Barriers to local community participation in tourism development: Evidence from mountainous state Uttarakhand, India

Article *in* Tourism · October 2018

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Abstract

Local community involvement, particularly in emerging and remote tourism destinations, is justified to accomplish sustainable tourism development efforts. Despite the benefits that tourism development offer, participation of community in geographically disadvantaged mountainous destinations is accompanied with many challenges. This qualitative investigation has understood and given voice to local residents of two emerging destinations of Uttarakhand, India. Data were gathered through interviews and were thematically examined. Findings reveal four key barriers that affect community participation in tourism development: practical, socio-cultural, apprehension and institutional. The study emphasizes the need for both greater advocacy of community participation, better synchronization among concerned government authorities, education and training for locals, and the need to design particular strategies which can encourage local participation that are customized to emerging destination context.

Key words: community participation; tourism development; barriers; mountainous destination; India

Introduction

Mountainous and remote rural areas of developing nations, usually attributed by subsistence economies, poor status of traditional agriculture, dependence on pastoralism, poverty, poor governance, fragile natural environments and susceptibility to natural disasters, pose unique challenges in tourism development (Sood, Lynch & Anastasiadou, 2017). Besides diversifying to other non-agricultural employment, tourism is considered as a possible solution to the challenges. However, it has been observed that economic, social, political and environmental aspects may impact the extent of participation in tourism by mountain communities (Nyaupane, Morais & Dowler, 2006). Tourism authorities have failed to recognize the spatial and societal distinctiveness of mountainous areas and to involve locals, which made the efforts of sustainable tourism development futile (Nepal & Chipeniuk, 2005). Tourism development in mountainous and remote rural areas is a challenge for planners, as they must balance development with ecology. Tourism literature highlights that the success of sustainable tourism development in geographically disadvantaged areas largely governs by the active participation of local people. Since the growth of tourism affects the locals directly and has the emotional impact on their lives, community participation is considered of immense significance. The locals must be involved as they are more familiar to tourism products associated with their socio, cultural background. The knowledge of local tourism offerings and appropriateness to local situations signify host communities' involvement in tourism development (Tosun, 2006). In view of this community-based tourism helps locals to control the tourism development, operate tourism facilities and infrastructures, manage indigenous

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resources, implement tourism-developing strategies, minimize economic leakages and increase tourism acceptance (Tosun, 2000; Tosun & Timothy, 2003).

Interestingly, community-based tourism, homestay tourism, rural tourism and sometime ecotourism are used synonymously in the Himalayan regions. Such forms of tourism are at the infant stage as tourists visiting rural areas take shelter in villages for food and accommodation. Miserably, the concept of community-based tourism is almost lopsided and tourists rarely get the feeling of community tourism except seeing some of the tourist places. In the present form of tourism development, only large business organizations including tour-operators, camp-owners and hotels are enjoying benefits whereas local people have been neglected and ignored significantly due to their uneducated, uncultured, ignorant and less articulated characteristics. Local communities have limited or sometimes marginalized contribution in decision-making and thus, deprived of financial benefits of tourism particularly in remote areas.

This paper explores the reasons why local communities of mountainous destinations are not participating in tourism development. The objectives of this study are: a) to identify major barriers that inhibit local community participation in tourism development in Uttarakhand; b) to examine the impact of identified barriers on the local communities' willingness to opt tourism industry as a profession and; c) to suggest ways of improving their participation in tourism business in future. This article contributes to barriers to community participation specifically in India, particularly on mountainous destinations. Only a few pertinent works focusing particularly to Uttarakhand have only been published, as will be presented in the literature review. The outcomes of this study will be of immense value to policymakers in designing an appropriate framework for enhancing community participation and developing the capacity of locals to play an active role in the tourism business.

Literature review

Community participation and tourism development

Community participation is believed as a method of grassroots democracy, where individuals have a right to participate in decision-making on matters that directly affect their lives. It is seen as a corrective style especially where local residents are poor or geographically disadvantaged (Burns, 2004). Stylidis, Biran, Sit and Szivas (2014) and Bello, Lovelock and Carr (2016) advocated that the objective of sustainable tourism development can be attained through the voluntary involvement of local communities. Murphy (1985) recognized there would be proper consensus, less chance of delays and more harmonious development, only if more individuals are motivated to involve in tourism development at an early stage. Snyman (2012) supported that tourism should be community driven, where community members are responsible to control tourism infrastructures and facilities available in their surroundings. Either directly or indirectly, the local community comes across both favourable and unfavourable outcomes of tourism, and thus their participation is essential to better handle the impacts and to gain the benefits generated through tourism activities (Cole, 2006).

Participation is capable of transforming the passive attitude of community into responsible and favourable outlook, inspiring entrepreneurial ventures, building partnership and collaboration, promoting a spirit of cohesiveness and rejuvenating relationship between people, tourism destination and external stakeholders (Moscardo, 2011; Pongponrat, 2011; Idziak, Majewski & Zmyślony, 2015) and consequently, can increase the prospects of more successful and sustainable development (Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma & Carter, 2007). However, researchers deliberate that participatory tourism development may vary from locality to locality and region to region. They opine that not every form of community participation could produce standard expected benefits to locals since it can take many forms ranging from manipulative participation to citizen power (Tosun, 1999). Kayat (2002), Mbaiwa (2005), Wang, Yang, Chen, Yang and Li (2010), Pongponrat (2011), Dogra and Gupta (2012), Khani (2012) reveal that host communities of developing countries such as India, China, Malaysia, Botswana, Thailand, and Iran, seldom participated in tourism-related decision-making. The active participation of the community in many destinations is not apparent due to highly centralized decision-making and underestimating the role of locals in decision-making processes.

Barriers to community participation in tourism development

In order to achieve voluntarily participation of local communities, factors that affect the level of their participation should be well identified and managed. In his three-dimensional framework, Tosun (2000) classified cultural, operational and structural limitations to community participation. He accepted that prevailing socio-economic and political conditions are the main reasons for these limitations in developing countries. Tosun and Timothy (2003) found that a low level of education, unawareness and limited means of collecting information are reasons for community non-participation in tourism development. Cole (2006), Manyara and Jones (2007) and Marzuki, Hay and James (2012) revealed that poor educational level, inadequate capabilities, unawareness, apprehensive and reluctant nature of community to take part in the decision-making process are major limitations in remote areas of Indonesia, Kenya and Malaysia respectively. Breugel (2013) found that unawareness, inability, insufficient infrastructures, poor coordination, remoteness and smaller size of destinations prevent residents to participate actively in tourism in Thailand.

Stone and Stone (2011) identified the absence of ownership sense, insufficient employment generation, deficiency of information, loss of advantages, and a disparity in tourism board structure restrict locals' participation in Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust, a community-based tourism enterprise in Botswana. Kim, Park and Phandanouvong (2014) identified low education & understanding about tourism, poor socio-economic conditions, lack of time for tourism, seasonality, power disparities and locals' distrust in authorities as key hindering factors in Houay-Kaeng Village, Laos. Saufi, O'Brien and Wilkins (2014) identified lack of tourism information, education and financial resources, perceived negative impacts and imbalance in tourism agencies' priorities in developing local tourism inhibit local participation in Lombok, Indonesia. They highlighted the significant role of the private sector, improvement in entrepreneurial skills in collaboration with educational and financial institutions, and role of government agencies as a catalyst in enhancing community participation.

Mustapha, Azman and Ibrahim (2013) identify the reluctance of stakeholders towards power-sharing, centralization of authorities, elite domination, unawareness, insufficient economic resources, poor professional attitude and limited capability of the local community to participate in tourism at Tekek Village, Malaysia. Kunjuraman and Hussin (2017) examined the difficulties of community-based homestay program in Dagat village, Malaysia and revealed internal challenges (amateur individuals, leadership issues, poor monetary resources) and external challenges (absence of fundamental infrastructure, absence of monitoring framework, lack of formal organisational structure, absence of marketing and promotional efforts) confine the community participation. Aref (2011) indicated that financial constraint is a major reason for community non-participation in Shiraz, Iran. Tourism authorities generally consider community participation as an unnecessary and costly process in terms of time, efforts, financial resources and abilities required to coordinate the entire procedure (Tosun, 2000).

It can be apparent from the literature that these limitations are closely interconnected to each other and consequently it is relevant to comprehend the structures and mechanism through which they inhibit host communities from active participation in tourism development. Despite all the efforts, local communities barely ever participate in tourism development activities and commonly experience a low participation in or a complete exclusion from decision-making (Mustapha, Azman & Ibrahim, 2013). This condition is predominantly acknowledged mainly in emerging remote tourism destination and generally in developing countries.

Barriers to local community participation in Himalayan destinations

The first planned ecotourism destination of India - Thenmala has set the example of extending benefits of community-based ecotourism to locals. Community participation ensured through Thenmala Ecotourism Promotion Society, Eco-Development Committees and *Vana Samrakshana Samithies* contributed positively towards economic empowerment, environmental sustainability, cultural perseverance, employment opportunities and standard of living of locals. Sirubari, the first model village of Nepal and winner of PATA Gold award (2001), has set the example on how to extend tourism benefits to poor villagers. Villagers developed tourism products from the elementary level through active community involvement. Tourism efforts of villagers helped in alleviating poverty, preserving culture, traditions, and environment and have made improvement in professional abilities, revenue-generating ventures, family incomes and quality of life (Thapa, 2005). In Bhutan, Gurung and Seeland (2008) highlighted the necessity of ecotourism in achieving equitable economic development, environmental protection and cultural promotion, which contributes to Gross National Happiness. They suggested the supportive role of government and tourism policymakers in financial assistance, improving skills of locals and establishing small tourism and hospitality enterprises.

Community-based homestays in Ladakh have been instrumental in conserving the rapidly worsening Himalayan natural and cultural resources, empowering women and providing sustainable livelihoods to local communities (Anand, Chandan & Singh, 2012). Initiated by Snow Leopard Conservancy in association with UNESCO, Ladakh Himalayan Homestay program, supplemented the earnings of households, preserved wildlife and increased ownership by host communities (Lama, Jackson & Wangchuk, 2012). Chaudhary & Lama (2014) appraised the efforts of NGOs, Ecotourism promotion committees and local communities in community-based tourism development in Sikkim, India. In Great Himalayan National Park, of Himachal Pradesh state, Bansal and Kumar (2013) reviewed the ecotourism for community development and concluded that unawareness, incapability, lack of constant support and consultation from government authorities are limiting factors. Dogra and Gupta (2012) revealed that attitude of tourism development authorities, limited financial resources, poor capacity of people and unavailability of time inhibit community participation in a rural destination of Jammu & Kashmir, India. Sood et al. (2017) studied the community non-participation factors in homestay scheme in Kullu and identified daily workload of women, lack of awareness/information, lack of finance, lack of institutional mechanisms, lack of skills and confidence, fear of loss of cultural values and safety concerns as key barriers.

In Uttarakhand, Gupta and Bhatt (2009) found that unawareness, perceived negative aspects of tourism, seasonality, lack of proper training and entrepreneurial skills hinder local community participation in tourism in Sari eco-village, near Tungnath. Bagri (2010) identified unawareness about governmental schemes, poor institutionalized mechanism, low education, poor entrepreneurial skills and poor infrastructural facilities limit residents' participation in tourism in two offbeat destinations of Uttarakhand. Thus, in the context of geographical remotes destinations, it is warranted to document the various barriers and their likely impact on host community participation in tourism development.

Geographic scope of the study

Situated in the northern part of India, Uttarakhand state shares the international border with Nepal and Tibet (China), and the national border with Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The state is commonly known as 'Land of Gods' (*Devbhoomi*) because of having its association with Hindu Gods and Goddesses. This multi-destination state offers a variety of tourism products including religious Hindu pilgrimage shrines *Badrinath* and *Kedarnath*, Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve - the world heritage site, Jim Corbett National Park - the first national park of India, historic temples, heritage, nature, wildlife, yoga, meditation, peaks, forests, valleys, glaciers, rivers, flora and fauna. Both domestic and foreign tourists visit Uttarakhand and tourist inflow is steadily growing in the region. Agriculture, horticulture, tourism and power are the major sectors for generating revenue for the state. Since the majority of people resides in geographically disadvantaged areas, Uttarakhand has concentrated in tourism with a huge importance for the development of rural areas and improving the living standard of people. For the present research work, two emerging rural tourism destinations of Uttarakhand were identified. A brief description of these two destinations are given below:

Trijuginarayan

Located at an altitude of 1,980 meters, Trijuginarayan has been declared as a tourist village by Uttarakhand State Government considering its religious significance and natural surroundings. According to mythological books, it is believed that the marriage of Lord *Shiva* (one of the trinities of Hindu Gods) and Goddess *Parvati* (one of the forms of mother Goddess *Durga*) is solemnized here in *Treta-Yug* (it is believed that this period belongs to millions of years back when Lord *Rama* ruled India) in the presence of Lord *Vishnu* (one of the trinities of Hindu Gods). Because of this, Lord *Vishnu* is being worshipped here constantly throughout three *yugs* (eons), thus it is named Trijuginarayan. Pahri-Partihar architecture style of temples indicates the rich constructed heritage of Garhwal region. This destination offers a variety of tourism products including historical temple, architectural aspects, lakes and caves, 360° view of Himalayan peaks, dense forests with rich diversity of flora & fauna, purified water rivulets & springs, Mandakini river valley, trekking trail, rock-climbing, rappelling, paragliding, bird-watching, nature photography and cycle safari (Bagri & Kala, 2015).

Table 1
Distance from major places (in Kms)

Places	Trijuginarayan	Koti-Kanasar, Indroli, Pattyur tourism circuit
New Delhi (national capital)	481	366
Dehradun (state capital)	259	112
Nearest airport (Dehradun)	233	140
Nearest railway station	216 (Rishikesh)	112 (Dehradun)

Table 2
Number of tourist arrivals

Year	Uttarakhand	Trijuginarayan	Koti-Kanasar, Indroli, Pattyur circuit
2011	26,070,907	7,940	49,338
2012	26,963,679	8,557	52,037
2013*	20,038,811	7,584	21,574
2014	22,093,281	8,912	36,672
2015	29,602,820	9,411	48,590
2016	30,622,469	NA	NA

Source: Annual Reports (20110-2016) Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India & Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board.
*Kedarnath natural disaster in Uttarakhand.

Figure 1
Map of India, Uttarakhand and survey destinations

Source: Google Maps.

Koti Kanasar, Indroli, Pattyur tourism circuit

Considering the enormous potential for rural tourism, Koti Kanasar, Indroli, Pattyur tourism circuit has been identified by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India as an emerging destination for eco-tourism promotion. Koti-Kanasar is known for the oldest and thickest deodar (*Cedrus deodara*) trees of the Asian subcontinent. Indroli village has two famous Hindu temples: *Mahakali* (dedicated to Hindu Goddess *Durga*) and *Mahasu* (dedicated to a Hindu deity Lord *Shiva*). Located at an altitude of 2100 meters, Pattyur is the most distant located village. *Jaunsaris* - a local tribe of this region - claim to be the descendants of *Pandavas* of the *Mahabharat* period i.e. 1200BC to 1000BC as suggested by archaeologists. Historical temples, old architectural aspects, lush green mountain meadows, dense forests, rich diversity of flora & fauna, snow-skiing, trekking and camping, adventure sports and nature-based recreational activities, eco walks, bird-watching, rock climbing, nature photography, organic farms, apple orchards, medicinal plant conservation area and simple villages maintaining an traditional way of life make this tourism circuit the continuous source of motivation for inquisitive globetrotters in the quest of enlightening experiences (Bagri & Kala, 2016).

Gauging the tourism potential, these destinations are growing gradually and people from neighbouring places and adjacent states have started to visit these unexplored sites (Table 2). These destinations are matchless in their natural backgrounds, possess all the merits to entice tourists and potential to compete with other mountainous destinations successfully. Present tourism destinations require the involvement of locals and mutually acceptable policies in order to consolidate their apathy or involvement stage of the destination life cycle.

Methodology

A qualitative research method was employed as researchers focused more on explanation than measurement of phenomena or quantitative generalisations. Qualitative methods are helpful when utilizing numerous sources of evidence to investigate the contextual dimensions of complex issues in real-life circumstances and when the target group can be reached easily in their abode. Several trips to research sites were made and held some meetings with local community members which helped researchers to realize the factors of community non-participation in tourism development. Thus, a list of questions was prepared around the study theme for the interview script. The study employed in-depth interviews, qualitative questionnaires and observations for collecting primary data. Data were gathered in two phases: the first slot of data was collected in March-June 2013 (For Koti-Kanasar, Indroli, Pattyur circuit) and the second slot in March-June 2015 (for Trijuginarayan). The research team was included four researchers to ensure two members were at each interview. All researchers were qualified and experienced in conducting interviews and analysing qualitative data. Participants selected for the study were identified using purposive and snowball sampling method. First, the chief villager (*Pradhan*) recommended prospective participants. Then, the first participant suggested the next participant and so on. In total, 36 in-depth interviews were completed. During sample selection, an effort was made to incorporate observations of a cross-section of the community i.e. members of different age, sexual category, professions, and income to assess diverse viewpoints, understanding, and importance regarding tourism development.

Each interview was 30-45 minutes in length. Some interviews were recorded with the consent and later transcribed, whereas other interviews were limited to researcher notes. Interviewees preferred to speak in Hindi/*Garhwali* as it is a local dialect used in their daily lives. Collecting responses in the native language encouraged participants to express themselves more responsively and ensured the richness and authenticity of data. Team also listened for additional local residents during in-depth interviews. For internal consistency, interview responses were translated into the English language and verified by the language educators. Themes, sub-themes, and quotes were analysed to accomplish research objectives of the study. Some statements were presented directly from interviews while others were gathered from researcher notes using a best effort to get the exact wording correct. For the validity, multiple researchers present during an interview and discussion jotted down their notes independently, then deliberated and combined the data. This was often done hours after interviews or by the end of the day. These data were also shared with study participants for achieving construct validity. Reliability was attained using an interview script and data with field notes.

Findings

The findings indicate that only a handful elite community members are invited by tourism development authorities to participate in decision-making. The majority of local people are simply left out of the consultation and decision-making process. However, residents expressed that they should be included in this process for the welfare of their communities. One respondent of Koti-Kanasar village stated, *"I want to safeguard nature water springs and forest in my locality as these resources offer us products and food to sell and consume…I am enthusiastic to take part in tourism as it empowers me to look after the natural resources in my village and lets me familiarize about environmental conservation."* Despite the awareness and readiness, community members in these destinations do not enthusiastically contribute to tourism activities. Based on interviews, researchers identified four categories of barriers for explaining the community non-participation in tourism development in the study areas.

Category one: practical barriers

Tourism by chance, not by choice

A variety of tourism products, favourable tourist inflows, positive perception and tourists' willingness to enjoy tourism offers entice locals to involve in the tourism business. Local people are not in the business of tourism by choice, but by chance. This involuntary involvement in tourism made locals participate less in tourism development. According to a resident from Koti village, *"to get the local people here to participate in any form of tourism is very hard. This is mostly because we didn't choose tourism, tourism chose us, and it has been a challenge for us to adapt to this rapid transformation since tourism is an irresponsibly unorganised sector. Moreover, there is hardly any presence of formal organizations for involving locals in tourism. Tourism planners do not really exist here and the government authorities support local participation only to the minimal extent."* One resident of Trijuginarayan shared that they are inadvertently involved in tourism. They have limited requirements and tourism is fulfilling all. They never thought of earning more from tourism.

Lack of knowledge

Communities located in remote locations are often unaware of tourism benefits. This lack of tourism awareness arguably prevents the effectiveness of community participation in development processes but also host communities' capacity to fulfill the expectations of visitors. A local of Trijuginarayan said that the community still looks at tourism from a tourist's perspective rather than on being the custodian of nature and ecosystem. Opportunities are available to us to operate accommodation, transport services, tour guiding, eateries and restaurants, entertainment, and souvenir emporiums, which are not optimally exploited because no one from us is even aware of their economic importance. Another member added, *"…the level of tourism awareness is very low. The only thing we know about tourism is that tourists will come to the destination and leave the money behind. Out of 100%, I would say only 2% of local people have a clear knowledge of what tourism is all about; we do not understand that tourism is more than just tourists and money."* In distant villages like Pattyur, interviewees who already involved in tourism business by operating eateries were also unaware of the concept of tourism. Locals shared their willingness to participate in tourism development but said they are unaware of the concept. They expressed that a low level of awareness about tourism is the major contributor to the apparent lack of interest from the community. They also felt that local authorities should organize awareness sessions in villages.

Low education

Participants expressed that poor education background of local community makes them incapable to take tourism profession related-decisions on their own and even make them incompetent to understand the objectives of tourism-related training programs. Some of the participants believe that decisions made by authorities are imposed on local community due to the poor educational background. Participants deliberated that even a mere discussion with residents is by itself sufficient and appropriate. One participant stated, *"…decision-makers always abstain us because they think we cannot contribute. We all know the reason for this behaviour. It's all about our poor educational background."* Low education makes them unwilling to contribute to and takes responsibility for any facets of tourism development. A respondent of Indroli village added, *"…I want to be a tour guide. Sadly, I have poor communication skills and do not know how to speak the English language. So I am not confident whether I can take this as my profession."*

The local people in Uttarakhand are not professionally qualified enough to contribute to the decision-making process. They raised this issue due to the lack of tourism and hospitality-related professional courses in educational institutions. "…*Although many educational institutions are available in the region, these institutions are primarily offering traditional courses. Considering the potential of tourism and hospitality sector in the state, these institutions should offer short duration professional courses in hotel and restaurant operations management, business communication…"* added by a resident of Trijuginarayan.

Category two: socio-cultural barriers

Poor living conditions

The majority of inhabitants in both the destinations have been deprived of living requirements. Most of the residents involved in agri-business and pastoralism for their livelihood. Some male members migrate to nearby towns for low-level jobs. Though they wish to invest and involve in tourism-related activities such as accommodation, homestay services, eateries, tour guiding or tour escorting, it is a little difficult for residents to start without the financial help of concerned authorities. The limited financial capacity of locals discourages them to commence entrepreneurial ventures. One participant commented, *"You know our tough daily lives and poor financial situation. In this harsh living conditions, it is nearly impossible for us to become entrepreneurs. If I had money and pleasant living conditions, I would have owned a small tourism venture instead."* Another participant added that he wants to manufacture and sell souvenirs to visitors, but he doesn't have adequate economic resources to materialize this idea. *"As you know, capital is needed to establish an income-generating tourism venture. This is why the majority of us are incapable to start tourism business, it's not that we don't prefer!"* added by a local of Trijugnarayan.

Busy daily routine

Many participants appraised of their busy routine for agriculture, pastoralism, childcare and household cleanliness, it deprived of their participation in prescribed training of skill development courses. People do not have time to rush to tourism business and even participate in similar kinds of activities. They cannot leave their primary and traditional sources of income. Cornwall (2008) pointed out that self-elimination may be a logical option when individuals observe that participation in such initiatives is time-consuming. One respondent said, *"I realized it tough to arrange my time to participate in tourism-related activities. Every day, I have to wake up early for agricultural work in my fields. I also give some time to look after my cattle. When I return home, it seems too late … I have to perform my household tasks too…I wish I had extra time for tourism development initiatives.* In the same line, another interviewee commented, *"Everybody imagines about tourism business, he or she wastes his or her available time and efforts doing tourism activities. They don't go to their agricultural fields. So who will perform these important life-sustaining activities? I think that the whole aspect of tourism planning and development should be in the hands of our government officials."* Consistent with the findings of Kayat (2002) and Dogra and Gupta (2012), local people and full-time employed individuals of these destinations are reluctant to involve in tourism showing their apprehension about the adverse impact of involvement on their primary livelihoods.

Passive role of women

Women are the backbone of this mountainous state. Women generally perform all kinds of activities from agriculture to household, from small business to pastoralism. These are difficult and time-consuming activities. Comparatively, women in the hilly regions are much stronger and very much associated with natural resources, as they visit the mountains regularly to gather timber and fodder. Thus, they play a strong role, especially in protest. Community members expressed that the involvement of women is still poor in the decision-making. Acknowledging this statement, a respondent stated, *"Traditionally, only the men are decision-makers in a family and in society. Women participation in decision-making is very poor and usually unacceptable. It will take time to overcome this traditionally inherent element of this society.* The strong male-dominating culture prevailing in developing societies has been the main problem to involve women in the decision-making. Poor educational background of the community and particularly of women is the main reason behind their non-participation. Women are often disqualified from meetings. A female participant stated, "*There was a meeting in our village, but only male members of the village were called. We were not asked to attend the meeting…"* However, few participants also illustrated that education and entrepreneurial prospects are some of the motivating elements for changing the outdated patriarchal mindset. A male respondent expressed, "*Government is promoting women education and providing employment opportunities to them. These initiatives will make women educated and self-employed. This will also develop the ability to stand on her own and take decisions herself. Society is in a transition phase and has realized the significance of women in a society."*

Category three: apprehension barriers

Perceiving tourism seasonality

Seasonality of tourist visitation and limited income generation are other important factors that affect locals' participation. Community members expressed their dissatisfaction with the extent of earnings generated particularly in rainy and winter seasons in which visitors hardly travel. A local resident of Trijuginarayan shared, *"I used to run a small eatery in the village. My customers were tourists only. They were coming here only for 4-5 months and the numbers were not encouraging, even in the peak season. How could I survive and look after my family with this seasonal business?* The experiences of local people exhibited a negative appreciation of tourism as a means of monetary activities in these rural destinations. A local resident of Indroli village added, *"I could earn only a little money by selling souvenir for travellers, mainly in the summer season which is insufficient for my household expenditures… Therefore, I discontinue my involvement in tourism-related activities… I put my efforts in performing other activities that produce more money for me and my family."* Interestingly, one respondent shared that the fear of commonness is his apprehension of being involved in the tourism development. He added, *"...tourism business is not profitable anymore as more individuals will employ in the similar business."*

Lack of expertise

There is a common saying that the rural people are not benefited from tourism-related schemes due to lack of industry awareness and business expertise. Since seasonality is a major drawback of the tourism business, rural people have no choice except to abandon the plan of joining the tourism industry due to lack of other means for their livelihood. One participant pointed out, *"We have poor educational qualifications and no distinctive abilities, so how can we take the advantage of tourism?"* Another respondent expressed, *"We want to generate more income from tourism-related occupations but we have no knowledge what is the suitable method to do it. We do not possess any professional skills; we can only contribute our labour...We, people without adequate skills, just do not matter in the participation in tourism initiatives."*

These comments reveal that poor professional attitudes and lack of expertise of community members are enough for non-participatory tourism development in this mountainous state. People are hesitant about their abilities as prospective tourism entrepreneurs and they are not confident if they would be able to meet the requirements of tourists from urban areas. Although tourism business has low entry barriers in terms of monetary resources and required skills, respondents' apparent lack of expertise, confidence and exposure act as high entry barriers.

Perceived negative impacts

Community perceives that tourism brings social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts in both favourable and unfavourable directions. However, a majority of residents have serious apprehensions about its adverse aspects. A participant of Koti-Kanasar circuit raised his concerned about the erosion of socio-cultural values once tourism development will take place. Local traditions and cultural milieu of the ancestral villages may worsen. Participants also have the reservation on the increased flow of visitors would increase the cost of living. A few participants were afraid of reduction of agricultural outputs and increase the cost of living if tourism infrastructure facilities would be constructed on the fertile agricultural land. Matured community members also opine that the young generation may lose their customs and traditions by observing tourists' behaviour. Participants pointed out other concerns such as traffic congestion, overcrowding, pollution, increasing waste, construction of concrete structures, changing the rural landscape, disturbance and devastation of wellconserved vegetation and wildlife. The perceived negative impacts also discourage locals to promote and participate in tourism development.

Category four: institutional barriers

Power disparities

The local community believed that tourism development authorities have the capacity to propose and develop tourism-related activities without their active participation and support. Conversely, some participants expressed that they are not given the equal chances to make decisions on tourism-related initiatives because of the poor background and limited abilities. Although they are encouraged to share their views and opinions, only a few selected members are invited to attend the programs and meetings. Locals perceive power disparities is one of the reasons for the poor participation in tourism development. One participant stated, *"I never got an opportunity to share my ideas and opinions regarding tourism development initiatives in my locality... I used to present my views when I participated the community meetings, but I sensed that officials didn't listen to me…."* Locals are only asked to monitor and update concerned authorities about ongoing tourism activities. They also felt debarred and uncertain that any of their opinions would be deliberated in forthcoming development policies in their villages. A disheartened participant shared, *"…tourism officials have a better understanding of tourism planning and development … I am not willing to involve, mainly in the community meetings or discussion forum… well…actually, I am not a strong or influential community member so I am not asked at all… my views and suggestions will hardly be given any weight in the designing action plan for tourism development anyway. Why should I worry?"* This indicates that the community felt skeptical to contribute to the consultation activities. Participants expressed that there exists a communication gap between community and tourism planners responsible to increase the level of distrust among them. In addition, poor tourism infrastructure, the clash of harvest and tourism seasons, poor networking skills and inadequate coordination between private tourism providers and locals were also highlighted by participants, which inhibit residents to involve in tourism development.

Discussion

This qualitative investigation examined and debated the barriers of community participation in the tourism planning and development in two emerging destinations. The four main broad constraints that emerged in the present study, as perceived by the community members, relate to practical, socio-cultural, apprehensions and institutional. Remarkably, these barriers are not specific to participatory tourism development strategy, but related to and/or an extension of the prevalent economic, socio-cultural and political framework in developing regions, which have impeded them from achieving a sophisticated level of progress. Mirroring the findings of Tosun (2000), this study advocates that abolition of these obstacles to participatory tourism development approach essentially depends upon diminishing usual difficulties of emerging destinations. Since there are no mandatory guidelines to operationalise community-based participatory tourism development, the active participation can be attained with specific and deliberate strategies framed at the village and local level considering the barriers identified in the study.

Most participants considered tourism as a relatively unwelcome sector. They expressed that although destinations have tourism potential they can't take the advantage of the industry due to lack of operational skills as well as the poor educational background. The communication gap between tourism-planners and community make local people less knowledgeable about tourism and related entrepreneurial opportunities it might offer. Similar to Cole (2006), Manyara and Jones (2007), Marzuki et al. (2012), Kim et al. (2014) and Saufi et al. (2014), authors believe that the lack of information not only restricts community responsiveness about tourism but also lessens their empowerment. Considering their poor educational and social background, local shared that they are not capable enough to share prompt decision and hence never invited into a discussion. This mirrors the findings of Aref (2011), Dogra and Gupta (2012), Kim et al. (2014). Saufi et al. (2014) and Sood et al. (2017). With agriculture and pastoralism as principal revenue sources, interviewees sensed that tourism might not be well-matched with their prevailing work pattern. The opportunity cost of tourism over agriculture is higher, this makes tourism less attractive to local residents. The current busy routine also discourages local involvement as harvest season coincides with peak tourist season. The present study admits that women in mountainous destinations already undertake the majority of the work, consequently insufficient time for tourism activities. Regardless of the different data collection locations, the involvement of female in tourism found insignificant.

Lack of skills and the poor professional attitudes adversely affect individual capabilities and business confidence echoing the outcomes of Kim et al. (2014), Saufi et al. (2014) and Sood et al. (2017). Many participants perceive that tourism business is seasonal in nature and having limited income opportunities. They have apprehensions for competition due to engagement in similar nature of tourism activities and thus low-income generation. The study proposes that choices to involve in tourism are contextual, and are affected by factors beyond simple financial benefits. In Uttarakhand, community decisions to take part in tourism are greatly affected by observed adverse outcomes of tourism on community traditions and values. Power structures among government departments and indifferent attitudes of government authorities are perceived as negatively influencing community participation supporting the findings of Jamal and Camargo's (2014) in Mexico, Saufi et al. (2014) in Indonesia and Bagri (2010) in India. The poor institutional framework further prevents social harmony among concerned departments and consequently promotes ambiguous and uneven tourism planning, inadequate attention to locals' involvement, implementation failure of tourism programs, and weak tourism guidelines. Government's emphasis on mass tourism apparently overlooks the opinions of local individuals. Survey of tourist destinations and interaction with communities make it evident that very less work has been taken place for the improvement of tourism infrastructure, creating awareness and capacity building. Thus, residents have developed unconvinced perception that tourism is a vulnerable sector for future investment.

While considering emerging tourist destinations promotion only skill-based education can encourage locals to participate actively in tourism-related activities and minimise economic leakages. Capacity-building initiatives can develop the favourable attitude and increase the level of expertise. Tourism planners can organise skill development workshops, training sessions and seminars in order to develop and improve the business skills of the host community. The content of these programs should be professional, concentrating on specific job-related capabilities. Private tourism providers can also stimulate locals' participation in tourism by providing more access to them in their tourism activities. For instance, the communication between local people and tourists can take place, when more community-based activities in tour packages are offered by private tour operators. In such situations, residents can learn and understand the benefits of tourism activities such as homestay, tour guides, transport providers, etc. The establishment of tourist information centres in appropriate locations would assist communication with community members as well as with tourists.

Encouragement and engagement can be the appropriate ways to solve problems for prospective rural entrepreneurs. Collaboration with educational and financial organizations can help in motivating the tourism entrepreneurial initiatives from local residents. As UNWTO (2011) has acknowledged that tourism has the potential for women empowerment and promoting gender equality, women must be given priority in terms of education, training and engagement. Tosun (2000) observed that in developing countries like India, which are divided by class, political and gender issues, NGOs help is of immense significance in creating awareness, training, and providing finance/marketing support. In addition, tourism planners can employ techniques of community participation as suggested by Marien and Pizam (1997). In addition, six strategies for ensuring community participation as suggested by Bello et al. (2016) in the context of Malawi can also be employed. The present study also finds that government authorities neglect the role of the host community in tourism activities and this fosters the attitude that tourism is developed to benefit "outsiders" only. An institutional mechanism with greater stakeholder participation and above all, operationalization at the village level is definitely needed. This overall debate confirms that a complete transformation in the social, political, regulatory and economic structure of this mountainous state is required for participatory community-based tourism development.

Conclusion

Barriers to community participation affect not only residents' engagement but discourage them to involve in tourism-related decision-making even in the future. Local communities must be considered as the integral element of the tourism product. Tourism policymakers must avoid discrimination in the participatory approach and make sure the contribution of various stakeholders, including minorities and underprivileged sections, rather than just community leaders, elite and dominant interest groups. Participation in tourism develops a feeling of ownership among them, thereby making the implementation of policies more effective. It will empower local people and form a connection between tourism benefits and preservation. Government initiatives in terms of offering vocational training, workshops, capacity-building programs, information centres and financial support can transform community attitude favourably towards tourism development. Eliminating socio-cultural and apprehension barriers require a long educational process and flexibility. This orientation cannot be an overnight phenomenon;

it must be developed. Researchers suggest that the transformation in attitude and behaviour of and genuine collaboration from all stakeholders including state government, local tourism authorities, privates tours operators, NGOs, and local communities are essential for sustainable and successful community-based tourism development.

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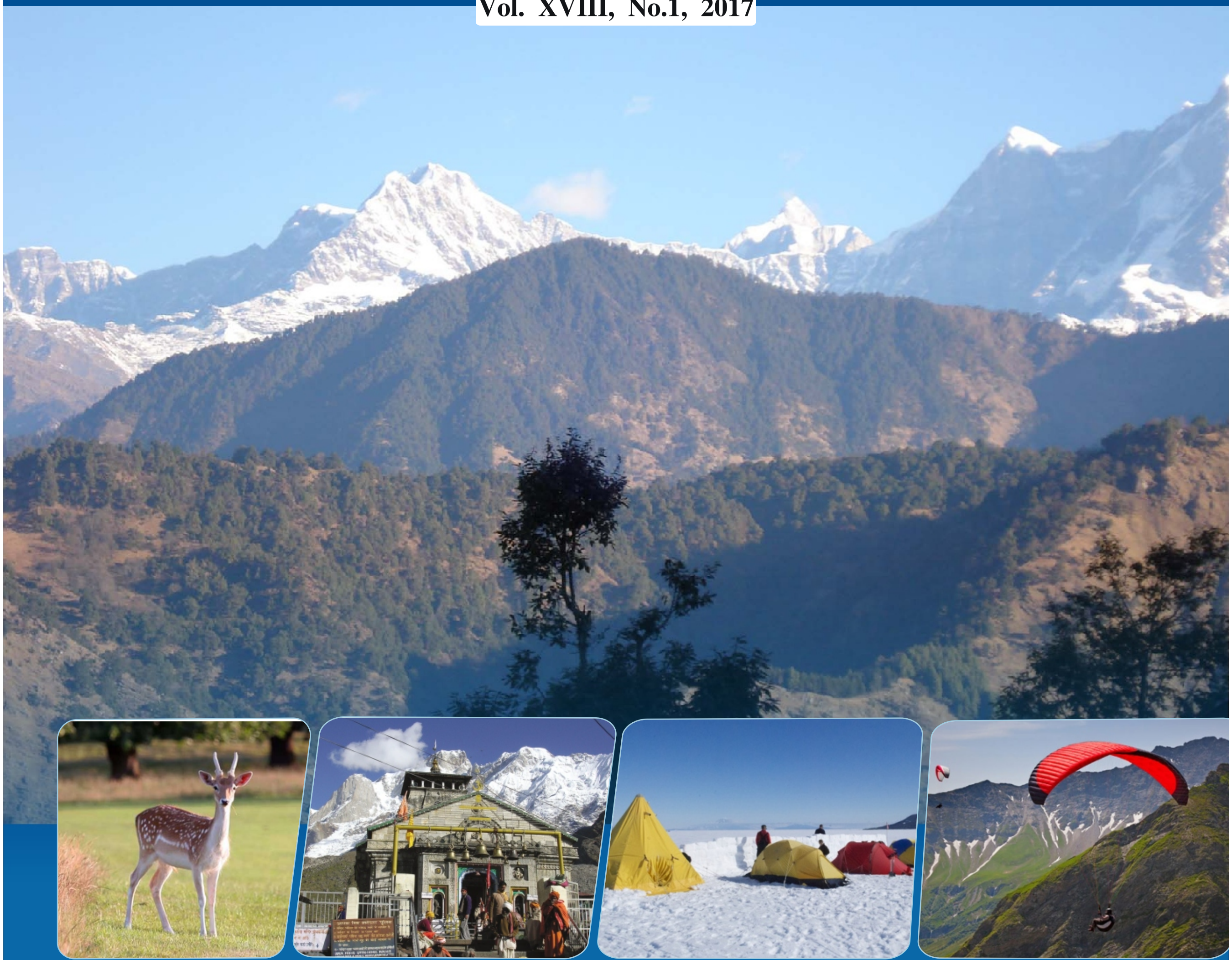
Received: 26/03/2018
Accepted: 15/08/2018

ISSN: 0972-7310

Journal of Tourism

An International Research Journal on Travel and Tourism

Vol. XVIII, No.1, 2017



Centre for Mountain Tourism and Hospitality Studies (CMTHS)

HNB Garhwal Central University, Srinagar Garhwal, India

Journal of Tourism
Vol. XVIII, No.1, 2017 ISSN No. 0972-7310

Frequency and Subscriptions: Journal of Tourism is published biannual.

Annual Subscription rates: India-Institutional: INR.2000, Individual: INR. 1000, Abroad- Institutional: US$ 75, Individual: US$ 40, Demand Draft or Cheque should be in favour of Finance officer, HNB Garhwal Central University, Srinagar Garhwal and be payable on SBI Srinagar Garhwal (3181) India.

Editorial/Subscription Information

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Guest Editorial Note

Journal of Tourism (JoT) is again pleased to connect you with this issue on the theme **"Destination Management Structures for the New Tourism order"**. As you would accept my view that tourism sector is facing severe challenges in terms of development of infrastructure, satisfaction/experiences of tourists besides management of tourism destinations/resources. Among all, managing destinations has become a herculean task for the stakeholders to put everything in order. However, due to lack of awareness and negligence, the destinations are losing their appeal and invites major shock to the industry, tourists and people altogether. In view of this, Journal of Tourism is commissioned itself to devote this issue on destination management and invited research papers from various corners and based on its editorial experts recommendations, three research papers and two research notes have been finalized and incorporated in this issue.

The first research paper titled "Techniques for working with sustainable tourism indicators at the local level" authored by González-Guerrero, G.; González Díaz, J.G.; Castañeda Martínez, T.; Valdez Pérez, M.E., shares the significance of sustaining the tourism attractions and its achieving methods through sustainability indicators. Also, they argue that the indicators should have sync with the interests of the local people.

The second research paper titled "Research on the Green Destination Development Evaluation: a Low-carbon Perspective**"** authored by WANG LIN, ZHANG QIQI and ZHANG MU opines about the transformation from brown economy to green economy and its importance, its presence in the tourism sector in the name green destination. The paper also discusses the green destination, its management and operating styles with different layers of evaluation index system.

The third paper titled "Making a job out of your passion: When sports people become entrepreneurs in the tourism industry" written by Philippe Terral and Fanny Dubois discusses about the skill set to be developed by the sports people to become tourism entrepreneurs of various levels**.**

The first research note titled “Heritage Tourism and its determinants- An Empirical study in Himachal Pradesh” by Arun Sharma shares the heritage wealth of Himachal Pradesh state of India and its share in the state's tourism. He further studies about the factors related to heritage tourism and measures the impact of tourists in tourism in the destination.

The second research note titled “Some Reflections On India's Outbound Tourism” authored by S.C. Bagri and A. Suresh Babu discusses about the growth of India's out bound tourism and shares about the intriguing factors for tourists and the countries of preference.

I, on behalf of the family of Journal of Tourism feel happy to thank the editorial team for their valuable inputs and our readers for their continuous support and motivation in bringing up this issue successfully.

Prof. S.C.Bagri

Journal of Tourism
An International Research Journal on Travel and Toursim
Vol.XVIII, No.-1 ISSN:0972-7310 2017

Contents

Key Words

sustainable tourism; indicators; community participation; qualitative and quantitative research

Techniques For Working With Sustainable Tourism Indicators At The Local Level

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Abstract

The definition of sustainability indicators in tourism at the local level can be a challenging task due to their technical nature. However, insight into the relevance and understanding of such indicators by the local people takes importance within the context of decentralisation. Such relevance points to the need for techniques that have not been commonly used in the indicators research but can be advantageous for informing it at the local level. For this purpose, this document proposes the use of the Likert scale and photoelicitation techniques; the latter as a more innovative technique in the study of indicators. Further, it is argued that the information generated with these techniques can be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. It is elucidated that both types of analysis and interpretations are able to inform different aspects of research. The research was conducted in a community of the Nevado de Toluca Park.

INTRODUCTION

In tourism, the purpose of conserving the resources while using them for the economic and social benefit of the local population, has meant the need to establish monitoring mechanisms. These mechanisms have a twofold purpose. On the one hand, they can inform the progress of tourism sustainability objectives. On the other, they can help to prevent considerable impacts to the social, economic or environmental spheres. One such mechanism is the use of sustainability indicators (Altieri, 2002; Fernandes& Wood house, 2008; Ziaabadi, et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the need for indicators at the local level has been raised (James, 2000). Indicators need to be developed and applied at the local level, considering context appropriate issues. Further, the present document argues that indicators need to reflect the interests and concerns of the local people and be understood by them. This is particularly relevant in the context of decentralisation and community-based natural resource management. In this context, institutions become an important subject as it is perceived that they could 'play an important role in the effective management of scarce natural resources' (Runge, 1986).

In the case of Mexico, the institution that has been officially chosen as the channel for the management of natural resources is the ejido system. Although the Agrarian Law was changed in 1992 to allow for the selling of the ejido land, many properties remain collectively owned and thus the ejido institution prevails (Barnes, 2009).

Thus, it is necessary that indicators be understood by the local people as stewards of the resources if the aim is to conduct the tourism activity in a sustainable way. However, understanding indicators can be a complex task due to their technical nature. This shows the importance of using techniques that may be appropriate for working with indicators at the local level.

This research proposes two techniques, the Likert scale and photoelicitation. The Likert scale has been used in tourism research for determining tourist satisfaction and perception of authenticity of events (Chhabra, et. al., 2003). It has also been used to analyse motivations (Swanson, 2006;Jones, 2011) and indicate competitiveness of a destination (Ozer, 2012; Mulec, 2013). Photoelicitation has been used in research with the purpose of 'balancing power, create a sense of ownership, foster trust and build capacity' (Castleden, et. al., 2008:1393). This paper argues that these techniques have the potential of providing a simple approach to identifying the interests and concerns of the local people, which can in turn be converted into indicators reflecting local needs.

Sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism can be seen as a goal that tourism destinations strive to define and pursue (Mihalic, 2016). There has been much debate around the concept, its meaning and application. However, the idea behind it the conservation of natural resources while using them for the tourism activity, which implies the balance between the natural, social and economic dimensions is still considered worth pursuing.

Sustainable tourism is thus not a type of tourism but rather a quality or a set of principles that are desirable for good tourism practice. It is a break from the paradigm of what might be referred to as traditional tourism, which was characterised by mass tourism and a lack of sensitivity to local people, the environment and culture in tourist destinations. In contrast, sustainable tourism is characterised as being low-impact, responsible and respectful of the local people, environment and culture, and inclusive of different stakeholders with community participation at the core of tourism planning and implementation. As stated by the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 1998:3), the tourism activity should not be harmful to the interests of the population in destination sites or to the environment.

Sustainable tourism appeared in response to growing concerns about a range of impacts including the marginalisation of host communities, cultural shocks and the few benefits that local people were actually receiving from tourism activity (Countryside Commission, 1995; Wahab, 1997; WTO, 1997; Mowforth& Munt, 2003). However, the emphasis in practice on the environment and the difficulty of applying sustainable tourism principles due to the prevailing socio-economic and political conditions in the developing world is regarded by some as being a continuing problem (Tosun, 2001:289).

Another critique has been 'the implementation gap'. Mowforth and Munt (2003), who offer a detailed analysis and description of the meaning of sustainability for tourism, conclude that there is no “absolute true nature of sustainability” because it can only be defined within a context and its definition is influenced by the “control and position of those who are defining it” (Mowforth & Munt, 2003).

This implies that the objectives and tools used in sustainability will be a reflection of the interests of those defining it. Thus, with the discourse of putting the local communities' participation at the core of tourism planning, the movement towards decentralisation and the abundance of community resource management instances, the role of the local people in sustainable tourism takes greater relevance.

Among the tools used in sustainability are indicators. They have the purpose of monitoring the performance of various aspects within the dimensions of sustainability. And, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, they can also reflect the interests of those who define them.

Indicators of sustainability in tourism for over two decades, different associations, groups and sectors have devised sustainability indicators with the purpose of measuring the performance of different variables involved in sustainability. In the case of tourism, there have also been various exercises to develop and use indicators to monitor and measure sustainability. Most notably, in 1996 the WTO released a publication that listed a set of 11 core indicators and other lists of complementary indicators that were destination-specific (with a further release in 2004).

Similarly, some countries have developed their own set of indicators for sustainable tourism. Some of them have used the indicators proposed by the WTO as a basis. Examples of this include the case of Korea, where the WTO's sustainable indicators were used to monitor the management activities of the Mt. Sorak National Park. The purpose of the study was to evaluate whether the park was being managed in a sustainable way. The findings were expected to assist in a change of the way in which the park was being managed (Kang, 2002).

The Association of Caribbean States adapted a set of indicators considering some criteria such as security, identity and culture, child prostitution, employment in tourism, quality of bodies of water, energy consumption index, water consumption index, environmental management and use, efficiency of the solid waste management system, efficiency of the waste water management system, tourist satisfaction, and national and local product consumption index. The purpose was to ensure the achievement of sustainability in the tourism activity (Association of Caribbean States, 1994).

Miller (2001) proposes a set a core of indicators based on the tourists' point of view. There was first established a set of 29 indicators which were sent to three groups of people: experts in the field, businessmen within the scope of tourism enterprises, and holiday makers. The three groups made their evaluation regarding what they considered important to be measured. After the evaluation and crosschecking of the three groups, a reduced set of 16 indicators came out. The final purpose was to find out whether tourists used to make, or would be interested in making thoughtful decisions when choosing their places to visit and also if managers were willing to disclose information about the sustainable practices to help to make the choice easier.

Research on indicators has included different stakeholders (Vila, et. al., 2010; Blancas, et. al., 2011; Ziaabadi, et al., 2017) but few have emphasised the importance of the local people in community-based natural resource management (Spencer, 2010).

The role of communities in indicator selection and use

Much attention has been given in the literature of sustainable tourism indicators to the participation of different stakeholders in the selection of tourism indicators. Although the importance of the participation of different stakeholders is not in question, this research argues that the importance of stakeholders is given by the context of the destination. In the case of countries such as Mexico, where there is a widespread practice of community-based resource management, communities become the stewards of their natural resources (Kumar, 2005; Zhu, et al., 2017). This is so because community members, being immersed in the environment, can be in a position to monitor changes in natural, social or economic spheres.

Further, within the context of decentralisation, responsibility for the resources is given to institutions at the local level. These institutions should be able to respond appropriately to the changes that have manifested themselves in rural spaces, originated by decentralisation, and globalisation processes, and to the 'processes of redefinition of the role of the State, and the participation and privatisation of the public functions' (Echeverri Perico & Ribero, 2002:20).

Community resource management implies the shared responsibility of the community for the planning and use of common resources. As part of decentralisation policies, it gives local communities 'the responsibility for natural resources held as commons' (Leach, et al., 1997:1). The rationale for this measure has been that 'the goals of equity, development, empowerment and environmental sustainability would be reconciled once resource management was transferred into the hands of local communities' (Kumar, 2005).

Accordingly, this research argues that the local community plays an important role in monitoring in instances of community-resource management and where there are budgetary and personnel deficits. However, this view faces the obstacle that indicators tend to be technical in nature.

In communities that can be considered rur-urban (Kay,2007), there can be a low education level. In such cases, technical indicators can prove difficult to understand. For this reason, this research suggests that creative methodologies need to be incorporated into the definition of issues and the selection and development of sustainable tourism indicators while working at the community level. This type of research can help to “identify the community shared values and vision aspirations of the community for whom the indicators are intended” (Miller& Twining-Ward, 2005).

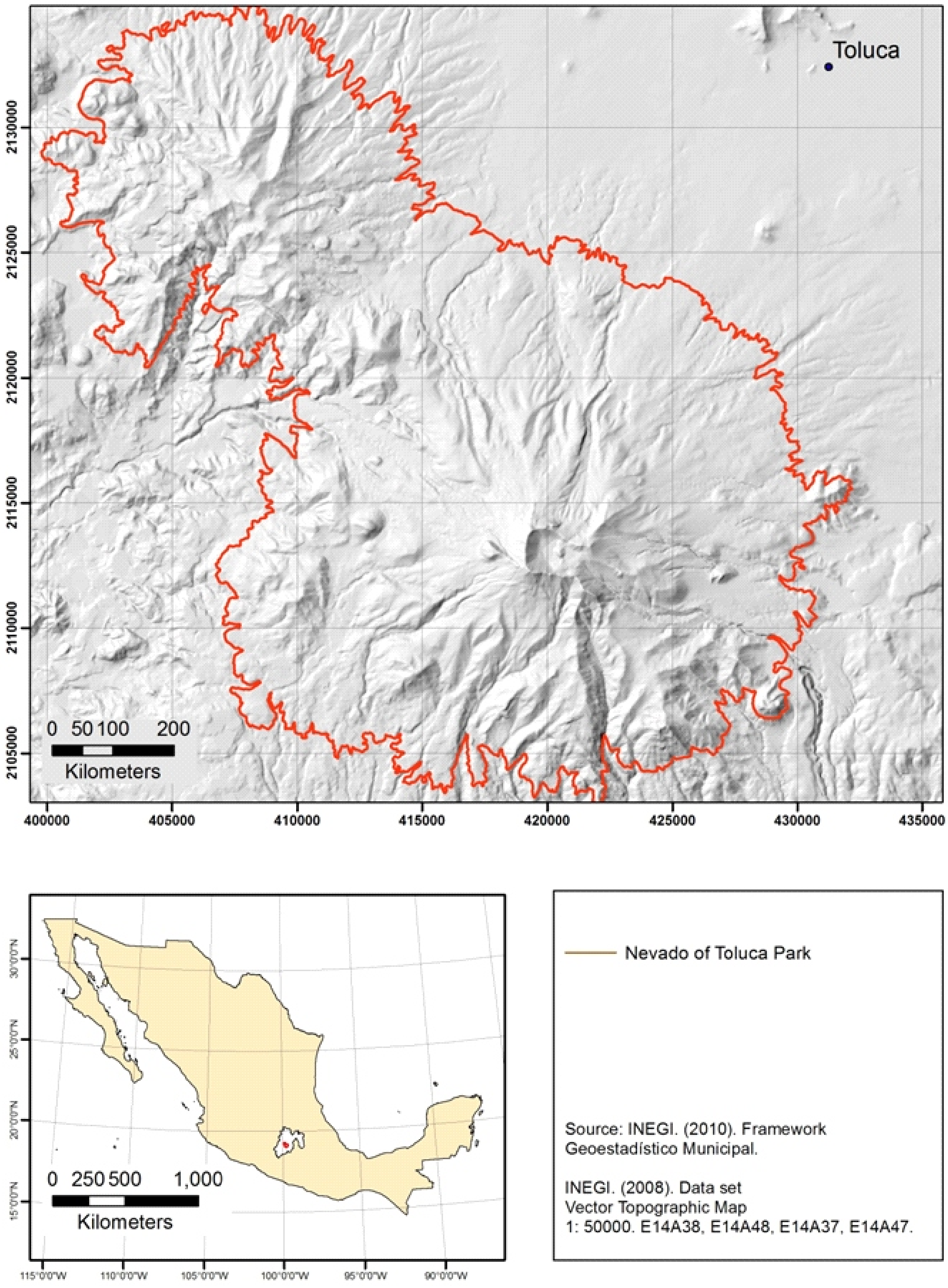
Thus, this paper proposes that indicators should be understandable to community members (Kozak& Martin, 2012). In the measure that the indicators are understandable and the more they reflect the communities' interests and concerns, the more the community members will be able to appropriate them and take active part in the monitoring process towards sustainable tourism.

Methodology

Research Site

The setting for this research is the Nevado de Toluca National Park. The park covers 53,988 hectares (CEPANAF, et al.,undated). One of its four tourist sites, the Deer Park, is part of the Zinacantepec municipality (see Figure 1). In the Deer Park,visitors have picnics, take walks or ride horses. It also has tourism services and infrastructure, which is considered to be in good condition (CEPANAF, et al., undated).

Figure 1. The Nevado de Toluca Protected Area and its main tourist areas.



Source: Authors, 2017

Although being a Protected Area, there are individual landowners and ejido members with clear group and individual land rights in the park. Other community members have also interest in the park's resources, simply for leisure activities.

The Nevado de Toluca Protected Area is home of 15 rural communities. The size of the settlements range from 2 to 500 houses. The size determines the number and kind of services that can be found in each. Potato and oats are the most common crops grown, although maize can be found in the lowest-lying areas. It is also common to come across herds of cattle or flocks of sheep being herded to grazing areas.

Most of the settlements were formally established in the first part of the 20th century. Before then, what today is known as the Nevado de Toluca Protected Area, was referred to by its nahuatl name Chignahuiltecatl (Nine Hills) or Xinantecatl Volcano. Most of its 53,988 hectares were then divided amongst three haciendas: la Gavia, la Huerta and Tejalpa, which were formed after the conquest of Mexico in 1519.

The Nevado Park was constituted by decree in 1936. The decree made it clear that, due to the ecological importance of the area, conservation was a priority and this could not be achieved if excessive exploitation (by ejidos or individual owners) prevailed. Owners affected by the decree were given a period of six months to prove their ownership, after which they would receive compensation for their land.

The decree was not fully executed in the Nevado Park. The area was declared a Protected Area but the individual land owners and ejido members were not compensated and hence forth they did not leave the area.

San Juan de lasHuertas (SJH) is one of the communities with claims over the Nevado Park in the form of ejido with 2,170 hectares. Its ejido that manages the Deer Park, a tourist site of the Nevado Park. The community has a population of 12, 253 inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticay Geografía, 2010).

Materials and methods

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 ejidatarios from SJH. The interview was designed in four parts. The first part of the interview was composed of a series of open-ended questions designed to introduce the subject of sustainability and find out how much the interviewee knew about it. This part also had the purpose of determining the awareness of the interviewee on the tourism activity in the Nevado Park.

The second part of the interview consisted of a list of 19 indicators which were selected based on the literature review, giving greater weight to those proposed by the WTO. Indicators were selected based on the characteristics of the tourism activity and the site itself. Interviewees were asked to rate the perceived importance of each indicator on a 5 point Likertscale.

The third part of the interview consisted initially of a set of 31 photos the interviewees had to arrange in order of importance. These photos were representative of the resources found in the Nevado Park and the community. It includes images meant to represent education, income and family.

The interview was pretested with five ejidatarios randomly chosen as they arrived to the office of the Ejidal Comisariado (the representative of the ejidatarios). The results from the test showed that for the second part of the interview some indicators had to be re-worded to make them more understandable. The third part of the interview showed that 31 photos were too many. Some of them, the ejidatarios said, were repetitive of resources and were therefore placed consistently on the same level. Therefore, the photos were reviewed to reduce the number to 12 (Table 1). This was done while trying to ensure that the photos of the resources that intended to be represented remained. It was also noticed that some photos were attached different meanings by ejidatarios. For this reason, it was thought necessary to specify what the picture meant for the research. This was not to be made known to ejidatarios. However, after they finished arranging the pictures in order of importance, they would be asked to explain what each picture meant to them.

Table 1. Images and their intended meaning.

	Image	Intended meaning	Rationale
1		Work	As ejidatarios, all interviewees are familiar with farming. For many of them, it is their main source of livelihood.
2		Fauna	The image shows fauna that belongs to the region. Many interviewees were able to identify it as such.
3		Education	The image shows a drawing of a happy child in his classroom.
4		Money	The image shows Mexican currency. It was meant as either money or income.
5		Deforestation	The image is of an area of the Nevado Park.It was meant to portray soil and deforestation.
6		Community	The image is of the centre of the community, where the main offices and library are located. In addition a crowd of community members can be seen.
7		Water	The image is of one of the lakes in the crater of the Nevado Park. Thus, portraying water.
8		Trees	This image is of another area of the Nevado Park. In contrast with image 5, it presents an abundance of vegetation.

9		Family	This image is meant to portray a family. As a rururban community, it was assumed an important issue for community members[1].
10		Tourism	In addition to the tourist in the front, this image shows the area that is used for parking and interviewees would likely be familiar with it.
11		Tourism 2	The image shows an area of the Nevado Park that is used for tourism and belongs to the ejidatarios. The building that can be seen on the right is the lodge where some visitors stay overnight, also run by ejidatarios.
12		Flora	The image shows flora that belongs to the region. Many interviewees were able to identify it as such.

After these modifications were made to the interview script, a list of ejidatarios was obtained from the EjidalComisariado's office. Using a random numbers table, 40 ejidatarios were selected. It was planned to conduct only 22 interviews, but an extra 18 names were obtained in case some ejidatarios refused to participate or could not be found.

In addition to these interviews, informal conversations were held with various members of the community. Meetings of the ejido were also attended by a researcher functioning as an observer. This allowed examining the dynamics of these meetings and the interaction of ejido members.

The data collected for the second part of the interview (through questionnaire using the Likert scale), was input into a double-entry matrix considering 19 indicators and 18 respondents (four were excluded from the analysis for assigning values outside the Likert scale). To determine the significant indicators in the surveyed population, a combination of the extreme groups approach and item-test correlation was used (Elejabarrieta&Iñiguez, 2010; FernádezPinedo, 2006).The former considers the global results of the upper and lower quartile. An item is useful when the mean of the individuals of the superior quartile is higher than one. The latter discriminates between useful items and those that are not, through their internal consistency. It correlates global individual results with results per item. Although this method considers an r of 0.35 as significant, this study considers an r superior to 0.70 as significant. The internal consistency of the questionnaire (designed as a sequence of items) was validated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (see Ledesma, et. al, 2002; Oviedo & Campo-Arias, 2005; Brasileiro, 2014; Cardozo, et al., 2014).

Aprincipal component analysis using InfoStat 2011p was performed with the indicators selected through the above process(Di Rienzo, et al., 2011). In this analysis, the variables were the indicators and the repetitions were the answers given for each indicator by the 18 interviewees (Martin, et al., 1994; Torres, et al., 2008). This was performed with the understanding that a principal component analysis allows for the reduction of the dimensionality of data, transforming the original group of p variables into a group of unrelated q variables (q   p). These are the principal components, which are lineal combinations of those variables that best explain the variation in the matrix. Therefore, when identifying the variables that form the first principal components, it can be concluded that these are the variables that best summarise the information (Martin et al., 1994; González, et al., 2008).In this study, the principal component analysis will identify those indicators that best represent the view of the interviewees regarding sustainability indicators included in the questionnaire (Balzarini, et al., 2008; Johnson, 2000). A cluster analysis was conducted, based on the principal component matrix, to identify any association between the indicators(Johnson, 2000).

In the case of the images, it was considered the priority that each interviewee assigned a ranking to each image.This way, the information was concentrated in a double-entry matrix with 12 positions and 22 interviews in order to determine which images were given priority by the interviewees. The images were arranged based on three procedures and a summary. The first process considered only those respondents who assigned a place to each image (13).In order to determine the order, it was considered the measure of central tendency mode of each image (Steel, et. al, 1985). If the position was repeated, it was assigned the highest priority number to the image that appeared later in the sequence, assuming that there was a positive effect for the images that appeared first in the sequence.

The second process was based also on mode, sticking to the rule mentioned above, but in this case all positions that respondents assigned to images were included, i.e. those who assigned more than one position to an image or repeated a position. The third process used principal component analysis (Johnson, 2000). The first four main components were considered. In each, the three images with the highest value were selected. The first three positions within the first component were sequentially assigned, then the second component and so on until all 12 positions were completed. In case animage had already an assigned position in the preceding component, it was selected the next image according to value. Finally with the positions obtained, a table was made with the purpose of obtaining an adjusted position. If the position was repeated in two processes, it was considered significant and it was assigned.

To check if an indicator had a differentiated perception for the interviewees in terms of whether it was evaluated with an image or a questionnaire, a contingency table was developed using chi-square test statistic (Balzarini, et al., 2008).The table included as dependent variables the seven indicators that were evaluated both ways. The independent variable was the evaluation by image and questionnaire. The frequency used in the process was the number of interviewees who assigned the number five to the indicator in the questionnaires, whereas in the case of images, the positions were assimilated into the five categories of the questionnaire, considering the first three as equivalent to assigning five in the questionnaires. The process was performed with the InfoStatsoftware version 2011p (Di Rienzo, et al., 2011).

For a qualitative analysis, an analysis was made not only of the ranking of the images but also of the meaning attached to them by the interviewees. This meant gaining insight into the issues that the interviewees considered relevant. This was observed because the image was often linked to something else in a narrative, as it will be explained in the following sections.

Discussion

Quantitative data analysis

The questionnaire showed internal consistency having a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.92. This implies that the subject had consistency and it was identified as relevant by the people interviewed. In a quantitative way, this justifies two issues; first, the validity of the instrument, and second, the consistency with which people provide everyday information. Table 2 shows the indicators that, according to the applied quantitative methods, have greater significance for the interviewees.It should be noted that this information is categorical and gives an indication of the aspects to which the population is sensitive. However, the quantitative method does not dwell on understanding its significance, so it needs to be supplemented with qualitative methods. An important aspect of the information shown in Table 2 is that in the short time it provides elements to guide the qualitative methods to specific indicators in which an in-depth analysis will provide further information. In the long-term, the information will address two questions: whether it is necessary to rethink how to address a specific indicator in the questionnaire and the very validity of the indicator for the population. This is particularly helpful as discrimination through qualitative methods involves a

Table2. Significant indicators based on two methods.

Indicator	Method	
	Correlation (r)	Extreme groups (Difference)
Crime	0.954	2.4
Waste	0.918	0.8
Social effects	0.898	2.6
Extinction	0.885	1.6
Soil quality	0.812	1.4
NGO involvement	0.796	2.2
Water quality	0.735	1.6
Air quality	0.722	1
Decisions in tourism	0.706	1.4
Unemployment	0.595	1.6

The quantitative method of cluster analysis was used to identify associations between indicators in order to correlate these with the categories to which different indicators are linked. In this study, the method does not identify any association of indicators, which means that people do not make a distinction of categories of the evaluated indicators. This means that the population is sensitive to what affects it but it does not use the guide of sustainability dimensions in its reasoning. However, the dimensions do not cease to be relevant to the researcher in his analytical intention since the number of social and environmental indicators in this study was almost the same (6 vs. 5). This method is particularly relevant, as in deepening in the association of indicators it allows to approach the information from the qualitative point of view with the risk of biasing the interpretation of data, since the outlook of the dimensions is implicit in the analysis of the researcher.

When using the principal component method to prioritise the indicators from the perspective of the community (Table 3), it was found that the first two components explained 80% of the variation in the values that respondents gave the indicators. Two indicators were left out: NGOs involvement and soil quality. The principal component method adds to the information on the significance of the indicators the relative importance of each of them. In this study, although NGOs involvement and soil quality are indicators present in everyday life, they do not represent issues that the community intends to address in the short term. Once again, the quantitative method is categorical in its information and it requires methods to further explain this phenomenon.

On the other hand it is observed that the prioritisation is relatively constant for the first four places (indicators), showing a greater variation in the remaining four. The contrast of the quantitative methods used gives evidence of a difference between the meaning of an indicator and its priority. Using the methods of correlation and extreme groups, it can be inferred from the homogenisation of values that the community gives to each indicator that there is enough information regarding the indicators to judge in a homogenous way, therefore referring to significance or meaning. With the method of principal components, the difference of the value given to each indicator by the respondents is understood as a point of reference to the relative importance of each indicator. In this sense, it is here inferred from the heterogeneity of respondents with respect to the indicators. The analysis of the two methods shows how consistent and stable the indicators are from the perspective of the interviewees. In this study the indicators showed stability and consistency.

Table 3. Significant indicators prioritised by the method of principal components.

Variable	Importance	Component
Crime	1	1
Waste	2	1
Extinction	3	1
Social effects	4	1
Air quality	5	2
Decisions in tourism	6	2
Water quality	7	2
Unemployment	8	2

In the case of the images, only four were identified as significant indicators for the population (Table 4). From these four, three converged with those identified through the questionnaires although it did not converge in prioritisation. Neither is it observed atendency to associate the images to the categories used in the questionnaires. Based on the order in which the images were analysed, it is observed that there is no relationship between the priority given to the image and the significance it had for respondents. This implies that, for the community, indicators refer to issues, which are identified by their constant presence in town. But in the sense of the attention that these issues require the diversity of opinions is broad. In this sense, the method used allows identifying the indicators better understood by the community, but it requires the support of qualitative analysis to understand the reasons for the difference in perception. Further, the quantitative method facilitates the prioritisation of indicators avoiding subjective tendencies.

Table 4. Significant indicators for the population from photographs based on three methods so for dering.

Image	Indicator	Process			
		Principal component	Mode without repetition of positions	Mode with repetition of positions	Adjusted
1	Unemployment	8	7	8	8
2	Extinction	4	5	5	5
3	Education	5	9	8	NS
4	Money	7	11	2	NS
5	Soil quality	2	1	12	NS
6	Decisions in tourism	1	12	1	1
7	Water quality	3	2	10	NS
8	Conservation	11	4	6	NS
9	Family	10	10	9	10
10	Tourism satisfaction	9	8	3	NS
11	Tourism 2	6	3	4	NS
12	Wildlife diversity	12	6	7	NS

* NS=Not significant

Through the contingency table it was determined(p <0.01) that the way to present an indicator (either by questionnaire or image), influences the way that people give it significance(Table 5). In general, it is observed that the evaluation through images ends to assign lower values to the indicators than through questionnaires. This can be explained by the fact that in the case of the images the indicator is analysed from the perspective of the interviewee, while in the questionnaire the indicator is the interpretation of what the researcher intended. In this sense, it could be inferred that the greater the difference between the results of the two instruments might mean that the indicator is relatively foreign to the expectations of the community. This is the case of tourism indicators that could still be assumed as an abstraction for the interviewees. A contrary case would be the indicator of air quality, which could be inferred that is fully understood and interpreted by the community.

Table 5. Contingency table on the frequency with which the indicator is considered significant for the individual.

Indicator	Interviewees who considered the indicator to be significant		
	Image	Likert	Total
Water quality	8	19	27
Soil quality	13	6	19
Air quality	4	6	10
Conservation- community awareness	15	10	25
Diversity of wildlife	4	15	19
Extinction	7	18	25
Decisions in tourism	1	19	20
Satisfaction with tourism	2	16	18
Total	54	109	163

Qualitative analysis of the photoelicitation technique:

For the photoelicitation technique, 9 of the 12 images showed something with which the interviewees may be familiar. Image 1, for example, does not only portray farming, but growing potatoes in the Nevado Park, an activity with which all ejidatarios are well acquainted. The remaining 3 of the 12 images were chosen as portraying in a generic way, the intended meaning.

In terms ranking images, results show that arranging the images in order of importance was not a straightforward process for the interviewees. An important part of the process was the meaning that each gave to the image. For example, images 3, 9 and 10 were all dismissed by 4 people. These images were intended to portray education, family and tourism. It is relevant the fact that the images chosen to portray education and family were not familiar to the interviewees. That is, they did not belong to their surroundings as the rest of the images did. Also, the fact that all interviewees were males could have some bearing in dismissing image 9 (family), the implication being that female interviewees may be more sensitive to family issues and needs.

Another factor to consider is that images 3 and 9 could have been perceived as out of context in the sense of the greater subject that was being discussed sustainable tourism in the Nevado Park. Although possible issues in the community, they were not in direct relation to the subject, nor where they introduced as such.

The images that consistently ranked higher were 1, 2, 5, 8 and 11. The intended meaning for these images was work, fauna, deforestation, trees and tourism. Among these images, the highest ranking was for trees. There could be several ways to interpret this. One is that the Nevado Park, being a wooded area, is readily identified with trees. Another reason could be that, for the last several years, government policies have tended towards the afforestation of areas such as the Nevado Park. This has included launching afforestation programmes directed to local communities. The programmes have involved paying wages to community members to plant trees on designated areas for a period of a few months at a time. Thus, a large population of trees can be perceived as important not only in terms of income, but also in terms of government discourse.

The images that consistently ranked lower were 3, 4 and 6. The intended meaning for these images was education, money or income and community, respectively. The results for image 4 help to illustrate whath as been extensively documented in the literature about participatory techniques the extent to which the answers reflect the real thoughts of the interviewee. The interviewees may have ranked this image low because they did not want to be perceived as greedy or materialistic. This can be illustrated by an experience with one interviewee. At first, he had decided to dismiss the image because, in his own words, he did not want to "appear greedy". However, through the process of accommodating the images, he reasoned that without money it was not really possible to do much. He decided to re-incorporate the image to the list but placing it in a middle ground position.

The images that were more evenly distributed throughout the ranking were 7, 10 and 12. The intended meaning for these images was water, tourism and flora respectively. It is noteworthy that image 11, also intended to portray tourism, was ranked among the highest. This suggest that from the two images chosen to portray tourism, the more familiar to them was the one with the lodge that they manage, even though this image has no visitors in it. The tourism activity seems to be important for them, since the two images were ranked high and middle ground but not low.

While the image about fauna was ranked among the highest, the image about flora was ranked in the middle ground. This seems to suggest that for the interviewees fauna is more important than flora. However, this is relative, because if image 8 (about trees) is considered as part of the flora, then flora takes importance, considering that trees was the image ranked highest of all.

In terms of the meaning attached to the image 1, it could be observed that 10 of the interviewees readily interpreted it as farming. Five expressed explicitly the idea of work. The interpretation of this image by another five went further. The key words in the meaning of these five interviewees were: erosion, afforestation, food (2) and path. As expressed earlier, farming is the immediate context of these interviewees in terms of livelihoods. However, as ejidatarios, there is a sense of ownership and knowledge-ability attached to farming. As expressed by one interviewee, this is an image of "farmers who know how to cultivate their land". Ownership in the context of ejidos not only implies the plot assigned to each ejidatario for farming but also the totality of resources comprised in the ejido given to the community. This is so especially in cases like that of the Nevado Park, where part of the ejido is woodland and, due to the decree, is not divisible but owned as a collective.

It can be said that the interpretations of this image linked to erosion and afforestation where within the context of the broader subject of the research. Erosion had been introduced in the second part of the interview with the indicators. Afforestation was also in the immediate context of the interviewees. Firstly, through afforestation projects involving community members.

Secondly, it is noteworthy that the same interviewee who linked the image to afforestation, in the first part of the interview mentioned that sustainability was afforestation.

Another image that showed some significance was that of the family. Fourteen interviewees readily identified the image as a family. However, the narrative that accompanied the identification of the family varied. For example, five of the interviewees mentioned the family in connection with the tourism activity. For some of these, the image was about families visiting the Nevado Park and the security that should be given to these families. Others interpreted it in the context of their own family visiting the Park.

From these 14 interviewees, two interpreted the image as a family but in connection with the environment. For one of them, it was about water and the benefits that families receive from having water. This could be interpreted within the context of the difficulties that some communities within and around the Nevado Park have to gain access to running water. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (2006), 89% of households have piped drinking water in the community. Despite this figure being 12% higher than the municipality level, the reality is that 11% of households do not have access to this service. This particular interviewee could fall within this 11% and thus the importance that he attaches to water in relation with the family.

For the other interviewee, the image of the family is linked to environmental education. This, he mentioned, is responsibility firstly of the parents, and secondly of the State, through the schools' curricula.

From all the images, image number 6, with the intended meaning of community, was the one that showed greatest variety of given meaning. The highest consensus was in terms of politics, with six interviewees interpreting the image along these terms. There were mentioned the unfulfilled promises of the politicians and the misuse and mismanagement of financial resources. Apart from this interpretation, the image was also interpreted as the right to free speech. Closer to the intended meaning of the image, it was interpreted as either the offices of the local government, the centre of the town or the people of the town.

This results and interpretations show that the technique of photoelicitation can aid in finding out local peoples' interests and issues within a particular subject. Although it is limiting in the sense that the images are given, it is flexible in the sense that they provide the opportunity for free narratives.

Conclusions

The research shows that the use of the photoelicitation technique in the context of sustainable tourism can be more telling of the community interests than techniques such as the Likert scale. This was evident because in the section where it was asked to rank in a Likert scale, the variation was minimum. That is, all indicators seemed equally important to the interviewees. This can be interpreted in two ways, one, all indicators were truly equally important, and two, a number was given that seemed appropriate without much consideration given to the question.

Additionally, the Likert scale does not allow for much feedback or exchange of information. The photoelicitation technique, however, invites interviewees to express their own thoughts and to elaborate on the meaning attached to the images allowing thus further insight into their views and interests.

On the other hand, the analysis of the Likert scale in a quantitative way allows validating the instrument and testing the consistency with which people provide everyday information. This was seen in the results obtained by quantitative methods such as correlation analysis, extreme groups and principal component analysis.

When combining qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis, it is possible to identify issues that are important for the respondents although the attention or priority that is given by each one of them can vary greatly. This latter point is further understood by the use of qualitative methods that help elucidating perceptions and reasons thus establishing issues priorities that reflect the interests of the local people.

Limitations of the Study

A challenge of using the photoelicitation technique is the meaning given to the images. As it could be seen by the results obtained, the intended meaning does not necessarily correspond to the meaning given by the interviewees. This could be seen as either a weakness or strength: as a weakness because the results may not give the intended outcome. As a strength because the liberty given to the interviewees in their answers can help enrich the results of the research and can allow for the emergence of issues that were not considered initially by the researcher although relevant to the community.

Additionally, the codification of results obtained can be a challenge. However, once the relevant issues are identified, these could be used as a starting point for the development of indicators that are relevant to the community and clear to identify and monitor by community members (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005). This becomes particularly relevant in the context of decentralisation where communities are made responsible for the conservation and preservation of their resources and are thus expected to monitor changes.

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Key Words

Green development,
Low-carbon tourism,
Sustainable development,
Green destination,
Evaluation index system,
Green transformation

Research on the Green Destination Development Evaluation: a Low-carbon Perspective

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Abstract

Green development is a new pattern of tourism development. Tourist attractions are the main carriers of tourism industry. How to construct them into the green destinations are the most important area and critical link in tourism green transformation. Based on a low-carbon perspective and the successful experience of the Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town East (OCT East), this research constructs an evaluation index system for green destination by using the method of Delphi, questionnaire and field survey. There are four projects, nine elements and 33 indicators determining the level of green development. The authors use the Shenzhen OCT East as an evaluation object for empirical research. They verify the applicability and operability of the evaluation index, which can provide reference for the evaluation of other green destinations. The results show that the evaluation score of the Shenzhen OCT East is 88.97. It belongs to a strong green destination and its green development has entered the mature stage. The Shenzhen OCT East gets high scores in two projects, "Ecological protection" and "Daily energy saving", especially these elements like "Ecological environment", "Energy supply system", "Tourism activities", "Green propaganda". Finally, the authors put forward some development suggestions for other green destinations by integrating the actual situation and evaluation data of the Shenzhen OCT East.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of the global financial crisis, the United Nations Environment Programme proposed "Global Green New Deal" and "Green Economy" in October 2008. It called for a global transition from "Brown Economy" to "Green Economy". The initiative of green development concept has received enthusiastic response from many countries and organizations. They put forward their own strategies and plans for green growth or green transformation. Green development is a new pattern, which regards environmental protection as an important support to achieve sustainable development. Tourism is an industry relying on the environment, but it has brought many negative impacts. It has already threatened the existence and development of itself. So the green development of tourism is in line with the trend of the times. As the pillar industry of tourism, the green transformation of tourist attractions are particularly necessary. After the China National Tourism Administration issued the "Demonstration Destination for Green Tourism" industry standards in January 2016, the tourist attractions across the country engaged actively in green transformation. Green destination will be a new trend in the future construction of tourist attraction. However, the development of green destination in China is still in the initial stage and has a low speed. What is the green destination? How to evaluate the development level of green destination? How to construct and manage the green destination? Exploring these issues are important to the green development of tourism. After sustainable tourism and ecological tourism, low-carbon tourism become a new concept in tourism areas. It has great significance to promote the transformation of tourism internal structure, improve the ecological environment and ease the pressure on global climate change, so it gets widely attentions by tourism academics (Zhao Xueru, Liu Xuemin & Cong Jianhui, 2014).Based on the perspective of low-carbon tourism, the green transformation of tourist attraction means that the existing extensive mode will be transferred to the low-carbon and environmental protection development path. This can fundamentally prevent and control the environmental pollution, then help the sustainable development of tourist attraction. This research has certain theoretical and practical meanings. The evaluation index system of green destination is a kind of evaluation tools. It can assess the development level and ability of green destination. At the same time it can also provide scientific basis for the developing strategy and measures of green destination, as a guiding role.

Literature review

In recent years, the concept of low-carbon economy and green development has been gradually understood and accepted by more people. The related research in tourism academic is also on the increase. The research on low-carbon tourism is more mature. In view of the measurements of tourism carbon emissions, they mainly research from the following two perspectives. One is based on energy terminal by using the energy consumption statistics data from the national level (Jones & Munday, 2007; Becken, 2013; Li Peng, Huang Jihua, Mo Yanfen et al., 2010; Xiao Jianhong, Yu Aifen & Wang Min, 2011). The other is based on consumption terminal by using the survey data from the perspective of carbon footprint (Becken, Simmons & Frampton, 2003; Howitt, Revol, Smith et al., 2010; Wang Qingrong & Xie Feilong, 2014).On the study about the development mode of low-carbon tourism, they mainly focused on two key words, “carbon tax” and “aviation” in tourism transportation area (Hamilton, Maddison & Tol, 2005; Tol, 2007). In tourism accommodation area, they thought about renewable energy (Gössling & Schumacher, 2010). In tourist area, they revolved around the logical line of “perception -awareness - intention”, including the perception of "tourism impacts climate change" (Becken, 2004; Weaver, 2011), the awareness of carbon emission reduction (Leiserowitz, 2006; Kellstedt, Zahran & Vedlitz, 2008), the intention to pay for emission reduction (McKercher, Prideaux, Cheung et al., 2010). They also studied about the evaluation index system of low-carbon tourism, selecting the typical low-carbon city (Li Yanrong & Li Wen, 2016), low-carbon community (Li Yanan, 2014), low-carbon scenic spot (Tan Jing, 2010; Luo Yuyan, Ge Peng, Ren Peiyu et al., 2011; Tai Yunhong, 2014; Li Hangfei, 2016).

On the study about green development of tourism, they mainly concentrated in the conception of green tourism, as well as the significance and countermeasures (Wei Min, 2011; Piao Jingyu & Wan Li, 2011; Wang Yachang, 2016). The research objects included green hotel (Yang Jianhua, 2009; Xie Jianhong & Liu Zhenming, 2012), green tourist (Berginseers & Mair, 2009), green supply chain (Wang Fen, 2010), green hotel (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2011).There were less research about green destination or the green transformation of tourist attraction. Xie Yincheng, Jing Shaoping and Tao Yuhong (2011) used green marketing concept to guide the management of tourist attraction. Wei Li (2013)analyzed the problems in the development of green logistics in the tourist attraction, and proposed countermeasures for the better development of green logistics from the perspective of the government and enterprise. Sun Hao, Wu Jin, Tang Xiaoyun et al. (2013) constructed the tourist attraction's green marketing model from tourists' perspective, drew up and carried out the green marketing on the basis of ecological environment. Peng Jing and Hu Fen (2016) analyzed the development situation and existing problems of Wuhan tourist attractions, and put forward some countermeasures and suggestions for its development. Huang Limei (2016) integrated the green shipping concept into the development of green tourism, constructed the green shipping index system of Liangzi Lake Tourist Attraction and provided some technical support for the development of the shipping industry to promote green.

In a summary, the literature of low-carbon tourism is relatively abundant, while the green development of tourism puts more emphasis on theoretical research and is still at the stage of theoretic exploration. The combination of theories and practices is not enough. At present, the research results of tourist attraction's green transition in tourism industry are less, and there is no research on the development evaluation index of green destination. The transformation and development of tourist attractions should be combined with practice. The evaluation results and the development strategies should correspond to each other, form a complete system.

Green destination means that the construction and development of a scenic spot is linked with the concept of low-carbon economy and green development, especially make some low-carbon and green transformation in the process of its management and operation. It determines that a green destination needs to be developed from internal construction and external behavior. The green destination doesn't have a uniform definition. From the perspective of low-carbon tourism, green destination not only has a low-carbon and environmental protection facilities, but also has tourism service through the concept of green development. It can not only provide tourism products with “low pollution, low energy consumption, low emissions”, but also satisfy the tourists' demand with “high quality, high experience, high efficiency”. Finally it can achieve sustainable development.

Methodology

Design of the index system

This research adopts four levels of model structure: the target layer, the project layer, the element layer and the index layer. The target layer is to evaluate the intended completion of the task. The project layer is a division of the evaluation scope and the criteria for determining the specific things. The element layer is the basic content of each project. The index layer is the final point of the evaluation index system.

This research selected the quantified and standardized indicators to constitute the evaluation index system of green destination, by searched the key words such as “green”, “low-carbon”, “environmental protection”, “energy saving”, “sustainable” from the following three aspects: (1)Reference to the construction experience of the Shenzhen OCT East, ensured the feasibility and practicality of the evaluation index system; (2) Reference to the “Green tourist attraction”, “Demonstration destination for green tourism” industry standards issued by the National Tourism Administration, ensured the authority of the evaluation index system; (3) Reference to the comprehensive evaluation index put forward by scholars in the low-carbon development evaluation literature, ensured the scientific of the evaluation index system.

Determine the evaluation indexes

In order to improve the preciseness, this research selected and revised 40 preliminary evaluation indexes through Delphi method and questionnaire survey.

(1) Delphi method

An advisory group of experts was composed that included 5 experts from Jinan University, 10 graduates of tourism management programs and 5 managers from the Shenzhen OCT East. Each of the 20 experts received a copy of the questionnaire. The experts were requested to provide his or her advice and recommendations regarding the indexes. According to the experts' opinions, some indexes were removed and revised. Finally there were 34 indicators determined.

(2) Questionnaire survey

The paper and online questionnaire were used to survey the members of the advisory group and the tourists. To signify that an index was “very important”, “relatively important”, “general”, “unimportant”, or “not important at all”, the respondents assigned a score of 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1, respectively. After collecting the questionnaires, the authors used the arithmetic mean of each index score to represent the opinions of the respondents' concentration, the variation coefficient to represent the opinions of the respondents' coordination degree. The smaller variation coefficient is, the higher the coordination of the index has.

Suppose that the i respondent assigned the j index a score X_{ij}. There were n respondents and m indexes.

$$M_j = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} X_{ij}$$

$$S_j = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n-1}\sum_{i=1}^{n}(X_{ij}-M_j)^2}$$

$$V_j = S_j / M_j \text{ (Formula 1)}$$

Where:

M_j = the arithmetic mean of j index;

S_j = the standard deviation of j index;

V_j = the variation coefficient of j index;

Determine the weights of indexes

The weight of the index is a measure of the importance to the construction of green destination. It has an important effect on the evaluation result and greatly influences the validity and scientific of the evaluation index system. This research adopted the principal component analysis (PCA) method.20 experts were asked to judge the degree of importance of each index.

$$g(i) = \sum W_i * X_i \text{ (Formula 2)}$$

Where:

W_i = the weight coefficient of the first principal component factor;

X_i = expert' score on the same index.

Used the formula $f_i = g_i \big/ \sum_{i=1}^{n} g_i$ and composed the index $f(i)$ in different levels. Then obtained the weighting set,

$$F=(f_1,\ f_2,\ldots\ldots,\ f_n)T,\ \sum_{i=1}^{n} f_i = 1$$

The evaluation model of green destination

This research adopts multi-objective linear weighted function method to establish the evaluation model of green destination. In this model, n= total number of indexes, m= total number of elements, P= total number of targets.

$$S = \sum_{h=1}^{P}\left[\sum_{j=1}^{m}\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} A_i B_j\right) C_j\right] D_h$$

(Formula 3)

Where:

S = Total score;

A_i = the score of i index;

B_j = the weight of j index;

C_j = the weight of the indexes within j element layer;

D_h= the weight of the indexes h within target layer.

The level standards of green destination

Every single index in the green destination index system reflects the green level from different aspects. According to the evaluation model mentioned above, the scores of the green destination can be calculated. The grade division of green destination does not have a uniform standard currently. This research references the "Green tourist attraction" industry standards and Huang Limei's (2016) green evaluation standards. The total green level score set to 100, and the development level of green destination can be divided into the following four levels from strong to weak (see table 1).

Tab.1 The level standards of green destination

Value range	(0, 50)	[50, 70)	[70, 90)	[90, 100]
Level	Weak green destination	General green destination	Strong green destination	Stronger green destination
Evaluation	The green development is poor and must to be improved	The green development is insufficient and needs to be enhanced	The green development is relatively good.	The green development is excellent and needs to be maintained
Stage	Initial stage	Growth stage	Mature stage	Advanced stage

An empirical analysis based on the Shenzhen OCT East

Survey of the Shenzhen OCT East

The Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town East (OCT East), located at Dameisha of Shenzhen, China, covering an area of nine square kilometers. It is the first domestic large comprehensive national ecological tourism demonstration various themes, such as relaxation, vacation, sightseeing tour, outdoor sports and science popularization education. It mainly includes six parts, namely Knight Valley Eco Park, Tea Stream Valley Holiday Park, Wind Valley Sports Park, Huaxing Temple, Theme Hotel Cluster and Tianlu Mansion, embodying the harmonious coexistence between human beings and the nature. The Shenzhen OCT East carried out a bold breakthrough in the content and form of green constructions. Its green development achievements have been affirmed, because it was selected the first batch of the 50 national green tourism experimentation area in 2010.

Under the background of advocating the development of low carbon tourism, choosing this scenic spot as a case has the significance of guiding and demonstrating the construction and development of green destination in China. Under the background of advocating the low-carbon tourism development, the Shenzhen OCT East as a case, has the significance of guidance and demonstration for the construction and development of green destinations.

Development Status of the Shenzhen OCT East

The authors analyzed and evaluated the development status of the green development in Shenzhen OCT East, by field survey and interviews with its managers and tourists in perspective of the followings: (1) Ecological protection: Making large-scale optimization, beautification and structural adjustment of the mountain area. Afforesting the exposed areas; Trying to protect the original natural resources; Establishing garbage transfer station and domestic sewage treatment station; Adopting ecological technology to purify the water quality of landscape. (2) Green energy and construction: Using a variety of green, clean energy including the project "windmill in the cloud", solar photovoltaic power station, water power station and biogas utilization system. The hotel used environmentally materials and coatings. Some landscape facilities also used a large number of vegetation and other raw materials. (3) Daily energy saving: Sidewalks used natural materials combined with the actual terrain and the environment; Using green transportation and parking lot system; Using environmentally paper and electronic billboard; Building with environmental toilets and artificial lake; Improving the value of recycling rain water by purification technology. (4) Green supporting: Putting a lot of money into green construction and development; Setting up environmental monitoring stations for the atmosphere and water quality; Publicizing green knowledge; Carrying out a series of environmental protection campaigns.

Construct the evaluation index system of green destination

After the questionnaire survey, a total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, 280 were recovered and 268 were valid. The effective rate was 89.3%, and the recovery was better. The Cronbach index was 0.907, which proved that the data was very reliable. By calculation, the arithmetic mean values of all indexes were above 3, indicating the importance of the indexes was identified by the respondents. The variation coefficient of all indexes were between 0 and 0.25, indicating the high degree of coordination and the index system was feasible.

In Table 2, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic were greater than 0.5 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were significant ($0.000 < 0.01$) for all dimensions. So the data were suitable for Factor Analysis.

The factor loadings of each indexes in “Ecological protection”, “Green energy and construction”, “Daily energy saving”, this three dimensions were greater than 0.5. It showed that the various components of the original index has more significant correlation, factor analysis on the common extraction results are more satisfactory. But in the “Green supporting” dimension, the factor loading of the “Compile special green protection plan” index was lower than 0.5. Therefore, the factor analysis was carried out again without this index. At last, it showed that all the original index has more significant correlation, and the results

Tab.2 The results of KMO and Bartlett test

Dimension	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Sig.)
Ecological protection	.665	.000
Green energy and construction	.742	.000
Daily energy saving	.755	.000
Green supporting	.748	.000

The authors checked the reliability of each dimension and found that the scale reliability was acceptable. Each factor was named. After adjusting the indexes through factor analysis, the index system of green destination was constructed. It included “Ecological protection”, “Green energy and construction”, “Daily energy saving” and “Green supporting” this four projects, with nine elements and 33 indicators (see Table 4).

Then the authors collected the 20 experts' scores and get the weight coefficient of first principal component factor (see Table 3). Then Substitute the data into the formula 2.Thus was obtained the weight of each index (see Table 4).

Tab.3 The weight coefficient of the first principal component factor ( )

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Weight	0.399	0.295	0.335	0.348	0.349	0.206	0.195	0.394	0.307
1.Ecological environment 2.Waste disposal 3.Construction energy sa ving 4.Energy s upply system 5.Tourism activities 6.Water sa ving 7.Disposable goods 8.Green propaganda 9.Construction guarantee									

Tab.4 The index system of green destination

Target layer	Project layer (Weight)	Element layer (Weight)	Index layer	Weight
evaluation index system for green destination	Ecological protection (0.237)	Ecological environment (0.179)	1 Bio-diversity	0.036
			2 Vegetation coverage rate	0.038
			3 Protect the original landscape ecology	0.036
			4 Air quality	0.033
			5 Surface water environment quality	0.036
		Waste disposal (0.058)	6 Recycling of solid waste	0.029
			7 Wastewater treatment	0.029
	Green energy and construction (0.233)	Construction energy saving (0.106)	8 Use the building ventilation system to adjust the temperature	0.029
			9 The indoor lighting is good	0.028
			10Use localized building materials	0.031
			11Use recycled building materials	0.018
		Energy supply system (0.127)	12Energy resources recycling	0.031
			13 Utilization rate of renewable clean energy	0.033
			14Using innovative energy storage technologies	0.033
			15Utilization ratio of energy -saving appliances	0.030
	Daily energy saving (0.320)	Tourism activities (0.247)	16Ecological construction of touristfootpath	0.032
			17 Ecological guidance signs	0.030
			18Construction of ecological parking lot	0.032
			19 Proportion of green food used	0.029
			20 Green transportation	0.034
			21The use of high energy entertainment facilities	0.030
			22 Packaging of environmentally friendly materials for tourist commodities	0.033
			23 Providing temporary accommodation	0.027

		Water saving (0.037)	24 Utilization rate of water saving facilities	0.019
			25Setting up rainwater storage system	0.018
		Disposable goods (0.036)	26 Proportion of disposable tableware used	0.018
			27 Proportion of disposable articles used in hotels	0.018
	Green supporting (0.210)	Green propaganda (0.152)	28Green knowledge training for employees	0.038
			29 Green propaganda and education for visitors	0.038
			30 Green support from l ocal government	0.039
			31 Green propaganda and education for local residents	0.037
		Construction guarantee (0.058)	32 Revenue is invested in green construction	0.029
			33 Establish a green environmental monitoring mechanism	0.029

Analysis the weight of the evaluation indexes

According to Table 4, the impact of four projects is followed by: daily energy saving>ecological protection >green energy and construction >green supporting. This indicates that the green destination should pay more attention to the green development of "daily energy saving". In the elements layer, "tourism activities" hasthe highest weight, followed by "ecological environment". The weight of "construction energy saving", "energy supply system" and"green propaganda" are also higher. Thus, these elements should be given high priority in the process of developing green destination. In the index layer, "green support from local government" has the highest weight, which shows that government plays a very important role in promoting green development. The weight of "green knowledge training for employees", "green propaganda and education for visitors" and "green propaganda and education for local residents" are relatively high. It shows that the development of green destination requires the joint efforts from tourists, government, residents and employees.

The authors asked 20 experts to score the green degree of the Shenzhen OCT East, taking the arithmetic mean of each index score (see Table 5).

Final score = Actual score * Weight (Formula 4）

According to Table 1 and Table 5, the evaluation score of the Shenzhen OCT East is 88.97. It belongs to a strong green destination and its green development has entered the mature stage. The evaluation results showed that the system has certain operability and applicability, which can provide the decision-making basis for the evaluation of other green destinations.

Tab.5 The green rating score of the Shenzhen OCT East

Project layer	Final score	Element layer	Final score
Ecological protection	21.34	Ecological environment	15.98
		Waste disposal	5.36
Green energy and construction	20.62	Construction energy saying	9.40
		Energy supply system	11.22
Daily energy saving	27.63	Tourism activities	20.75
		Water saying	3.57
		Disposable goods	3.31
Green supporting	19.38	Green propaganda	13.93
		Construction guarantee	5.45
Total score	88.97		

Suggestions for the development of green destinations

According to the survey of the Shenzhen OCT East, it has basically reached the requirements of green destination. For example, “ecological environment”, “construction energy saving”, “energy supply system”, “tourism activities” and“green propaganda” have outstanding performance. But meanwhile, according to the green destination index system built by this research, the Shenzhen OCT East also has some areas that needs further improvement. Based on the actual situation and evaluation data of the Shenzhen OCT East, the following development proposals are put forward for other tourist attractions.

(1) Strengthen natural barriers and control pollution emissions

The project “ecological protection”is ranked second and the element “ecological environment” occupies 0.179. It means the green destination should attach importance to ecological environment, with proper redistribution and strength in greening. Provide a natural ecological filter for tourist attraction through the direct purification of green space, wetland and water. It can absorb large amount of carbon dioxide and reduce carbon emissions effectively. Solve the sewage and waste discharge through the garbage transfer station and sewage treatment station at the same time.

(2) Reduce energy consumption and recycle resources

Both the element“construction energy” and “energy supply system”have relatively large weight, which are 0.106 and 0.127. Green destination should consider environmental protection material, renewable energy and clean energy in the planning stage. For the tourist attractions which were already built, they have to put the appropriate research and funding for green transformation. Reduce energy consumption and waste emissions by using new energy sources, such as wind energy, solar energy and bio energy. Pay attention to the recycling of resources. Purification environment and recovery energy must be combined organically.

(3) Live a low-carbon life

The project “daily energy saving” is ranked first, especially the element “tourism activities”. It has the maximum weight of 0.247 in 9 elements. There are a lot of carbon emissions in the various stages of tourism. Without reducing the tourist experience, green destinations should develop their own green tourism products with the standard of energy saving and sustainable development. Green concept should be put into daily business maintenance and practical action.

(4) Advertise green education and protect green development

The tourism industry contains many stakeholders. To promote the green development of green destination, it is essential to rely on the extensive participation and cooperation among local governments, local residents, employees in tourist destination and tourists. Their green awareness is a solid foundation for green development in tourist destination. Therefore, "green propaganda" plays an important role. Not only the employees should be trained but also the tourists and local residents should be educated. Besides, green destination should build up and improve their monitoring network system, and conduct environmental monitoring regularly. Special funds should be set up as "green saving" for equipment purchase, maintenance, personnel training and ecological improvement.

Conclusion

China's tourism industry is facing the global climate change, and the low-carbon tourism has shown great vitality. The construction and development of green destination is a long-term and complex task. It is the inevitable trend of the coordinated development with society economy and environment. Compared with the existing literatures, this research has a more abundant source of indicators. In the previous researches, the indicators were most based on the existing index systems. This research also refers to the successful construction experience of the Shenzhen OCT East, and the “Green tourist attraction”, “Demonstration destination for green tourism” industry standards issued by the National Tourism Administration. It makes the evaluation index system more feasible, practical and authoritative. In the past, the scholars had conducted the comprehensive and untargeted researches on the evaluation of ordinary tourist attractions. But in this research, the indicators are around the concept of low-carbon economy and green development. They are selected to reflect the green transformation situation in the green destination as much as possible. This system includes“Ecological protection”, “Green energy and construction”, “Daily energy saving” and “Green supporting” this four projects, with nine elements and 33 indicators. Finally the authors use the Shenzhen OCT East as an evaluation object for empirical research. The applicability and operability of the evaluation index is verified. The results show that the evaluation score of the Shenzhen OCT East is 88.97. It belongs to a strong green destination and its green development has entered the mature stage. It can provide reference for the construction and development of other green destinations.

Green development is a new standard in tourism field. The theory and evaluation technology of green destination is a basic work with complex content and broad range. With the development of the times, there will be many new technologies and new development concepts in the construction of tourist attraction. Therefore, it is necessary to revise the evaluation system and improve the evaluation standards according to the actual situation. Although some achievements have been made in this research, there are still many shortcomings due to the authors' theoretical level, as well as the limitations of time, energy and data. The following two aspects can be studied in depth: (1) According to the existing research results, the standard of measurement in this research can be further studied in the future with the help of new concepts and methods. (2) This research mainly focuses on sorting the importance of each index. In order to further improve the evaluation system and development countermeasures, we can add the investment analysis of each index.

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Acknowledgment

This study was sponsored by the Higher Education and Teaching Reform Project of Guangdong Province in 2016.

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Key Words

Tourism, sport, passion, profession

Making a job out of your passion: when sports people become entrepreneurs in the Tourism Industry

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Abstract

In the second half of the 20th century, companies in the non-profit sector have met important changes in the way they operate, which is putting their sustainability at risk. The leisure sector, an area that was initially and predominantly non-profit and voluntary, has progressively changed towards private entrepreneurial structures, particularly in the tourism areas.

Based on interviews and ethnographic observations carried out in a rural region of the south of France, this study takes an interest in the careers of the business managers of outdoor sports activity companies, and more specifically in the process of converting an amateur activity, considered to be a passion into a profession in tourism activity.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism represents 6.7% of French GDP and France was the leading tourist destination in 2007 with 82 million foreign tourists (www.tourisme.gouv.fr). Therefore, tourism has a predominant place in both the national and world economy. In this sector, where service activities represent more than 70% of employment, sports related services are more and more in demand. In 2007, the demand for goods and sport services have increased by 3.8% compared to 2006 (http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?ref_id=NATnon08126). In particular, outdoor sports activities made up of structures offering sports leisure activities such as climbing and canyoning is a fast growing sector. Service providers and the natural facilities are ever increasing (Anthony, 1966 ; Beioley, Crookston & Tyrer, 1988 ; Melo & Gomes, 2017). More than 30 million French people practice these outdoor sports activities, which are therefore an attraction pool for rural zones (20% of consumption related to the tourist industry is linked to rural areas) and are furthermore an essential component of land development. These outdoor sports practices represent an important activity pool, generating goods and services and employment whilst consolidating the development of the territories (CNAPS Report 2002:21).

This article aims to comprehend the construction of the skill set necessary to fulfil the role of a business executive in the sports tourism field. The passionate aspect of these activities does not "reconcile easily with the market economy". We will take a further interest in the practical details of the conversion of the passion into profession; a process often takes place at numerous fields Gibson, 2006 ; Melo & Gomes, 2017).

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

Most companies in this sector are small (less than 50 employees) and are defined by the central role of their executives (Gibson, 2006; Bouhaouala, 2008). 75 % of these executives hold four or more functions in their respective companies such as sales, administration, oversight and organisation (http://www.sportsdenature.gouv.fr/docs/superdoc/presentation_etude-massif-central.pdf). Thus, these executives steer the development of small businesses and play a determining role in the strategic choices (Bouhaouala, 2008). In a context where commitment and the maintenance of jobs related to outdoor sports activities are perceived by the individuals as the fulfilment of a "vocation" (Chevalier, 2003: creating a company gives them the possibility to transform "their passion into a profession" (Chevalier, Dussart, 2002: 461). Most executives of these companies have indeed been active amateurs before looking to become professional and teach their "passion". This has been frequently cited as their motivation for becoming professional in this sector. We define passion as: the interest that a group of protaganists have for sports, nature and the pleasure they get out of it. Passion therefore distinguishes itself by its subjective aspect meaning the importance and the feelings that they have. This subjective aspect is identifiable in the view of the protaganists and can be identified in their behaviour (Bouhaouala, and chifflet 2001).

However, these companies are experiencing difficulties in expanding. Reveret (2004) notably mentions the "fractured structure of these actors", the "small size and financial precarity of these geographically dispersed structures" and the "ability of these actors stemming from a sports and tourist background to mix". Furthermore, according to an INSEE investigation based upon Database Sirene and Sine study generation 2002 and 1998 entrepreneurs in rural zones encountered difficulties in setting up their businesses in particular when it comes to administrational formalities. These difficulties are linked to the professionalization of the leisure industry: a space formerly made up of voluntary associations and volunteer workers transitioning towards private businesses.

In order to promote the structuring and development of this field, one of the objectives would be to improve the definition of the skills and qualifications necessary to supervise these activities and to administrate businesses characterised by their varied activities:

To better define the skills necessary for these practices would be beneficial both socially and economically, since this would enable models to be suitably adapted to the people and the territories and therefore promote its development (Baconnier Savy, 2004).

In order to understand the difficulties in developing small businesses working in outdoor sports and leisure activities, the 'career' of the professional was studied in this field. Most of these business managers have been practicing in the field before becoming actors on their way by creating their businesses. We cannot therefore address the professional career of these managers without taking into account their amateur practices. One cannot understand the practice and identification of oneself with one's work, if the person concern doesn't involve himself into relation with their past or ongoing amateur careers" (Chevalier, Le Mancq, Simonet, 2011). More precisely, resorting to the notion of career allows us to consider the diachronic as well as the synchronic aspects of the professionals' career paths and to measure the effects of certain irreversibilities (Zalio, 2007:64) on these and on the development of small businesses. We will be looking into the objective changes in the positioning of individuals (matching their professional characteristics), and subjective changes (related to their social characteristics) that they carry out or are submitted to (Hughes, 1990). Indeed these often go through phases marked by interruptions.

Moreover, the actors experience every sequence differently and can take over several social scenes simultaneously. The concept of career will therefore permit us to see simultaneously the procedural aspect of practices in their subjective and objective dimensions and the way that each of these worlds offers various positions that are applied differently depending on the resources of the people involved (Chevalier, Le Mancq, Simonet, 2011).

By using socialization processes, meaning learning from every social context experienced the individuals incorporate what are known as 'dispositions' (Lahire, 1998). These dispositions refer to the way of being, the way of doing, and the way of seeing the world, the inclinations to act in a specific way or to feel a specific thing. (Darmon, 2006). These can be activated or inhibited depending on the social context and are relative to past interactions. According to Lahire (2001 :79-80), there is indeed:

"a complex mechanism of being on standby or activation, or of inhibition/ activation of dispositions suggesting that each individual carries a plurality of dispositions and encounters a plurality of social contexts".

The concept of career enables us to show that it is these very social interactions that are responsible for the change in dispositions that favour advancing from one step onto the next in one's career.

3. Empirical setting and Research Methodology

The data has been collected in the department of Aveyron (France), Aveyron is a predominantly rural area (half of the population lives in the countryside) and it is very rich in outdoor sports and leisure activities in terms of businesses and employment. The Aveyron department has 700 employees and 200 companies representing 25 % of the outdoor sports leisure activities in the Midi-Pyrénées region. We have conducted forty-five qualitative interviews of an hour and a half in average. Thirty five of these were with business managers and ten were with employees. These employees have full-time or seasonal work in this field and might set up their own businesses in near future. In order to comply with the request from the Conseil Général de l'Aveyron, we have investigated business structures offering supervised or guided activities such as canoeing, kayaking, climbing, Via Ferrata, canyoning, caving, paragliding and hiking in the mountains. The essential data of the thirty-five interviewees collected were the creation date, the legal entity type and the turnover of their businesses in addition to the type of training they have had and their predominant sports activities.

Our sample includes only one female business manager. Outdoor sports activities have been largely dominated by men, however more and more women now have been involved by (Bessy, Naria, 2004 Gibson, 2006).

The methodology for our interviews resembled the telling of 'life stories'. The aim was to get the interviewees to tell their own experiences, particularly about certain periods in their lives: their commitment to their amateur careers, their various training periods and their career path from their jobs as instructors to the setting up and running of their own businesses. Moreover, the process was to extract their experiences in their social lives, information, descriptions and paths to follow was order to understand how it works and the internal dynamics (Bertaux, 1997).

Furthermore, these interviews have been supplemented by ethnographic observations so as to better comprehend the dispositions of the professionals. We have observed approximately ten guided activities in canyoning, climbing and caving for an average time of three hours. This has been done because the practice of these activities cannot be fully understood solely by listening to the accounts of the interviewees. We have therefore aimed to spot the behaviour and the attitude as well as the practice that indicates more general dispositions.

4. Results and discussion

This research shows that the careers of business managers in the outdoor sports and leisure activity industry are characterised firstly by acquiring and promoting sports dispositions linked to supervising activities: *"The passion for a sport, art or craft often leads one to combine passion and business. However, for the dream to come true, skills are essential. Thus, the persons' sports skills are the foundations for organizing their business" (Gerbaux, 1997 : 26).*

A great majority of the interviewed business managers have practiced an outdoor sports activity before creating their businesses. Starting with their amateur practice, some of these managers slowly became professionals in their respective fields and becoming instructors enabled them to turn their passion into a profession (Chevalier, 2003). They acquired expertise by supervising others during training sessions in sports institutions such as the clubs with which they were associated as members.

Following this, it seems necessary to change one's own sports dispositions or put them on standby in order to create their own small sustainable sports and leisure business. According to the interviewees a company remains sustainable when it enables its founder not to have another side by work. Due to having more network and attending various functions in the business, a decrease in the time spent practicing one's own sport is therefore an unavoidable consequence and it can even lead to dropping the personal practice of the sport entirely. The data collected during the interviews from employees, young business entrepreneurs and more established business managers show that this step can be defined by elaborating on a reflexive disposition and/or a more commercial representation of outdoor sports and leisure activities enabling the managers to adapt to their professional environment and to revitalise their businesses. They developed new social networks, which enables the creation of new sports services and equipment better adapted to the needs of the users.

4.1. Pursuing an amateur career in outdoor sport activities from competitions to 'self-organised activities

Becoming the head of a small sports tourism company seems to involve the fact that one has been practicing outdoor sport activities individually. All interviewed business managers have indeed been members of sports institutions at some point in their career. Sports people have extremely heterogeneous and entangled expectations (Bessy, Naria, 2004; Gibson, 2006; Melo & Gomes, 2017) and do not perceive the outdoor activities in the same way. They therefore adopt different ways of practicing, which reflect individual ways of socialisation. In particular, certain sports people have started orientating themselves towards federal sport and competitions, where as others have preferred 'self-organised' activities (Melo & Gomes, op. cit.) and have integrated the federal arena later.

On the one hand, seven out of the forty-five business managers who were interviewed were sports people motivated by competition. Through regular practice-programmed training sessions leading to competitions- they have acquired a strong taste for success and self-transcendence, aiming for 'performance and victory orientated efficiency' and setting up 'a functional attitude regarding rules' (Long, Pantaléon, 2007). In particular, Y, a former Kayak competitor, insists on the necessity, which he felt during downhill competitions to achieve the best time possible by not stopping for the difficult parts and giving 'his upmost'. Y is now at the head of a sports tourism company working eight months per year with a turnover of approximately €100,000.

The sports people have joined clubs relatively a little earlier early on and they have previously done more conventional sports activities such as swimming and gymnastics. They have experienced a deep socialisation through competitive sports within their families: their parents or their grandparents, who were former competitors of such sports activities enticed them at an early age to competitively commit to their activities. Therefore, the sports people have access to a 'sphere of specialised social participation' (Lafabregue, 2005) within their sports institutions: these institutions are instances of special socialisation within which such individuals develop new social relationships and build their sports commitment due to specific interactions. In particular, they progressively learn 'social facts and notably the functioning of the institutions' and its underlying values (Long & Pantaléon, 2007). On the other hand, our data highlights a profile of sports people who integrated the federal arena quite late for fear of time and space constraints and preferred self-organisation. They are club members by necessity in particular to have access to costly material or training- mostly between the ages of 16 and 18. In the most extreme cases they rejected sports institutions and sometimes even the school system. In the most radical cases, their dispositions could almost be considered as 'anti-institutional', since they can reflect a rejection of the organisation of time, spaces, hierarchy and consumerism. On the contrary, they valued pleasure and freedom and look for a better quality of life. Some of these sports people have had family related socialisation leading to a special link with nature, notably because their parents worked in that domain, mostly in agriculture. They started their sports activities in order to 'discover nature'. For others, it is useful to note the importance of what we could call 'territorial' socialisation. The majority of the business managers (38) were from rural backgrounds, with a wealth of outdoor sports activity sites. Growing up in a region where a cultural and environmental heritage is important can lead to the practice of outdoor physical activities, as is the case with C, who comes from a rural region surrounded by 'limestone mountains' and caves. The person concern quickly started to 'yomp around' and to 'hike'. The interactions with more experienced sports people and federal instructors are mentioned as being very structuring whether they join the federal arena early or later. Such more experienced practitioners encourage the others, with whom they were very friendly, to get federal training, diplomas, and to become instructors among themselves. In contrast to those preferring self-organisation, those leaning towards competition and performance didn't wish to make a living from instructing; this would be felt as 'a drain' and as repetitive and would not meet their thrill-seeking desires. Most of the time it was just a 'summer job' (Gibson, 2006 ; Weed, 2008 ; Melo & Gomes, 2017).

The family related socialisations, territorial socialisations and those experienced within sports institutions, generate particular dispositions relative to outdoor sports activities: from incorporating anti-institutional dispositions, to incorporating organisational norms for the practitioners who joined the federal arena at a young age; dispositions influencing thereafter the creation and development of companies.

4.2. Supervision of outdoor sports activities as a promotion of essentially sporty dispositions

Turning your passion into a profession and becoming a sports instructor.

Being generally not interested by their 'main curriculum' (Hughes, 1990; Chevalier, 2003) (failing in school, absence of a professional goal, etc.), some sports people, in particular those preferring 'self organisation', will give priority to their leisure activities: Their commitment as amateurs gives them an identity affirmation that they are hard pressed to find in their main curriculum (Chevalier, 2003).

They obtain one or several instructor diplomas giving them more freedom in the supervision of others. Their main function is the supervision of outdoor sports activities, but they also have other tasks such as secretarial work and the marketing and promotion of the company as E, currently an employee of an association, pointed out that she brought up her professional activities and stated,

"Everybody does a little bit of everything, even those with instructor diplomas have to prepare a quote or answer the phone or welcome clients from time to time".

Their training leads to an 'educational' representation of outdoor sports activities. In the second half of the twentieth century the sports world had led to the creation of training institutions that offered state and federal diplomas. These institutions give more importance to teaching the sport itself rather then the commercialisation of it in the market sector (Terral, 2003; Weed, 2008; Melo & Gomes, 2017). For example, according to J (business manager n°14), supervising other sports activities allows him to 'pass on something that you love' whilst 'having a certain quality of life: you do what you like'.

Having obtained their diplomas, the business managers started out as instructors, mostly on a seasonal basis within companies offering outdoor sports activities. In order to meet demand, these companies employ seasonal workers. This often happens through social relationships. These seasonal workers are indeed former members of sports clubs when they are working for an association they got the job through employees or former employees that they know.

Anticipating their career plan

According to Grossetti and Barthe (2008), setting up a company is 'a solution amongst others for someone in an unstable situation or even with his back to the wall'. However, for others wishing to work in the outdoor activity sector, the creation of such a structure seems to be a 'well thought out' professional project. These people have had higher education in relation to the creation and development of an outdoor sports company (certain interviewees for example hold a STAPS (French university course of study titled 'Sciences et Techniques des Activités Physiques et Sportives') diploma), and hold several sports related diplomas giving them prerogatives with regards to training in several sports activities (revealing a wish to diversify). They have prepared their professional future and set up companies. According to our data, all individuals completed university education were enthusiasts of competitions and joined sports clubs.

Enrolling in higher education and in particular in STAPS, contributes to an educational representation of outdoor activities in the same way as federal or state sanctioned training, programmes are helpful to foster the building of 'an approach of thought and action' (Terral, Collinet, 2007) and can involved the opportunity to prepare their professional career project and the creation of a company. According to Leroux, Haschar-Noé, Le Roux et Gojard (2010), the value of the training is in the 'ability to analyse problems in professional situations' and they help to acquire 'a way of thinking that the students reuse in order to theorise their local action context' (Terral, Collinet, 2007). Higher education takes more time, is more specialised and theorised, and therefore helps like certain other professional experiences, to structure the representation that the participants have of outdoor sports activities from a representation centred on teaching outdoor sports activities to a representation more centred on the functioning of sports organisations (Gibson, 2006 ; Weed, 2008). R, who used to practice athletics and caving, is the head of a small individual company created in 2006. In 2008 he hired a salesperson and now recruits 5-10 sports instructors during summer season. R has a Masters in 'Management of Sports Organisations' (STAPS). Talking about his training, he pointed out the thought process that he acquired and stated:

"I made the link between theory and practice. The theory has helped me with the practical side of things, for example when dealing with business relationships that have to be made because 50% of it is the relationship with the clients, some owners and potential partners. I think that the reasoning we are taught at university is important for marketing and information gathering for example. Even with the Internet today, you have to find the information and organise it in order to create a project and sell it. (....) We are more efficient in information gathering" (business manager n°18).

4.3. Creating a sports tourism company: from an educational representation to a more commercial reasoning

The educational representation of outdoor sports activities as an obstacle to developing companies

The 'educational' participants, having turned their 'passion into a profession' early on by obtaining sports diplomas and becoming instructors, sometimes have no other choice but to create a company to continue their career. They find themselves in unstable situations before the creation, either because they did not get full-time jobs or because the company for which they worked closed down definitively. The most common situation of creation is characterised by a partnership with the structure that they used to work for seasonally beforehand. These structures choose to subcontract their activities to independent workers in order to benefit from lower employment costs. Thus, these professionals gain access to an independent work status.

For the most part, such structures belong to individual companies that offer sports training and coaching. They do not last long and function on a seasonal basis (about two months per year) and have very little structure: the business managers 'are one with the company'; 'the company is not organised by functions: the head of the business can do either through management or operational tasks' (Paget, Mounet, Guilhon, 2007). S, for example, set up his individual company in 2007. He offers various supervised climbing activities and Via Ferrata. First climbing on his own, then becoming an instructor, he abandoned his main studies with the consent of his parents and decided very quickly to become a professional in the outdoor sports activities sector. As soon as he had his diplomas he was employed by company 'A' seasonally for 6 years. In 2001, the head of this company strongly advised S to create his own individual company whilst 'promising' to use him for the next few seasons to supervise climbing. S then created his individual company and has supervised climbing activities for company 'A' for 3 years, but only seasonally. During the off-season, he was employed by the climbing club of the neighbouring town. As he says himself, this 'allows him to have enough money to pay the bills'. During the interview S pointed out that he would like to prolong the working season of his company but failed to succeed.

In addition, our data shows that most of these structures are very recent and do not continue for long (Weed, 2008 ; Melo & Gomes, 2017). Most entrepreneurs that are not able to develop their companies, which generate relatively little turnover, have a secondary activity during winter often sports teaching related in order to 'survive'.

The main function of these business managers is the supervision of activities. Only rarely do they look after marketing and administrative tasks or the organisation of their companies. The interviewees have mentioned difficulties concerning these tasks specifically regarding research into new partnerships and new clients; the techniques used essentially being based on direct contact with clients ('word to mouth') and the networking around 'sportspeople' and they are also very 'localised' ('nearby campsites'). These professionals are not seeking financial profit and, just as in the fair trade economy (Boncler, 2002; Gibson, 2006), they have difficulties in operation. Two of the interviewed professionals have since closed their companies for good and they are now working in another sector.

Working towards a more 'commercial' reasoning of outdoor sports activities: creating sustainable tourist companies

Companies created by the 'reflexive' participants are more sustainable and 'tourism orientated': the entrepreneurs put together 'tourist packages' (Paget, Mounet, Guilhon, 2007 : 4). Several types of activities are offered in order to diversify the service: including various sports activities, but also providing food and accommodation (mostly through partnerships). The entrepreneurs try to target different types of clients whether its individuals, school tours, families or works councils-, and adapt the services on offer. Some of them sell and repair sports equipment, others offer packages for works councils, others propose field trips for schools, including sports activities and food and lodging, thus making the organisation of field trips easier for schools.

The business managers therefore subcontract their services by recruiting seasonal staff, independent workers or by creating partnerships. Sub-contracting sports activities to independent workers enables companies to reduce their labour costs. In doing this, they are developing their social network in a strategic and conscious manner beyond the sports sphere aiming to increase the number of their partnerships and their resources: formal and informal partnerships are established with hosts, caterers, local communities, school camps and works councils. They will also make use of their personal relationships in order to overcome certain difficulties. In some cases family members, and in particular spouses, who are predominantly women, are hired. Most of the time these structures work 6-8 months per year allowing their business managers to focus entirely on them.

Their functions reside essentially in organising, recruiting, administrating human resources, and the marketing and setting up of new products. Unlike the careers in the horse-riding sector (Chevalier, 2011), the entrepreneurs have distanced themselves from the sports practice in order to run their companies. Most of them no longer practice their sports during their free time. These results are in accordance with the study of Leroux, Hashar-Noé, Le Roux et Gojard (2010) regarding the former students of STAPS. Throughout their course, the STAPS students distance themselves from their 'passionate rapport with sports:

"… distance themselves from their sports and physical capital, considering that it has had a positive effect on their professional insertion, but that the sports network has not been a determining element in this insertion" (Leroux, Hashar-Noé, Le Roux et Gojard, 2010).

In 1996 'V' created a structure, offering multiple supervised activities. It was operating for eight months generating a turnover of €250,000. 'V' quickly hired a person in charge of promoting these activities. He also hired his wife to take care of the administrative tasks. He was a climber and then became an instructor for a company in Aveyron, 'V' completed a Master degree in the Management of Sports Organisations (STAPS). He then decided to create his own structure in order to offer his own products such as stays for schools and works councils. He works with several regional organisations.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

In certain cases those who practice physical outdoor sports activities are changed from the status of a 'consumer' of leisure activities to that of a 'provider'

(Bouhaouala, 2001 ; Melo & Gomes, 2017). Thus, they become instructors, and then business managers of small sports tourism companies and their dispositions have a direct influence on the dynamic of these structures. The sustainability of these small structures relies upon the 'professionalization' of the dispositions of the business managers and also on their social network. Admittedly, the 'amateur' practice can be a 'lever' for the professional career. However, in the interests of the company, the dispositions must be diversified beyond the sports sphere. Incidentally, we have observed that the amateur career is gradually abandoned by the actors during the elaboration of the commercial reasoning of an outdoor sports activity. To be more precise, the professionals develop a more reflexive and intellectualised rapport with sport.

'Turning your passion into a profession' by creating and developing a company presumes that the business managers come to the tourism sector and business administration by including various dispositions insufficiently built during sports socialisation. The professionals have to adapt to new functions inherent to being an entrepreneur. As Bouhaouala (2001) points out, the sustainability of companies is 'an indicator of the ability of the supervisors to integrate contradictory elements (economical and emotional) into their behaviour and professional strategy. These actors are more likely to adopt a way of thinking and acting that contributes to the development of a sports tourism company when they have had higher education. The acquired dispositions in the 'sports' phases of their career do not change radically nor do they change in their entirety. The business managers rather learn to make various dispositions coexist that stem from their participation in different social scenes. The development of these actors in their professional careers leads them to build dispositions that they learn to enable or inhibit simultaneously depending on the context and their objectives.

Thus, the professionalization of sports tourism (and on a larger scale the non-profit sector), which is translated by 'the collective demarcation and institutionalization of occupational practices' (Noordegraaf, 2011), is the reason for different views about activities having to coexist ; which leads to tensions between amateurs and professionals.

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Heritage Tourism and Its Determinants in Himachal Pradesh

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Introduction: This article describes the outcome of my Ph.D thesis devoted to assess the opinion of both tourists and stakeholders towards existing heritage based tourism products and future tourism development in Himachal State (HP). Preserving heritage for education and entertainment and utilizing such preservation with the help of creative industries towards tourism development is the focal point of discussion in the thesis. Campanella, (2013) asserts that heritage might be understood as a physical 'object', a piece of property, a building or a place that is able to be 'owned' and 'passed on' to someone else. HP referred as 'Dev Bhoomi' or 'Land of Gods' was formed on Jan 25, 1971 and has a total area of 55,673 square kms. The state shares its borders with Jammu and Kashmir on the North, Punjab on the West, Uttar Pradesh on the South and Uttaranchal on the East. The state is 355 kms from Delhi- the capital of India. According to Economic Survey report of 2016-17, the annual tourist arrival to the state crossed 18 million and its contribution was approximately 7% of the State Gross Domestic Product. There are around 2,604 hotel properties with total bed capacity of 70,869 registered with the state tourism department. The state has been meticulously planned and is famous for its distinctive monuments, royal buildings, rock inscriptions, temples, Buddhist monasteries, gompas, lakes, and other rich cultural attractions. Beside these cultural assets, the distinct natural features like pleasant weather, snow covered mountain peaks, biodiversity, valleys, mountain passes, lakes, springs, waterfalls and river system enhance the natural heritage of the state. In view of this 20 historic sites were surveyed representing four districts named Chamba, Kangra, Kullu and Shimla. According to Puranic legends, it is said that 'Pandvas' (five brothers) of the 'Mahabharta' explored the hills of Himachal Pradesh while in exile. It is further supported by the historic remains of Pabbar valley as there are many temples

that belong to the Pandavas and some of significant ones are; Pandva temple at Masale village located on the bank of Pabbar river representing five wooden images of Pandvas, Hadimba temple in Kullu dedicated to goddess Hadimba. It is also believed that during the time of Pandavas exile in the Himalaya, they travelled extensively in Kullu valley and remained undisclosed to the world and passed their much time in Sangla valley of Kinnaur district. Similarly places along the river Satluj such as Tattapani, Nerath and Nirmand are associated with the legendary saint Parshuram and his father Jagdambni. The famous tourist place Renuka lake near Nahan is named after Parshumram's mother Renuka. It is said that Parshuram was the contemporary of Lord Rama and his antiquity goes back to the Treta Yug falling somewhere 5000 BC. However archeological evidences record the antiquity of Lord Rama not before 1700 BC. Manali- another hill station of HP is named after sage 'Manu' who according to legendary sources is treated as the first person in the universe. Bilaspur district of HP is named after sage Ved Vyas, the composer of the Mahabharata Epic who is believed to have lived here around 2nd century BC. in the remote past. One of the artistically rich 'Sun Temple' of Northern India one can see at Nerath village near Rampur town in Shimla. The accounts of famous Chinese traveler 'Hiuen Tsang' who travelled Kullu and Spiti valley in 7th cnetuary AD described about the trade being operated by the contemporary people with Tibet. The emperor 'Akbar'(1556-1605) is believed to have visited the holy shrine of 'Shri Jwalamukhi' while emperor 'Jahangir' visited Kangra valley in 1622 along with his wife 'Nur Jahan'. The town 'Nurpur' in district headquarter of Kangra is named after Nur Jahan. Tower temples of Karsog Valley in district Mandi are the glorious examples of indigenous wood-stone architecture. A couple of sacred lakes like Kamrunag, Lamadal and Manimahesh are the true examples of authenticity and faith of people towards these temples.

Review of Literature: In the modern era the innovative reasons to travel includes pleasure, relaxation, enjoyment, health, education, love, curiosity and other motives. However, Timothy, (2011) indicated the pilgrimage as an earliest form of heritage tourism in which the people of contemporary societies had travelled far and wide in search of spiritual experiences. The Bible provides evidences of noble classes travelled to view ancient sites. In Indian history the messengers of Emperor 'Ashoka-The Great' traveled to Sri Lanka, East Asia and West Asia for spreading doctrines of 'Lord Buddha'. “The Arthashastra” describes about the protection given to merchants and their high status in the ancient Indian society. The travel accounts of the ancient travellers viz. Megasthenes (305 290 BC), Fa-Hien (AD 399 413), Hiuen-Tsang (AD 629-645), Ibn Battuta (AD 13041368), Al Masudi (9th century A.D), Marco Polo (AD 1292), Vasco Da Gama (AD 1460 - 1524), Francois Bernier (A.D. 1656 1668), Afonso de Albuquerque (AD 1453-1515), Afanasii Nikitin (AD 1466 1472) etc. provide sufficient evidences of heritage properties of India. Thomas Cook, the first tour operator had also included tourist attractions related to heritage properties. (Black, 2003, Pudney, 1953; Swinglehurst, 1974). Today a majority of the package tours include heritage sites and cultural areas in their respective itineraries. However heritage properties have not come up into right shape due to the nonexistence of proper (Singh 2002) policy Singh, (1978) and Kanwar (1982) explored the economic potential of tourism and proposed the establishment of old heritage buildings in Shimla. Thakur (1984) described rich temple architecture of HP. Gautam (1987) pointed out the problems of traffic congestion and growth of heritage tourism in Shimla. Bhakuni (1989) studied the profile of tourists visiting to HP. Gardner et. al., (2002) study on Kullu valley argued that the rapid rate of growth in the early- to mid- 1990's couldn't keep pace due to non-sustainable tourism activities. Singh (2002) stressed on tourism frontiers, myths, geographical appeal, attitude and ethics, political aspects and other tourism improvement issues and ecological implications for the promotion of tourism at heritage sites. Bansal and Gautam (2003) study contends that all around 37 % tourism was culturally inspired and developing at the rate of 15 % annually in HP. Batta (2003) acknowledged the values that stakeholders put together to the ecological resources in the HP and argued that the revival of these use and non-use values could play a vital role in adding funds towards the preservation and/or conservation of resources. Handa (2004) study outlined the earliest Buddhist monasteries of HP and described the significance of Buddhist Heritage. Singh and Mishra (2004) studied the societal, monetary and ecological dimensions of tourism in Manali region. Study uncovered that Manali was encountering natural issues like intense water scarcity, stuffed streets, overwhelming activities, exorbitant trash, unplanned development and illicit developments and sanitation issues. Rishi and Giridhar (2007) SWOT analysis of HP pointed out that due to lack of various facilities like food, transportation, water and accommodation the unique natural offerings of HP cannot be cash. Singh (2008) study maintains the destination enlargement dilemma in Manali and argued that the verdict of the purpose and limitations of destination development are vital for its sustainability. Gautam, (2012) assessed the preferences of tourists in HP and reflected that tourists endorsed the uppermost importance to safety & security, and stipulation of tourist information. Parmar (2012) attempted to study the tourist trends, tourist inflow, evaluation of the services/facilities offered to tourists and analyzed the attitude of the domestic and international tourists towards available facilities in HP. Singh's study (2012) on Pragpur- the 1st heritage village of India described connectivity and transportation network as limiting factors for the tourism growth in HP. Chand, (2013) asserts that, there are unlimited ranges of substitute benefits of heritage but research until now had only a limited success in identifying the most common benefits. Kanga et al. (2014) reviewed the latent of geospatial techniques to ease the tourism administration in Shimla. This study contended that, the geospatial technology make it easier for tourists to locate their way around their destinations viz. best route, locations choice, closest facility, customized directions, and ease of access across destinations. Chhatre & Lakhanpal, (2016) study on Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (GHNPCA) claim that heritage is employed as a weapon by local community, abundantly representing the region as the “Valley of the Gods” especially to work against universal preservation agendas.

From the review of literature it is evident that several heritage sites are exceedingly valued by local/regional communities and these communities may be enthusiastic to develop tourism but also may be defensive of their own privacy and wary of the effects that tourism might have. Thus, there exists a necessity to recognize the interdependencies that exist between the community and the heritage structure or area. The present study argues that victory in involving the community will often escort to success in drawing tourist markets because local residents are the best diplomats for any heritage tourism operation. It is further argued that, apart from of the enormity of the variations of tourism demand, the impact on the host community will not only be dependent on the number of tourist arrivals but the type of tourists. Also the impacts of tourism may either have encouraging or harmful influence on the humanity. Therefore the impact assessment becomes mandatory before suggesting a feasible tourism planning for future.

Research Methodology: The present study is exploratory in nature as it attempts to identify the factors related to heritage tourism and its development. Primary data were collected through observation and direct communication and secondary data were managed from public and private organizations and libraries. The targeted population for the present study were both domestic and foreign tourists visiting tourist sites and tourism industry stakeholders figure 2.6.1 (ref. annexure1). To select the number of respondents, quota sampling followed by judgement sampling has been used. In total 620 respondents including 500 tourists and 120 stakeholders were selected for the survey. A pilot study was carried out at Kangra fort before final data collection. Reliability of scale items were assessed through Cronbach alpha (α). Questionnaires were used to record the responses of respondents. It was developed separately for tourists and stakeholders.

The questionnaires were divided into four sections as:

Section A: focused on respondent's personal information based on their demographic profile.

Section B: focused on travel behaviour characteristics of tourists.

Section C: emphasized on statements related to tourists satisfaction.

Section D: focused on general attitudes of tourists

Questionnaire for Stakeholders had following four sections:

Section A: focused on respondent's personal information based on their demographic profile.

Section B: emphasize on general attitude of stakeholders towards tourism.

Section C: records tourism; Impacts on visiting attractions.

Section D: focused on the overall satisfaction of stakeholders with selected sites.

The questionnaires were personally administered by researcher in two years duration keeping in view the peak and off tourist seasons. The survey took place at the selected historic sites dispersed across four districts; Chamba, Kangra, Kullu and Shimla

Data Analysis: The primary data has been analysed with the help of SPSS 18. Descriptive analysis of data has been done with frequency distribution, percentage, bar charts and summated score ranking. For inferential analysis independent sample and dependent sample t-test, one-way independent ANOVA, post-hoc contrasts following turkey HSD (for groups with equal variances) and Games Howell (for groups with unequal variances) were performed to compare differences between groups. Factor analysis was performed for identifying the factors that measure impact of tourists on destination attributes. Averages, variance, kurtosis and skewness were applied for normality test and outlier detection. To test the assumption of homogeneity of variance among groups, Levene's test was applied

Finding of the Study: Research findings of the present study has been categorized both from tourist and stakeholder perspectives:

It was found that a majority of tourists (80 %) marked holiday/relaxation as their purpose. A large number of tourists (43.60 %) travelled with their families followed by friends (37.40 %) and organized groups (18%). The friends & relatives (58.80 %) reported to be the key source of exploring tourist places followed by travel agents (16.60%). Visiting spiritual places (1) was found as key motivation to visit HP followed by events or sports (2), culture & heritage (3), environment friendly tourist places (4), scenic beauty (5), conducive climate (6) and safety & security (7). Travel magazines were prime source of information. More than four-fifth (83.60 %) of tourists' availed mixed mode of travel (road, air, and rail) for their transportation. 72.20 % of tourists stayed more than 7 nights in HP. More than 60% of respondents agreed that religious sites are properly managed and maintained. About more than half of the tourists strongly agreed (26.8%) and agreed (29.4%) that the development of cultural or heritage villages increases heritage tourism products. More than half (61.2 %) of the tourists strongly agreed (32.6 %) and agreed (28.6 %) that fair and festivals provide a reflection of local culture. 30.2 % of respondents strongly agreed and 22 % agreed that the existing tourist attractions present authentic/genuine work of art to tourists. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) made four factors responsible for tourist satisfaction named as *destination charm, available heritage resources, available facilities and value for money.* The satisfaction level of tourist from these factors was tested across the four districts.

- Charm of destination factor testing shows no significant difference in the overall satisfaction of tourists from various districts, $F(3, 496) = 0.51$, $p > 0.05$, However, the level of tourist visited Shimla found to be greater than overall satisfaction of tourists visited Kullu followed by Chamba and Kangra. The indicators of destination charm were destination appeal, unspoiled nature, natural wonder and scenery, availability of sightseeing packages, trained tourist guides, tourist privacy, and accommodation facilities and airport efficiency.
- The heritage resources factor reveled a significant difference in the satisfaction of tourists, $F(3, 274.58) = 6.65$, $p < 0.05$, The satisfaction of tourists visited Shimla found to be greater than overall satisfaction of tourists went to Kullu followed by Kangra and Chamba. The indicators of heritage resources were monuments, museums, art galleries, historical sites, heritage villages, artistic/architectural features, heritage preservation efforts, local culture and local people life style.
- Satisfaction of domestic tourist from value for money was not significantly different from foreign tourist $t(498) = 0.18$, $p > 0.05$. The indicators of value for money were cost & quality of local handicraft, safety & security and quality of information sources.
- Satisfaction of domestic tourist was not significantly different from foreign tourist $t(498) = 0.18$, $p > 0.05$, the indicators of available facilities were local transportation facility, vehicle parking facility, convention facility, health facility and quality of local cuisine.

In perspective of tourism industry stakeholders, more than 50 % of the tourism professionals preferred internet (51.67 %) as the best mode of advertisement used for their respective business followed by road signs (20 %), newspaper advertisements (20.0 %) and flyers distribution (8.33 %). Good climate found to be a major USP (unique selling proposition) to attract tourists to HP followed by culture & heritage (22.78 %), events/sports (11.11 %), scenic beauty (7.22 %) and other personal reasons (1.11 %). The lack of information about tourist places (1) was reported to be the foremost important problem followed by parking facility (2), lack of trained manpower (3), poor availability of air transport (4), poor management of tourism resources (5) and service standard of hotels (6) in HP. Majority (53.33 %) of the tourism stakeholders were satisfied with the government policies for tourism development. Results of EFA revealed seven factors related to opinions of stakeholders towards impact of tourists on destination attributes in HP. These seven factors were named as Economic Effects (F1), Promotional Measures (F2), Socio-Cultural Influences (F3), Impact on Natural Resources (F4), Impact on Goods Prices & Environment (F5), Development & Opportunities (F6), Technology & Sustainability (F7). The attitude of stakeholders towards impact of visitors on destination attributes from these factors was tested across districts. The economic effects (F1) of tourism reflect significant difference in the opinions of stakeholders from various districts; F value (3, 176) = 5.239, $p < 0.05$. The indicators of economic effect are the jobs created for local people, Local business benefits and attracted investment to develop infrastructure for tourism. The E-Travel Trade Recognition scheme launched by Government was found beneficial for tourism related enterprises; F value (3, 176) = 1.68, $p > 0.05$. The results of analysis reveled that TVOA-ETA (Tourist visa on arrival-enabled with electronic Travel Authorization) scheme will bring more business to tourism enterprises; F value (3,90.36)= 0.74, $p > 0.05$. Lastly noteworthy difference across districts was found for role of government in developing religious tourism. Results indicate that, opinion of stakeholders towards Shimla districts is significantly different from Kangra district and stakeholder's opinion from Kullu districts is significantly different from Kangra district, $P < 0.05$.

Discussion: The multiple field visits of researcher over the last four years since 2013 revealed that famous historic and other culturally rich places in the state are full of tourists and pilgrims. The peak season of tourist's in summer's results into crowd and congestion near tourist places. More importantly, the scarcity of water and poor parking facilities at destinations like Shimla and Manali hamper the visits of quality visitor. It has been argued that, though the schemes of state tourism department viz. *'Har Gaun Ki Kahani'- (every village has a story)*, '*Har Ghar Kuch Kahta He'*- (*every house speaks something)*; identified villages for tourism, yet authorities are not able to channelize the tourist flow to rural areas except a few (e.g. *Pragpur- 1st heritage village of India)*. To channelize the rural heritage based tourism mechanism, state authorities should work very closely with the rural community and market it to the outer world along with creative industries. At the same time tourism planners should seek lessons from the *Ski village* and *Pong Wetland* tourism projects where local community refused the tourism development. The availability of mega traditional events like *Mahashivratri, Dushehra Festival, Lavi Fair, Minjar Fair* etc. should be tapped in terms of increasing quality tourist rather than pulling mass visitors. It is suggested that nearby every tourist cluster Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation should establish local souvenir shops. Satisfaction of domestic tourists found to be greater than overall satisfaction of foreign tourists. The results are important to consider for increasing the foreign tourist satisfaction. Improvement in basic infrastructure and sanitation standards are recommended. The factor destination charm has significant impact on tourists while selecting their destinations for travel. The indicators of destination charm viz. destination appeal; unspoiled nature, availability of sightseeing package, trained tourist guide, tourist privacy, accommodation facilities and airport efficiency are of immense significance. All these require immediate attention to tap the tourism potential available in the state towards developing economy with tourism. District wise results revealed that overall satisfaction of tourist from Kangra district was greater than overall satisfaction of tourists from Shimla, Kullu and Chamba. Government should ensure preservation and presentation of heritage resources to the future generations especially for their education and identity. Tourism can be better managed by making district wise tourism development councils in the pattern of Kerala Tourism. It can be improved by improving destination appeal, offering more variety of heritage based (cultural and natural) itineraries, providing trained manpower, improving accommodation facilities and ensuring strong air transportation link. The economic effects of tourism shows significant difference in the opinions of stakeholders from various districts. There is no significant difference in the opinions of stakeholders from various districts for role of government in providing support to establish tourism product, but the district wise comparison of resources reflect the unequal development of the tourism product across the districts. Therefore, Government should ensure equal sustainable development of tourism in all the identified districts with potential. 'E-Travel Trade Recognition' scheme launched by Government was found beneficial for tourism related enterprises. Authorities should encourage people to start their *start-ups* for tourism related business which can be achieved with the help of developing tourism entrepreneurship programs along with universities and other higher and technical institutions. Significant difference across districts was shown for the role of government in developing religious/ pilgrimage tourism. There is a need to tap the available heritage potentials of Kangra and Chamba districts for expansion of well-developed heritage tourist clusters. More importantly, HP has abundant heritage resource base but no systematic excavation has been undertaken neither by the state archaeological department nor the archaeological department Govt. of India. It is suggested that state authorities must ensure systematic excavation in association with Anthropological Survey of India and Archeological Survey of India. It can be done through establishing a centre for anthropological, archeological and heritage research in close association with the universities and institutions of higher learning.

Conclusion: The present study concludes that satisfaction of tourist and resident's acceptance of tourism and its related activities seems like a key towards the destinations holistic survival. Local heritage resources can be well maintained with the help and participation of local community. However, from governments end the close mentoring and monitoring mechanism for the tourism related activities and experts advice may contribute towards holistic tourism development. It is worldwide apparent that tourism sector acts as an economic stimulator to the developing countries and generates a large part of the direct/ indirect employment and business opportunities to the residents. To link this commitment from within the society to the cultural heritage and utilize it for tourism development could be an opportunity to boost up the tourism sector. Authorities need to create an excellent infrastructure at par with international standards while preserving the heritage and environment, creating employment opportunities to its natives and assuaging poverty. However, safeguarding the global cultural for the enrichment and learning of present and future generations seems crucial. A big deal of tourism product relies on places with natural, local and historic connotation. In order to respect the cultural connotation of a destination, people involved in the tourism industry need to be responsive to cultural groups who have a special interest and they need to be directly involved in the planning and promotion. More prominently, various sectors have to be recognized that the heritage belongings are the key for their individual sustainability and they are not exogenous factors.

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Annexure 1:

Figure 2.6.1 Major Stakeholders of Heritage Tourism

Tourism Related	**Non Tourism Related**
Tour operators Hoteliers Travel agents Rent a car/Bike rentals Restaurant/ Bar/Coffee shops Shopping Emporiums Attraction providers	Transport providers Service providers Retailers/wholesalers Building/Construction Farming/Fishing Vendors Small industry/ Manufacture, Electricity/ Water providers
Public Sector Officials/ Managers Indian Government Ministry of tourism HPTDC Districts of HP Chambers of commerce Developing organisation councils Local governments	**Private Sector Entrepreneurs/ Managers** Residents , Ethnic community, NGO- nongovernmental organisations, Institutions, Trade associations, government sector employees, Visitors

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Some Reflections On India's Outbound Tourism

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India is arising as a burgeoning destination among the worldwide tourist traffic and equally emerging as a house of potential and prospective outbound tourists. Indian tourists have showed immense pleasure in international travel, thanks to the competitive business environment and increased disposable income. The outcomes and developments of allied industry and ancillary services have intrigued international travel, which has attained respectable position enabling Indians to seal their footprints. Various new products fulfilling their aspirations has been experienced by Indian tourists while visiting international destinations providing valuable scope for the product development and increased customer satisfaction, thereby educating the product developers and host country to consider Indians as a major and potential market.

Indian Outbound Tourism

India, being one of the fastest growing markets possessing prospective travelers has shown significant rise and development in foreign departures and spending. Outbound tourism has shown significant 29% in 2016 rise despite the currency fluctuations and the economic slowdown primarily in search of leisure, shopping, fun and recreation and VFR besides MICE. Among the various influencing reasons, business travel emerges as a prime reason for the Indians. The catalysis for the surge in India's outbound tourism revolves around various measures and policies initiated by various national tourism boards and organizations by keeping the confidence and motivation level increased of all arriving tourists. The aviation sectors role in the development in outbound tourism is highly noteworthy; the budgeted costs offered by low cost carriers, price slashes by scheduled airlines have shown strong signal towards the surge in international travel. The growth in GDP reflected in the increase in disposable income has too triggered interest within the rich and elite to consider for long haul travel to Europe and American continents. The increasing value of Indian rupee shows confident signal towards the international travel coupled with new visa regulations offered by world countries.

According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) statistics, Dubai, USA, Thailand, and Singapore stands as preferred destinations for Indians besides UK, Australia, Indonesia, Turkey, Oman, Sri Lanka and Maldives In recent times, countries such as Canada, Philippines, Mauritius, Jordan, Taiwan, Vietnam, Croatia, Turkey, China and Kenya are also showcasing an increase in Indian tourists rush. The Philippines has witnessed a growth of 28 pc in Indian tourist arrivals during early 2017, compared to the same period last year.

It is also viewed that the craziness towards sports activities and strong zeal towards pursuing higher education are considered to be the main factors for the increase in international travel. However travelling for Meeting, Incentives, Conferences and

Events (MICE) is the prime reason for the growth of international travel for Indians especially. Regardless of the ease of governmental policies in enhancing Indians travelling abroad, the contribution of Information, communication and technology is very intriguing and made the travel related solutions more comfortable. The online travel services have created niche hassle-free platform for the success of international tourism, besides creating more entrepreneurs in the field of tourism.

Fast facts about Indian Market

- India is becoming globally significant for consumers especially for its middle class households. By 2020, it is anticipated that 65 per cent of the population will be less than 30 years of age, is likely to reach 600 million by 2030.
- The outbound tourist spending is expected to surpass US$28 billion by 2020 making India the 23rd most valuable source market for tourist traffic.
- A study by Nielsen and Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) revealed that on an average a Indian traveler spends about US$1,645 per trip, of which approximately 45% is spent on flights and accommodation while the expenditure pattern of balance budget goes to shopping, food, sightseeing, and communication.
- As per the report on Tourism Ireland prepared by Tourism Ireland India Office, Mumbai it was revealed that Leisure travelers and Business travelers normally spend around Rs.86, 723 and Rs.101, 602 per person respectively while travelling abroad.
- According to the tourism statistics of the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India; Thailand catered 7% of Indian outbound tourists in2012 followed by Singapore (6%) Malaysia, UAE and USA were in third, fourth and fifth place respectively. China, Hong Kong, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Australia and Canada are progressing well and recorded their presence felt in dealing with the country's outbound tourists. However it is presumed that Lanka and Nepal perhaps may become emerging caterers of India's outbound tourists.
- Going by Singapore Tourism Board statistics, Indian business travelers in Singapore spend more than their counterparts from other countries. An average business traveler from India spends S$2,200 a trip, while the average spend by business travelers from other countries is S$2,000.
- Economic growth has not only lifted millions of households out of poverty, but has also given rise to an emerging middle class.
- India's middle class will grow from the present 30% to 50% by 2030.
- India is fast on its way to becoming a large and globally important consumer economy. The Indian middle class is estimated to be between 250 to 300 million.
- The number of middle class households in India is likely to reach 600 million by 2030.
- The emerging middle class is growing at a rapid pace and is changing consumption patterns, as income levels rise and the finer things in life become affordable. It has also become the segment driving consumption of luxury goods like cars and air conditioners.
- This constitutes a key growth opportunity for marketers across the globe.

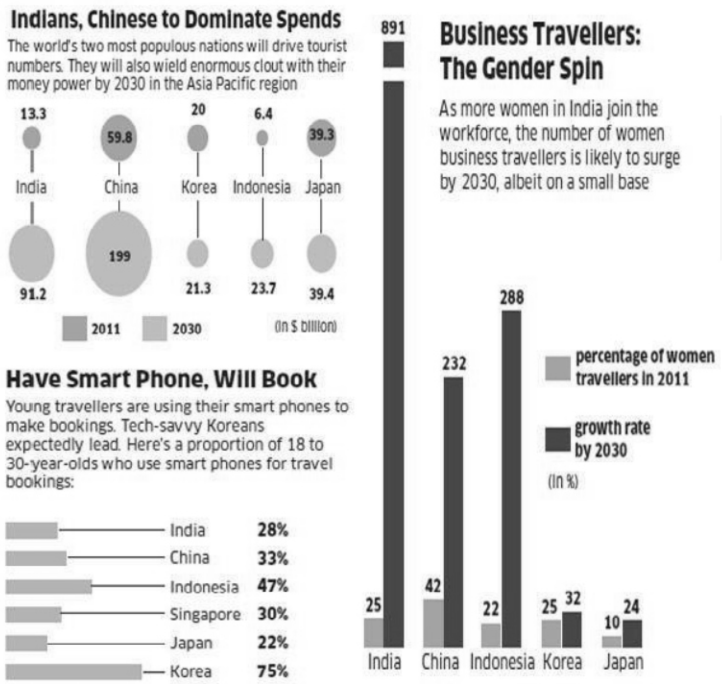
Australia is starting online visa applications for Indians from July. Australia has granted over 65000 visitor visas to Indian Tourists in the first quarter of 2017. Israel, Germany and Canada are also witnessing an unprecedented influx of visitors from India.

The number of Indians visiting Jordan is already up 39% to 20,150 in 2017. The kingdom, famous for its architectural ruins and historic landmarks, is offering Indian tourists a fully-sponsored luxury honeymoon holidays. Going with spending data, Indian tourists are on the move spending $16 billion on international travel in 2015, and averaging $4,500 on long-haul trips. India is now among the fastest growing outbound travel markets, ranked among the top-25 countries on international tourism expenditures, expected to climb to the top five by 2025.

The surge of Indians travelling abroad is also due to the existence of more government holidays and going with the survey more Indian women's are interested in travelling compared to women's of other countries like Korea, Japan and Indonesia due to their increased presence as quality workforce in all sectors these days and the share is expected to push china beyond at 2030. However, India is behind in making our women travel compared to China. Direct flights coupled with Indian cuisine on board catalysis the people to travel abroad. There is a massive shift is the spending nature of Indians expected to reach $91.2 billion in the year 2030 and China leading the chart in the whole of Asia Pacific region.

Technology driven smart phones will continue to dominate the services of international travel and presently India is far behind in this category; however it is expected to overtake all other countries being a second large populous country of the world. It is interesting to see individuals belonging to generation Y prefer smart phones to find their services and travel related solutions right from booking of train, flight and hotel services, which is considered to be a organic and healthy environment for outbound travel.

Fig.2 Comparison of factors among countries

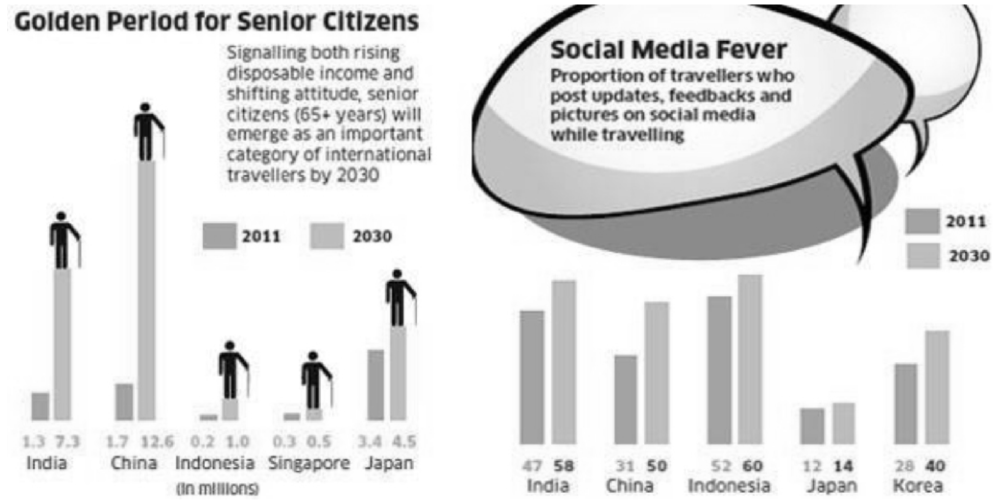


Source: Economic Times, New Delhi

There is a sufficient increase in share of the senior citizens disposable income interested to travel international. One of the Market survey research findings reveal that next to Japan and China, India occupies energetic space in the senior citizens category of travelling abroad on outbound tours, however the future predictions educates the increased share of China and India surpassing Japan in the year 2030.

The success of tour packages and services heavily relies on marketing strategies and its effective distribution network, having understood the significance of technology, travel services and solutions are being offered at your door step by the usage of social networking sites, which have resulted positive impact on the both service principal and receiver on varied aspects of product, satisfaction and feedbacks.

Fig.3 Comparison of Variables among countries



Source: Economic Times Bureau, New Delhi

While this being the scenario of international travel by Indians in future, one this has to be accepted that, Indians now no more novice in touring conventional international destinations, rather demand for niche packages, destinations and customized packaged tour fuelling their hobbies and aspirations.

Having learned this, many leading travel service companies started strategizing customized packages as the USP and offering unlimited services to the needy tourists. Below given is the varied type of travelers who are different in their need and demand while talking about international travel. However, the percentage of such traveler is very less, but it is a notable trend in the nature of tourists. Though, very rich and elite class people come under this category, a sizeable chunk of students who has zeal towards travel too part of this traveler breed.

Decision Driving Factors

- Recommendations from friends and family who have visited there-**51%**
- Recommendations from friends and family who live or have lived there -**34%**
- Travel-specific information on the internet -**31%**
- Advice from a travel agent or tour operator -**27%**
- Travel-specific television programs (e.g., TLC, Travel Channel and Travel XP) -**25%**

Fig.4 Different types of travelers

Major Outbound Nations for Indians

- Singapore
- U.S.A
- Thailand
- Malaysia.
- Switzerland
- Hong Kong
- France
- United Kingdom
- Relatively off beat locations such as Costa Rica, Tahiti, Rio de Janeiro, Turkey, Seychelles, Tashkent, Fiji, are steadily gaining popularity among Indians.

Countries offering Visa on Arrival (VOA) for Indian passport holders is also on rise. There is a change in the traditional segment from the conventional destinations domestically to the Far East and Europe/rest of the World

Table.1 Major Outbound Tourists' Source Market Cities in India

City	Percent share of outbound Tourists
Delhi (NCR)	22 %
Mumbai and Ahmedabad	25%
Chennai and Bangalore	16%
Kolkata	3%

Source: Tourism Statistics, Department of Tourism, Govt. of India

It is much encouraging sign that tier two towns are showing growth. Travel trade professionals have started to focus on this segment. Thomas Cook, Cox & Kings and Kuoni have come forward with special brochures targeting the luxury segment. Weekend international destinations are gaining wide popularity among the affluent and upper middle class people creating a specific market for travel business firms.

Having learned the expectations, sources of travel booking of Indians, many governments have shown keen interest to partner with India in equipping their tourism share in terms of arrival and spending increase compared to other countries. Being recognized as a potential traveler, it is no doubt that India would emerge as a successful source for outbound tourism and a positive note is that many countries are offering visa on arrival scheme for Indians and special permits to access specialized areas, again expected to experience a positive growth for world tourism and contributions by Indians.

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Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development Practices in Tourism and Hospitality Sector in the Himalayan States

In pic: Prof. S.C. Bagri addressing the participants, also seen are (from left to right) Mr. Hanumant, Prof. Ajay Rawat, PadmashriBasantiBisht, Prof. J.L. Kaul, Prof. M.P. Jain and Prof. Manjula Chaudhary

Rishikesh (Uttarakhand):The Centre for Mountain Tourism and Hospitality Studies, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna (HNB) Garhwal University (A Central University) organized a three-days International Conference cum Workshop on "Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development Practices in Tourism and Hospitality Sector in the Himalayan States" in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India from 28th April 2017 to 30th April 2017 in Ganga Resorts, Rishikesh. The International conference cum workshop was aimed to explore diverse contemporary issues and challenges faced by tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship along with identifying further possibilities of entrepreneurship and job creation in tourism and hospitality sector. The three days conference cum workshop was inaugurated by Prof. J. L. Kaul, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, HNB Garhwal University (A Central University). The three days were divided into six technical sessions based on themes pertinent with the objectives of the conference cum workshop. Resource persons from varied facets of the industry and academia spoke on the themes and enlightened the participants with their views. The event was wholeheartedly attended and supported by the students, academics, Government and Non-governmental officials, industry players, entrepreneurs and the local community members of the Himalayan states. The Conference cum workshop witnessed intense intellectual brainstorming sessions and the diverse collage of participant discussed on the contemporary issues and challenges of tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship in the Himalayan region. Sixty five papers on topics congruent with the themes of the workshop were presented during the course of the event. The workshop emerged not only as a platform to voice the entrepreneurial concerns of the local populace but also recommended suggestions to find sustainable solutions for the holistic development of the Himalayan region. The International conference cum workshop culminated with the Valedictory Function witnessing rapporteurs of the technical sessions presenting the session reports highlighting the key inputs, findings and suggestions of the resource persons and paper presenters. Prof. S.C. Bagri, Convener, thanked the resource persons, paper presenters, academicians and other present dignitaries for their participation and fruitful assistance in achieving the desired objectives of the International Conference cum Workshop. The three-days event was successful in achieving its stated objectives and provided recommendations to overcome the problems and challenges faced by entrepreneurs in the Himalayan states. The International Conference cum Workshop not only identified the thrust areas for the holistic sustainable development of tourism and hospitality sector but also made the requisite inroads to eliminate the status quo ambivalent in the Himalayan region.

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News And Views

2018 Global Travel Forecast predicts significant uptick in the prices of travel products

As per the 2018 Global Travel Forecast released by Carlson Wagonlit Travel in association with Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) Foundation, the travel product prices are expected to see a significant rise next year riding on the back of rising inflation, higher oil prices and emerging markets. The report expects travel prices to rise sharply in the coming year, reaching nearly to 4% increase in some sectors. The global airfares are expected to rise 3.5% in 2018; hotel prices are expected to be 3.7% higher; and ground transportation such as taxis, trains and buses are expected to rise only 0.6% - significantly less than the 3.0% inflation forecast for 2018. “The higher pricing is a reflection of the stronger economy and growing demand,” said Kurt Ekert, President and CEO, Carlson Wagonlit Travel.” According to Jeanne Liu, Vice President, GBTA Foundation & Research, Geopolitical risks, uncertainties in emerging markets and ever-changing political environments in Europe and the United States mean today's travel professionals have more than ever to take into account when building their travel programs. The uptick in global airfares comes as crude oil prices rise, in spite of airlines adding an expected 6.0% capacity in 2018. Complicating airline pricing is increased segmentation of basic fares among large carriers. Travelers now have the option of choosing a basic economy, restricted fare versus various upgraded fares, with specific service options and pricing varying by airline. Asia Pacific expects to see a 2.8% rise in 2018 pricing with domestic demand increasing, particularly in China and India. However, as many of the economies in Asia strengthen, weaknesses in infrastructure and airports in particular are increasingly becoming apparent. Globally, the 3.7% average increase in hotel prices masks what is actually happening on a regional level. Europe is expected to post strong increases, while other regions are barely keeping up with inflation. Additionally, prices are expected to fall in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the ground transport, sharing economy players such as Uber and Lyft are expected to continue double-digit growth upwards of 10.0% in 2018, before settling down into single-digit growth for 2019. Their growth is under threat by costly regulation and government bans.

Australia to be the Country of Honour at Vinexpo Hong Kong 2018

According to an official release of Vinexpo, the leading show of world's leading wine and spirits professionals, has announced Australia as the Country of Honour for Vinexpo Hong Kong 2018, the strategic international event for wine and spirits professionals in the Asia-Pacific region, scheduled between May 29-31, 2018 at Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. As the world's fifth largest wine exporter, and the second d largest exporter to China with a growth outlook of 25% in volume by 2020, Australia is expected to be a major industry player. It is estimated that growth in consumption of its still wines will be US$4.3 billion between 2016 and 2020. This decision reflects Asian consumers' growing appetite for Australian wines, and Vinexpo aims to celebrate the buoyancy of the Australian winemaking industry,” said Guillaume Deglise, CEO, Vinexpo.

Phuket retains its allure for high-spending Chinese tourist

Phuket remains one of the most desirable destinations for high-income Chinese tourists according to figures published in the latest Hurun Report, which was released at the International Luxury Travel Mart (ILTM) 2017, held in Shanghai from 5 to 8 June. Phuket has long been a draw for well-heeled travellers, for not only does the island offer a wealth of stunning natural wonders including the world's best beaches and stunning sunsets, it also boasts luxury experiences including sumptuous five-star hotels and luxury pool villas, spas with every kind of bodily pampering, designer malls, and tailored-made activities aimed at people seeking unique luxury holidays. Phuket and Thailand score highly in all three categories of the Hurun Report 2017. These are: Most Memorable Travel Destinations; Most Popular Summer-Autumn International Travel Destinations and Most Popular Winter-Spring International Travel Destinations. Thailand is well-known among Chinese tourists for its beach and island holidays with destinations, especially Phuket, with Krabi, Ko Samui and Ko Chang becoming increasingly popular. Chinese tourists who enjoy luxury also seek out big hotel brands, many of which are well represented in Thailand. The kingdom is also well known for resorts, which are the most popular style of luxury hotel in the Hurun Report with 81 per cent of the vote. Good personalised service, for which Thailand is renowned, also plays a part and was the most important factor with 49 per cent of respondents saying service played the main role when it came to choosing a hotel. The Hurun Research Institute carried out its latest survey between March and May 2017 in association with three of China's leading luxury travel agencies. The respondents in the annual survey were all high-end Chinese travellers from 12 mainland cities with per capita wealth of nearly RMB 22 million (US$3.2 million / 110.2 million Baht), and who spent on average per trip RMB 380,000 (US$55.8 / 1.9 million Baht), a figure that has risen 57 per cent year on per year. Established as a research unit in 1999, the Hurun Report Inc. has grown into a leading research house, media and lifestyle investment business based in Shanghai, China. The organisation is best known for its rankings of the richest people in China, India and the rest of the world.

Trip Advisor rates three Thai landmarks as among Best in Asia for 2017

Three of Thailand's most iconic landmarks, all in Bangkok, have been listed as among the top 25 Landmarks in Asia by the influential international travel website Trip Advisor in its 2017 Travelers' Choice listings. The Temple of the Reclining Buddha (Wat Pho), the Grand Palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, (Wat Phra Kaeo) all on Bangkok's historic Rattanakosin Island were named in the top 25 list, taking 4th, 9th and 14th place, respectively. These three landmarks are regarded as some of Thailand's top tourist sites and have appeared regularly in must-see lists published internationally. The Temple of the Reclining Buddha also took 21st spot in the Trip Advisor Top 25 Landmarks in the World 2017. The annual Trip Advisor Travelers' Choice Awards are given based on the quantity and quality of travellers' reviews and ratings on Trip Advisor's website gathered over the previous 12-month period.

Bouncing back: Hotel occupancy soars

The domestic travel industry has turned the tide. It has bounced back from the long slowdown since 2007. In the last financial year (2016-17), hotels across all segments recorded occupancy of over 65% for the first time in eight years, according to hospitality consultancy firm HVS. Indian hotels had seen their rooms this full last time in 2007-08. Achin Khanna, MD of consultancy and valuation at HVS south Asia, said, “While data for FY 2016-17 is still being collected, initial indicators showed over 65% occupancy after eight years. This has happened due to the overall economic growth that has led to travel picking up which requires accommodation, domestic leisure travel has picked up in a big way. Chinmai Sharma, Chief revenue officer for the TajGroup, said the domestic Indian leisure traveller is one of the fastest growing customer segments, which has also reduced dependence of luxury chains on international travellers. “We are witnessing an increase in international arrivals in India for number of reasons like improvement in ease-of-doing business and e-visa to nationals of more countries. Given the current global scenario, India is also being seen as a safe destination with the lot of unexplored at a reasonable cost,” said Sharma. Hotel room supply in India grew at 7-8% last year and is expected to be at the same range for the next three years. On the other hand, demand is growing at 11-14%. “With demand outweighing supply and outlook for travel remains positive, the upward trend is expected to continue,” said jean Michel Casse', COO of Accor Hotels (India and South Asia). However, average room tariff (of all segment ranging from five stars deluxe to two stars) are nowhere close to the level of Rs 7,989 in 2007-08. While guests are returning to hotels, average tariff is still around 30% lower at Rs 5,500, according to HVS, which monitors branded or organised sector hotels across segments.

In pursuit of the travelling Indian

For years, Bollywood has been the best brand ambassador for Swiss Tourism in India, with several hundred heaving themselves up the snowy Alps every year, just for a glimpse of the spots that their stars cavorted in, in their movies. Now Tourism Australia is hoping to emulate the model, using prime time soaps on Indian television to inveigle its way into the burgeoning Indian travel market. It has stitched up alliances with Star TV, Balaji Telefilms among others to present the country as a series of adventures in food, sport and leisure and at the same is pushing fares down for the deal-hungry Indian traveller. Mauritius, on the other hand, is pitching its locales as wedding destinations and luxurious getaways. Both countries have trained their sights on the band of outbound tourists from India, growing at 25 per cent a year and pegged to rise to 50 million by 2020 according to the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organisation). Nishant Kashikar, country manager, India & Gulf, Tourism Australia, said India is one of the fastest growing economies and home to a growing community of tourists to Australia. He sees the maximum growth coming from the professional class that is eager to explore new places and experiment with their vacations. “We are focusing on mid age affluents, as their average spend is high,” says Kashikar. The Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA) is targeting a similar band of travellers and for them; India presents a strategic opportunity to de-risk the country's over- dependence on European travelers. Kevin Ramkaloan, director of MTPA said that India is an important market in that context. Targeting aspirational travellers For Tourism Australia, the key focus has been pushing the country as an aspirational destination, one that the stars go holidaying to. The company worked with Star Plus for 10 episodes of one of its popular shows Ye Hai Mohabbatein and with Balaji Telefilms for several of its shows. The officials also worked with Indian food influencers, given the huge popularity of shows such as Masterchef Australia in the country. “Sustained outreach to the target audience by means of national and regional General Entertainment Channels (GECs) has been an integral part of our strategy,” says Kashikar. This has helped the number of Indian tourists to Australia to grow in the double digits since 2014. Bringing fares down and offering all-in-one deals have helped too. But when it comes to advertising the destinations, the focus is increasingly on digital media. “Today 50 per cent of the advertisement budget goes towards digital,” says Kashikar. In July 2012, Australian Tourism set a target for 300,000 tourists from India by 2020. Kashikar says they will hit the target in the first quarter of 2018. And from being the ninth largest (in numbers) and eighth (in spending) source of tourists to Australia, he expects to push the country up to fifth position in a couple of years. Till June 2017, tourist arrivals from India rose by 15 per cent to 2.67 lakh, as compared to the previous year and Indian tourists contributed $1.03 billion to the local economy. Kashikar is targeting an 18 per cent growth in these numbers by 2020. For Mauritius, India presents an opportunity to expand the size of its business. Tourism is the mainstay of the island economy and overdependence on Europe that contributes around 10 per cent of the tourist arrivals is being seen as a business risk. Like Tourism Australia, MTPA is focusing on the affluent segment. “We are targeting the luxury travel segment from the Indian market as over 90 per cent of hotel and resort brands in Mauritius are in the 5-star and 4-star categories. We are not a mass tourist destination,” says Ramkaloan. However, having studied the pattern of travel from India, Mauritius is being pitched as more than just a beach destination. MTPA is also promoting Mauritius as a place for adventure tourism and as a place that is culturally close to the country. To that end it has planned special events around Diwali, Bollywood awards extravaganzas and is working towards being a part of big Bollywood productions. Mauritius clocked an 8 per cent growth in arrivals with 48,000 Indian travellers till June this year. MTPA wants to take the number to 90,000 by the end of this year and 100,000 by the end of 2018. Ramkaloan says that the country is targeting luxury as well as the wedding travel segment. Last year, Mauritius was the venue for 15 grand Indian weddings. “Though Tier-I cities of India have been the best performing markets for us, but we are also focusing our efforts towards Tier-II markets,” he added. Over the past few years, the Indian traveller's penchant for foreign destinations has grown manifold, not just in the big cities. And for the tourism authorities of both countries, it seems too good a chance to miss, as they scramble to position their countries as ideal destinations for the Indian tourist.

Ministry for DoNER constitutes North East Tourism Development Council

The Ministry for the Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) has announced the constitution of a dedicated Tourism Development Council for the North Eastern Region. This was announced at the first of the North East Calling events organised by the DoNER Ministry at the India Gate Lawns in New Delhi yesterday. The North East Tourism Development Council is constituted as a company under section 8 with both private and public sector equity in it to promote tourism within North East and create linkages with the region in sync with the Look East policy. DoNER has also announced initiatives like North East Venture Fund, a joint initiative between DoNER and North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFi), to contribute towards entrepreneurship development of the region, and a Science & Technology Intervention programme dedicated for the North East region. Various MoUs were signed to drive these initiatives, including the one between YES Bank and North East Tourism Development Council, in the presence of Minister for DoNER, Dr Jitendra Singh. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Singh said that the North Eastern region has been ignored for more than 60 years and the current government is moving on the fast track to make up for the time lost. He said lot of progress has been made in improving infrastructure in terms of roads, rail and air connectivity to the region. He said that Ministry has gone beyond its mandate and funded infrastructure projects, including connecting Tripura with Bangladesh. Talking about the uniqueness of the region, Dr Singh said that rest of India has lot to learn from the people and the region. Later speaking to **Travel Biz Monitor**, Gautam Chintey, Adviser-Banking, Industries and Tourism to North Eastern Council, who is spearheading the North East Tourism Development Council said that the primary aim of the Council will be to promote regional tourism. The council will try to establish linkages with private sector tour operators from regional alliances like BIMSTEC, ASEAN, SAARC, etc., he said. The Council is constituted as a non-profit organization where people will contribute for the promotion of tourism without profit. The funds for the Council will be raised from the private industry, the state and Central governments, he said. The plan is to raise at least INR 100 crore for the promotional activities in the first one year, he said.

Swadesh Darshan: State to submit proposal for launching two tourism circuits

The Uttarakhand Ecotourism Corporation will submit a proposal to the Centre for launching two tourism circuits under the Swadesh Darshan scheme. Uttarakhand plans to develop Thano-Sanjay Jheel-Chaurasi Kutia-Ranichauri-Dhanolti-Devalsari and Chila-Rasiyabad-Sneh-Kolhuchaur-Kanvashram circuits connecting Rishikesh, Rajaji National Park, Haridwar, Tehri, Mussoorie and Kotdwar. Covering the three circuit concepts of Himalayan, ecotourism and wildlife, the proposal is at its final stage. The Union ministry of tourism had launched the Swadesh Darshan scheme for developing theme-based tourist circuits across the country. Under the scheme, Northeast, Buddhist, Himalayan, Coastal, Krishna, Desert, Tribal, Ecotourism, Wildlife, Rural, Spiritual, Ramayana and Heritage circuits have been identified for development. Forest rest houses in the two identified circuits will be linked to a few tourist spots under the proposal. Local people will be engaged for various activities such as housekeeping, kitchen and others. According to the scheme guidelines, tourism circuits shall be identified on the basis of current tourist traffic, connectivity, potential and significance attached to the sites and holistic tourist experience. It further emphasises on theme based tourism-religion, culture, heritage, leisure and others.

Ministries of Shipping and Tourism to work on the Action Plan to promote Cruise Tourism

Ministry of Shipping and Ministry of Tourism will work together on an Action Plan to promote India as a Cruise Tourism destination and develop enabling eco-system for the growth of cruise tourism in India. A Workshop was organised by Ministry of Shipping in Delhi to discuss 'Action Plan for Development of Cruise Tourism in India'.

Speaking on the occasion Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Shipping, Road Transport and Highways said that Cruise Tourism is one of the fastest growing components of the leisure industry worldwide, and can be a major growth driver for the Indian economy by generating huge employment opportunities. He also highlighted the role of cruise tourism as an employment multiplier with 1 job for 3-4 passengers. With India having the potential to cater to 700 cruise ships per year as against 158 handled this year, the cruise industry can generate more than 2.5 lakh jobs for ten lakh cruise passengers, giving a big boost to the country's economy. He further informed that cruise terminals are being developed at five major ports Mumbai, Goa, Cochin, Mangalore and Chennai. In addition, the transport potential of 111 inland waterways will also be tapped. Work will start for developing ten inland waterways by the end of this year.

Kerala targets 50% increase in foreign arrivals by 2021

The Kerala government is looking for doubling the number of domestic tourists and is targeting an increase of 50% in foreign arrivals by 2021, told Kadakampally Surendran, Minister of Tourism, Government of Kerala. He said that digital platforms are the key to achieve this aim. Surendran inaugurated the second edition of International Conference on Tourism Technology (ICTT) in Kochi. ICTT is one of its kind conferences organised by Kerala Tourism and Association of Tourism Trade Organisation (ATTOI) which features eminent speakers from varied backgrounds for sharing insights on how to make use of technology to brand, market and sell tourism products and services. "Year after year, we see a constant growth in the number of tourists we host. Hence the industry needs to evolve in accordance with the changes in global market. Kerala Tourism has been exploring new media as a key platform and has witnessed the reach and response to it," he noted. Terming the ICTT as "the gateway to improve our social media presence", he said it would eventually enhance the tourism sector.

Uttarakhand to develop 5 eco-tourism circuits in the State

Uttarakhand Eco-tourism Development Corporation has been established in the State with the sole aim of developing eco-tourism sector purely on professional lines. Eco-tourism Corporation, created by a Government Order in May 2016 became a section 8 company under Company Act 2013 in March 2017. Taking up the issue of development of eco-tourism in the State, Uttarakhand Eco-tourism Corporation is preparing a road-map for developing eco-tourism circuits in the state. In the first stage, these circuits would be developed around Forest Rest Houses while ensuring that villages located in and around these circuits are linked to eco-tourism activities, ensuring their livelihood development and income generation. A meeting in this regard was organized at Lansdowne, which was chaired by Forest and Environment Minister, Uttarakhand. Speaking at the meeting, Minister for Environment and Forests, Dr. Harak Singh Rawat said that although Uttarakhand is a hub of religious tourism but so far the state has not been able to evolve as an eco-tourism destination. Through Eco-tourism Corporation, State is making sincere efforts in this direction. "Considering the natural and scenic beauty of our state there exist huge potential for developing Uttarakhand as a hub of eco-tourism activities," he said. Dr. Rawat said that eco-tourism promotion was important from the standpoint of enhancing livelihoods of local communities. Anup Malik, Managing Director of Uttarakhand Eco-tourism Corporation and Chief Project Director of JICA funded Uttarakhand Forest Resource Management Project (UFRMP) made a detailed presentation at the meeting. He informed that a total of 30 Forest Rest Houses spread across Pauri, Almora, Champawat, Dehradun, Haridwar, Nainital, Rishikesh, Tehri Garhwal districts were proposed to be taken up under this initiative under 5 circuits.

Uttarakhand to develop Himalayan hot springs spas at six locations to boost wellness tourism

India is home of over 350 hot springs and Uttarakhand is home to about 62 hot springs. The state tourism department is focusing on developing these geo-thermal hot springs based wellness spa as the best geo thermal wellness destination in the world. The objective is to tap high end tourists, the niche segment, through it. In the initial stages, the destinations which have been selected for the project in the state are Madkot in Pithoragarh on the banks of Gori Ganga river, Gaurikund in Rudraprayag on way to Kedarnath, Badrinath, Rishikund onway to Gangotri and Suryakund at Chamoli in Yamunotri. Apart from Madkot, the remaining sites have been selected in the Char Dham.

Revive Sukhatal for Naini lake survival, suggest expert

Sukhatal, which feeds Naini lake of 40-53% water is in dire condition owing to apathy of the government and the district administration which fail to protect its catchment area from unauthorized encroachments leading to depletion of water, and its impact is visible on Naini lake, the water level of which has fallen about 14 feet below normal. After renowned classical singer Shubha Mudgal and more than 1,200 others signed a petition on 'change.org' recently urging Uttarakhand chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat to save the Naini lake from dying, experts pointed out that 'ecological ignorance' at every level of governance is responsible for the dilapidated condition of Sukhatal, barely one and half kilometres from Naini lake, which feeds the latter after September when monsoon is over. Prof Bhaskar Vira, director, Cambridge Research Institute, University of Cambridge, the United Kingdom, said, "Nowhere it is more important than the Himalayas, where the combined pressures from climate change, demography, and migration are impacting water resources and lives. It is vitally important to protect and rejuvenate our wetlands and ecologically-critical water zones, using best available knowledge." Despite National Institute of Hydrology, a premier research institute, nearly 20 years ago presented strong evidences backed by robust research data about the importance of Sukhatal for the survival of Naini, the authorities concerned remained impervious to suggestions.

The Naini-Sukhatal connection was further elucidated by a study carried out by Centre for Ecology Development and Research (CEDAR) in collaboration with Cambridge University by top Himalayan geologists and environmentalists in April 2015. It also pointed out the significance of Sukhatal in Naini's survival. The study suggests Sukhatal provides more than 40% subsurface flow to Naini round the year, especially during drier months. The capacity to absorb large amount of rainwater is the biggest service of Sukhatal, which is part of the Ayarpatta ridge largely composed of limestone and dolomite characterised by karst features, which hold huge amount of water and allows subsurface flows not only to the lake, but also to the single largest spring 'Pardadhara'. In June 2016, in a bid to save Sukhataal, the Uttarakhand high court hearing a public interest litigation filed by Ajay Singh Rawat in 2012 had ordered the removal of encroachments, and directed IIT-Roorkee to submit a detailed project report (DPR) about beautification and recharge of Sukhataal area. Following which, a DPR on the preservation and resurrection of the area was prepared by experts from geology department and IIT-Roorkee, which was also submitted to the state government, besides the court.

IIT-R report recommending development of Sukhatal as a tourist destination opposed by experts

A detailed project report (DPR) prepared by IIT Roorkee (IIT-R) to rejuvenate the Sukhatal lake in Nainital has met with opposition from experts who have termed a few suggestions mooted in the report regarding boosting of tourism to Sukhatal as being detrimental to the ecology of the region. The report was ordered to be prepared by Uttarakhand high court last year while hearing a PIL filed by local activist Ajay Singh Rawat regarding encroachments in Sukhatal. Sukhatal Lake is important for the region because almost 40 to 50 % of the water in Naini Lake, the lifeline of Nainital, is recharged from Sukhatal. The IIT-R DPR proposes constructing a permanent artificial water body in Sukhatal as a tourist attraction which will involve building a restaurant, lifts and other facilities. This has been met with objections from experts who say that if this construction happens, the sub-surface water flow from Sukhatal would further decrease the level of Naini Lake which has this season already plunged to an alarming 18 ft below normal level. "The signs of tampering on the Sukhatal lake bed are already visible through the decline in the Naini lake water levels. Any further tampering will hamper the dry period recharge that Sukhatal provides to Naini Lake," said KS Valdiya, eminent geologist and former vice-chancellor of Kumaon University. These concerns were echoed by SP Singh, former vice-chancellor of Garhwal University, "Creating a reservoir, or storing huge quantities of water in the vicinity of Sukhatal which lies near an existing fault line, will be a monumental mistake as any tectonic activity may lead to breaking up of the reservoir resulting in disaster.

Uttarakhand tourism's new tourism policy to be ready by next month

The new government in the State of Uttarakhand will soon come up with a new Tourism Policy for the State. According to Dr R Meenakshi Sundaram, Secretary Tourism, Uttarakhand, the new policy will be announced towards the end of August. The new policy is expected to give thrust to the State's great potential in spiritual tourism, adventure tourism, etc. with participation of the private sector. Talking to TravelBiz Monitor on the sidelines of the FICCI organised Tourism Investors Meet in Delhi, Sundaram said that the government is in the process of pooling land for tourism development in the state. He said that the government has identified about 100 acre land parcel above the famous Tehri Dam for developing water sports and hospitality infrastructure. The government has also got the area surveyed by Geological Survey of India, he said. "We will develop the basic infrastructure there and then either sell or give it on lease to private investors to develop water sports facilities, hotels, wellness centres, etc.," he said. Considering land acquisition is not easy and complicated, the government is going for outright purchase, he said. Apart from Tehri Dam, the government is also looking at taking over couple of land parcels which are in the custody of various departments of the government for tourism related development. He said that the department will create land banks for tourism development in Pithoragarh once the airstrip gets operational. He expressed hope that Pithoragarh will be part of the second round of bidding under the UDAN scheme of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. When invited his attention to Uttarakhand Tourism Minister's statement on developing Uttarakhand as the adventure tourism hub, especially for winter sports like Skiing, Sundaram said that the government already has a Ski resort complex in Auli, which would be upgraded with the participation of the private sector. "We want private players to come, upgrade and run the facility," he said. Apart from Auli, the tourism department is also looking at developing new Ski resorts in Dayara Bugyal in Uttarkashi and Betuli Dhar in Pithoragarh, he added.

Travel Companies, Hotels Now on a Spiritual High

While tour companies offer special packages for religious destinations, hotels are setting up properties in these places. With the launch of Darshans in August, SOTC became the first travel service provider to offer over 40 curated end-to-end itineraries covering 60 popular spiritual destinations in India. “Spiritual tourism is the single largest category in domestic tourism which is an untapped, fragmented opportunity, “said Vishal Suri, managing director, SOTC Travel. A company survey found 53% respondents interested in opting for a pilgrimage if a reputed operator provided it. “Indians are seeking a preplanned, organised and comfortable spiritual travel experience. Pricing of our products has been worked around to suit every budget, offering travellers a seamless spiritual journey” said Suri. Even international hotel chains are taking note of the growth in religious and spiritual tourism in India. In April, Hyatt Hotels and Resorts launched Hyatt Place Rameswaram, its first vegetarian hotel, close to the Ramanathaswamy temple and other holy spots. It offers 101 rooms and suites and the multi-cuisine 24*7 Gallery Cafe restaurant. According to Kurt Straub, vice-president, operations, Hyatt, “Earlier, people who wanted to visit the famous temples would stay at Madurai or Chennai and visit Rameswaram for only a day or two, this was in part due to lack of hospitality brands and stay options. With Hyatt Place in Rameswaram, we now offer the guests a better choice of stay and hospitality”. Hyatt is looking at venturing into Himachal Pradesh next year, with the Hyatt Regency McLeod Ganj, a town popular for its Buddhist nodes, the Dalai Lama's temple and the Namgyal monastery. “Religion is an indispensable part of the Indian culture and travelling to religious places comes with it. Several concepts such as experiential tourism and g wellness tourism have emerged lately in the tourism industry in India and it won't be incorrect to say that religious tourism has also picked up”, said Straub. Last month, the Hilton and Double Tree by Hilton announced the signing of a management agreement with Trillion Real Estate and Properties to launch Double Tree by Hilton in Shirdi. Scheduled to open in the first half of 2019, the property will be located in the historical town centre and marks the chain's entry into the pilgrimage destination segment. “Double Tree by Hilton Shirdi will mark the brand's sixth property in this burgeoning market. As the first upscale hotel in Shirdi, we look forward to delivering exceptional experiences to guests”, said Dianna Vaughan, global head, Double Tree by Hilton. Kaushik Vardharajan, vice-president, development, India, Hilton, said the property will give them a first mover advantage among both domestic and international tourists. Raj Rana, chief executive, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor, said the company is looking out for opportunities in the Buddh Circuit, besides destinations like Madurai and Rameshwaram. Carlson Rezidor has brands such as Country Inn and Suites, Radisson and Radisson Blu and already runs a Country Inn and Suites in Vaishno Devi.

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Some reflections on India's outbound tourism.

Free full text

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Journal article : Journal of Tourism 2017 Vol.18 No.1 pp.57-62 ref.6

Abstract : This paper presents an overview of the growth of Indian outbound tourism and provides some fast facts about the Indian tourist market such as the amount spent by Indian tourists. The paper also identifies the driving factors in Indian tourists' decision making, the major outbound destination countries for Indians, and the major outbound tourists' source market cities in India.

ISSN : 0972-7310
URL : http://www.jothnbgu.in/article/jotVol...
Record Number : 20183175768
Publisher : Centre for Mountain Tourism & Hospitality Studies, HNB Garhwal University
Location of publication : Srinagar Garhwal
Country of publication : India
Language of text : English

Indexing terms for this abstract:

Descriptor(s) : decision making, destinations, international tourism, markets, outbound travel, tourist expenditure
Identifier(s) : choice
Geographical Location(s) : India
Broader term(s) : Commonwealth of Nations, lower-middle income countries, medium Human Development Index countries, South Asia, Asia

sustainability

Article

Local Community Satisfaction toward Tourism Development in Pushkar Region of Rajasthan, India

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Abstract: Satisfaction of local residents is one of the key factors in responsible and sustainable tourism development. It helps tourism planners and policymakers in effective and strategic utilization of tourism resources. The present study investigates local residents' satisfaction level toward sustainable tourism development through economic, socio-cultural, and environmental development. In order to achieve the goal of the study, one-sample *t*-test, regression analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were performed. The findings of the study have suggested that local residents have a different level of satisfaction towards overall sustainable development and economic, socio-cultural, and environmental development in the study area. It was also observed that there is a high positive correlation among economic, socio-cultural, and environmental developments, and these developments significantly impact sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: sustainable tourism development; satisfaction; economic development; environmental impact; Pushkar; structural equation modeling (SEM)

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Citation: Tiwari, S.; Tomczewska-Popowycz, N.; Gupta, S.K.; Swart, M.P. Local Community Satisfaction toward Tourism Development in Pushkar Region of Rajasthan, India. *Sustainability* **2021**, *13*, 13468. https://doi.org/10.3390/su132313468

Academic Editor: Colin Michael Hall

Received: 16 October 2021
Accepted: 2 December 2021
Published: 6 December 2021

1. Introduction

Tourism has been recognized as one of the largest and fastest-growing industries globally, generating 10.4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019 and decreasing to 5.5% in the year 2020 due to ongoing travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic [1]. Tourism development transforms a destination in several ways, and it results in many negative and positive outcomes. All the components of tourism, such as attractions, accessibility, accommodation, amenities, and activities at destination, impact and alter each aspect of a destination, such as its physical, social, cultural, economic, and environmental aspects, in both positive and negative ways [2]. Natural and cultural environments are essential pull-factor components for a destination to work as a tourism destination. The growth and development of a tourism destination are elucidated by [3], with the help of the Destination Life Cycle or Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model with stages such as: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and decline or rejuvenation. According to the destination life cycle, a destination needs to pass through various stages of growth and development, as the volume and number of tourists keep increasing. Once a destination reaches its stagnation stage, it faces several cumulative impacts on the local economy, culture, society, and the environment [4,5]. Mass tourism increases the consumption of tourism products and resources, creating an imbalance between demand and supply and causing negative impacts on tourism destinations [6,7]. The carrying capacity of a destination and its impacts on a destination, local residents, tourists, and stakeholders, is another important component for determining and measuring tourism impacts [2]. In the case of natural tourism products and resources, these impacts are more intense due to more fragility and limitations of natural resources [8]. The fundamental reason for environmental problems is the personal gains of local residents and other stakeholders [9]. However, the relationship between residents, tourists, other stakeholders, and the environment would also alter because of transformations in tourism destinations [10]. Economic benefits of tourism are well known to tourists, local residents, and other associated stakeholders [11]. However, these benefits are associated with cultural and environmental costs that are caused due to personal interests and irresponsible and unsustainable practices followed by tourists, local residents, and stakeholders [12]. Local residents are the most important and legitimate stakeholders over the destinations, and their participation is essential for responsible and sustainable tourism development [13]. Residents have the feeling of annoyance and antagonism toward mass tourism development, as they face problems such as cultural clashes, economic leakages, congestion, noise, demonstration effects, crime, high competition, and environmental dereliction, which further decrease satisfaction level of local residents toward tourism development [14,15]. There is a need for resources, such as land, electricity, energy, water, land, infrastructure, and natural and man-made attractions for developing tourism, but local communities use these resources. It is essential to seek active participation of local communities while planning, designing, and developing tourism [4]. In addition to local communities, these resources are also for the use of tourists in the form of tourism amenities and activities [16,17]. Therefore, a friendly relationship between tourists and local residents must be encouraged and ensured [18,19]. Tourism cannot be developed sustainably without the active support of local residents [20].

The present study provides a comprehensive framework and plays an important role in developing tourism destinations in responsible and sustainable ways. Thus, the aim of the present study is to investigate sustainable tourism development in the study area from the residents' point of view, via socio-cultural, economic, and environmental developments. Furthermore, for achieving the aim of the study, the following three objectives have been formulated:

1. To measure the satisfaction level of local residents toward sustainable tourism development.
2. To measure the impact of socio-cultural, economic, and environmental developments on sustainable tourism development.
3. To understand the relationship among socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism developments.

This article contributes to the literature by comparing different types of tourism development and their impact on sustainable development. Concerning the above-mentioned objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *Local residents have a high level of satisfaction toward sustainable tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan.*

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *Socio-cultural, economic, and environmental developments have no significant impact on sustainable tourism development and.*

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Socio-cultural, economic, environmental, and sustainable tourism developments have a positive relationship.*

This study contributes to tourism literature by developing a coherent, comprehensive, and comparative understanding of the role of local residents' satisfaction and the impact of tourism on economic, socio-cultural, and environmental changes.

The structure of the article is as follows: Section 2 discusses the peculiarities of the research area; the next Section deals with study design and the individual steps taken during the research; Section 4 presents the results of the research, and the final section is dedicated to discussions, recommendations, and limitations.

2. Study Area—Pushkar, India

Pushkar is located in the Ajmer district of the Rajasthan province of India, about 10 km northwest and 150 km southwest from Ajmer and Jaipur, respectively, on the western side of the Aravalli Mountains. It lies between north latitude 26°29′23′′ and east longitude 74°33′3′′ (Figure 1). It is an important pilgrimage destination for Hindus and Sikhs, with more than 400 magnificent temples, including the only Lord Brahma temple in the entire world, along with the Pushkar Lake, bathing Ghats, and the famous Gurdwaras for Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. It is a lively tourist destination that always resounds with the chanting of prayers, religious songs, drums, and gongs, and thousands of tourists keep flocking around the city throughout the year.

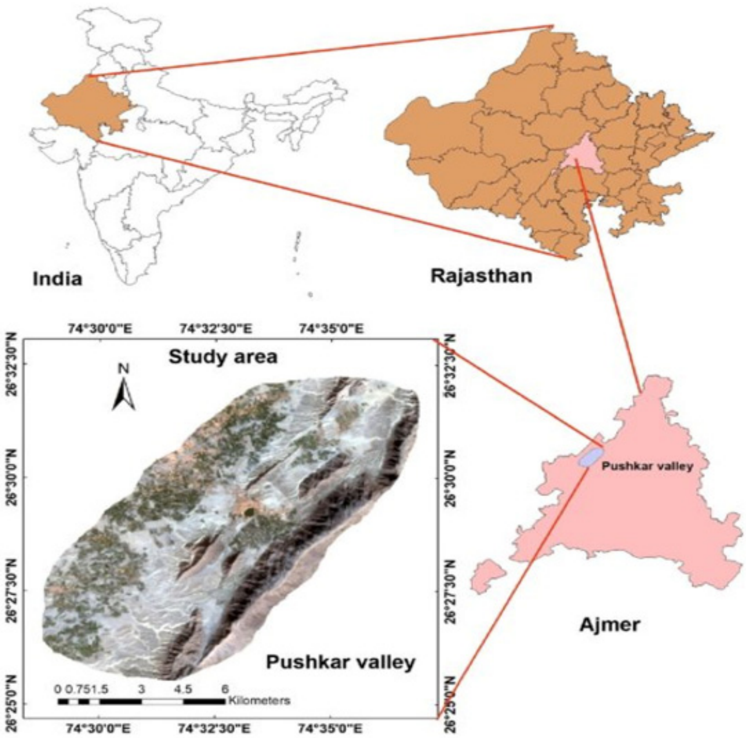

Figure 1. Location map of studied area—Pushkar, India. Source: https://ecologicalprocesses.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s13717-019-0193-5/figures/10 (accessed on 12 July 2021.)

Pushkar is a well-known tourist destination across India and the world, and tourism has been an essential part of its social, cultural, economic, and environmental development for several decades. Around 1.2 million domestic and international tourists visit Pushkar for its world-renowned and only Lord Brahma (Creator of Universe) temple in the world, the Ghats, Pushkar Lake, mythology, religious significance, spirituality, culture, cuisine, artefacts and handicraft, and the most popular annual international Camel Fair, which is one of the largest cattle festivals in the world. As shown in Table 1, the number of domestic and international tourist arrivals has increased substantially from 2010 to 2019 during the fair and regular days of the year. The Pushkar Fair (celebrated over a week in October or November during the time of Kartika Purnima, according to the Hindu calendar) contributes around 35% of total tourist arrivals to Pushkar.

The increasing number of tourist arrivals reflects the popularity and demand of Pushkar as a tourist destination. Over time, the natural environment of Pushkar has been completely changed and gave way to infrastructure development to meet the demand of a large number of tourists. The carrying capacity of the destination is challenging, especially during fair time. Due to tourism, the price of land, water, energy, accommodation, and tourism products and services have been increasing, and several adverse impacts, such as pollution, loss of natural vegetation and landscape, degradation of the natural environment, the worsening condition of Ghats and temples, congestion, and cultural dilution and commodification have been observed. These adverse impacts are due to irresponsible and unsustainable tourism practices being followed by tourists, local residents, and stakeholders for their personal gains and vested interests. This study measures local residents' satisfaction toward sustainable tourism development in Pushkar in order to understand existing problems more keenly and specifically.

Table 1. Tourist arrivals in Pushkar (2010–2019).

Tourist Arrivals at Non-Fair Days				Tourist Arrivals during Fair Total Tourist Arrivals				
Year	**Domestic Tourists**	**Foreigners**	**Total**	**Domestic Tourists**	**Foreigners**	**Total**	**% of Total Tourists**	**Fair and Non-Fair**
2010	736,566	4803	741,369	211,133	2101	213,234	28.76%	954,603
2011	807,334	5003	812,337	241,007	2229	243,236	29.94%	1,055,573
2012	836,298	6023	842,321	239,833	3406	243,239	28.87%	1,085,560
2013	866,047	6301	872,348	257,053	6208	263,261	30.17%	1,335,609
2014	955,730	6623	962,353	291,027	11,209	302,236	31.40%	1,264,589
2015	987,542	6806	994,348	311,307	11,905	323,212	32.50%	1,317,560
2016	1,035,383	7013	1,042,396	313,710	19,213	332,923	31.93%	1,375,309
2017	1,085,440	7102	1,092,542	373,135	23,102	393,135	35.98%	1,485,677
2018	1,135,037	7304	1,142,341	386,025	27,211	413,236	36.17%	1,555,577
2019	1,184,802	7543	1,192,345	391,041	32,193	423,234	35.49%	1,615,579

Source; Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC).

3. Literature Review

Sustainable tourism development (STD) is the long-term approach toward tourism growth and development without harming any aspect of the destination, local residents, tourists, and stakeholders, while simultaneously ensuring equal and fair distribution of tourism products, resources, costs, and benefits [21]. To ensure responsible and sustainable tourism development at any destination, tourists, local residents, and stakeholders need to work together, take collective decisions about tourism development, and strictly follow sustainable tourism practices [22]. STD creates a balance between physical and cultural environments of the destination [23]. The cooperation of local communities is necessary for responsible and sustainable tourism development; otherwise, it will benefit only a few stakeholders [10]. Indigenous culture, cuisine, community, and the environment must be protected and promoted to keep local residents satisfied with tourism development across destinations [24,25]. With the help of collective efforts of all the public and private stakeholders, the objective of sustainability could be achieved [13]. It is the responsibility of the government to develop tourism infrastructures, such as hotels, roads, airports, theme parks, amenities, tourist centers, etc., and create equal opportunities for all stakeholders [26]. Over time, several studies have been conducted on locals' satisfaction as a tool for sustainable tourism development [27–32].

Due to tourism development, local residents benefit from employment opportunities and economic benefits, and they can protect and promote indigenous culture, cuisine, and heritage [32,33]. Residents who experience better economic benefits are more supportive of and cooperative with tourism development at destinations [34]. The tourism development process could be controlled through the perception and satisfaction of local residents toward tourism. Local residents with a voice in tourism planning and development at destinations have a more positive perception and satisfaction toward tourism development [35]. When residents perceive the impact and benefits of tourism negatively, they have a low level of satisfaction toward tourism development [36]. There are several ways to develop tourism responsibly and sustainably, but a few specific indicators, tools, and guidelines are required to assess, evaluate, and test tourism development under the sustainability framework [37]. Audit and valuation of tourism resources are effective sustainability tools for evaluating costs and benefits of tourism development at tourism destinations [25]. Setting parameters for tourism growth and development, such as carrying capacity and acceptable change, could also make a huge contribution toward sustainable development [2,5,38]. The conceptual model of [39] is also quite popular and useful for sustainable tourism development, as this model designed some specific indicators to measure the physical, social, cultural, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism at the destination. In all such approaches, strong cooperation and coordination among governments, tourists, and local residents should be required at each level [40], and tourism needs to develop according to the needs and wants of local communities [41–45].

Several studies were conducted on various aspects of Pushkar connected to tourism: culture, cuisine, Pushkar Fair, cultural heritage [46,47]. The perception of tourists and satisfaction toward tourism development in Pushkar were studied by [48], stakeholders' satisfaction toward sustainable tourism development was studied by [49], and the foreign tourist satisfaction in Pushkar was studied by [50]. The impact of tourism development on natural resources was presented by [51]. There are also surveys connected to tourist satisfaction with hotels, festivals, and the condition of cultural heritage in Pushkar [52–54].

Moreover, several studies have been conducted on designing and developing methods, models, and scales for the measurement of perception, attitudes, and satisfaction of local residents toward different aspects of tourism, such as community development, economic development, socio-cultural development, environmental development, community attributes, and support for tourism, employment generation, regional and infrastructure development, and various other components of tourism in relation to local communities [55–58]. No previous study has been designed on any such scale for the investigation of local residents' satisfaction toward tourism development through socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development as core indicators of responsible and sustainable tourism development. This makes the present study innovative through the use of a constructed scale; locals' satisfaction measure scale (LSMS) is specific, unique, and uncommon compared to previous scales used, and it has wider significance and usage while developing responsible and sustainable tourism.

It was found that there is a dearth of literature regarding sustainable tourism development in Pushkar, India, concerning locals' satisfaction toward economic, socio-cultural and environmental development in the region. Based on this research gap, research objectives, hypotheses, studied variables, and a research framework were designed for the present research work.

4. Research Design and Methodology

The present study is empirical and exploratory in nature, conducted through normative survey method and qualitative and quantitative research methods under three phases:

Step 1. In the first phase of the study, a standardized tool was constructed—the locals' satisfaction measure scale (LSMS) measures the satisfaction level of local residents toward sustainable tourism development in the study area under socio-cultural, economic, and environmental parameters of sustainability. It comprises a total of 22 items under 3 categories, i.e., economic impact (7 items: jobs for local community, prices of goods and services, residents' income, quality of services, new markets, local entrepreneurship, infrastructure and public services improvement), socio-cultural impact (8 items: cultural activities, awareness of local heritage, preservation of local art, culture, and heritage, acculturation, living standards, changes in traditions and social norms, insecurity, social abuse), and environmental impact (7 items: urbanization, traffic congestion, environmental conservation, protection of natural habitats, destruction of natural environment, irritation due to tourism facilities, pollution). The statements assigned to each category are included in Appendix A of the questionnaire.

Step 2. Under the second phase, a self-constructed standardized tool (LSMS) was administered to local residents of Pushkar, Rajasthan, from January 2019 to July 2019 and 5 to 12 November (during the Pushkar international festival).

Step 3. In the last phase of the study, data collected from local residents were empirically and qualitatively analyzed, and based on research findings, conclusions and recommendations were made (Figure 2).

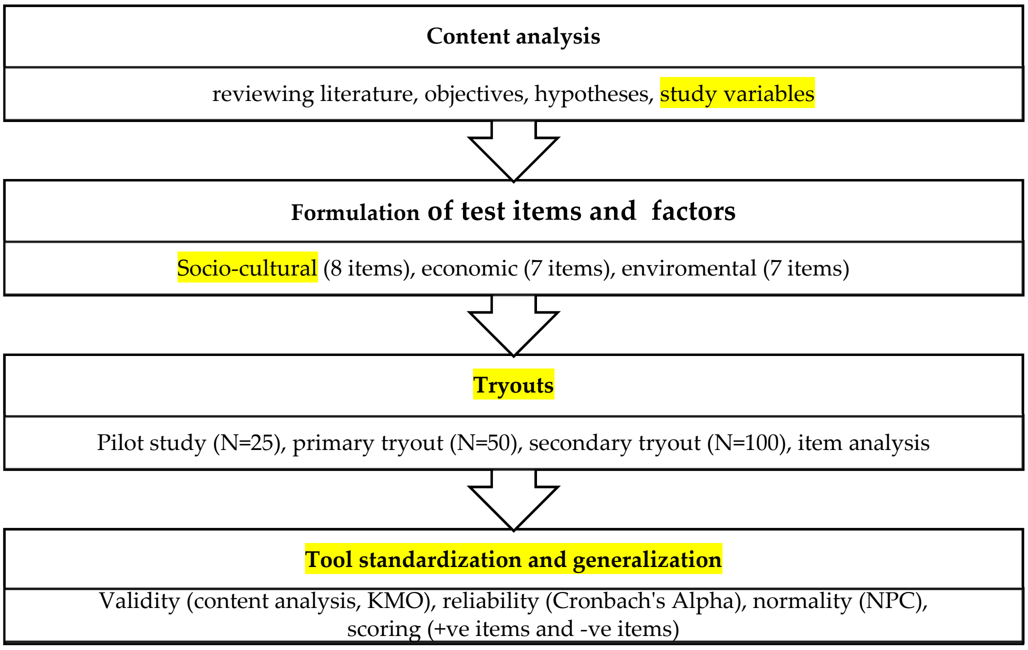

Figure 2. Literature search and tool construction.

According to the 2011 census conducted by the government of India, the population of Pushkar was 21,621. Out of this number, 200 were considered a sample that was an appropriate representation of the population and significant at 0.01 level of critical value and confidence interval under ($n = N \times X/(X + N - 1)$, where, $X = Z\alpha/22{*}p{*}(1 - p)/MOE2$) formula [35].The required sample was collected through a simple random sampling technique. The selection process and selected sample of 200 respondents were in accordance with the recommendation given by [59] for performing advanced multivariate statistics, such as regression analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM).

Regression analysis (H2 and O_2) is a way of predicting future events between a dependent (socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development) and one or more independent variables (also known as predictors), i.e., sustainable tourism development. The main uses of regression analysis are forecasting, time series modeling, and finding the cause–effect relationship between variables.

Multivariate correlation coefficient and SEM (H3 and O_3) were used to investigate the relationship among socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism development, and these relationships are explained by the SEM model in view of the consolidated effect on socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development on sustainable tourism development (Figure 3).

For constructing the Local Satisfaction Measure Scale (LSMS), similar previously constructed tools, such as Tourism Impact Attitude Scale (TIAS) by [60] and Sustainable Tourism Attitude Scale (SUS-TAS) by [61] were referred to. Present-scale LSMS has three elements: socio-cultural, economic, and environmental. As suggested by UNWTO, these are important, complete, and comprehensive elements when considering sustainable tourism development.

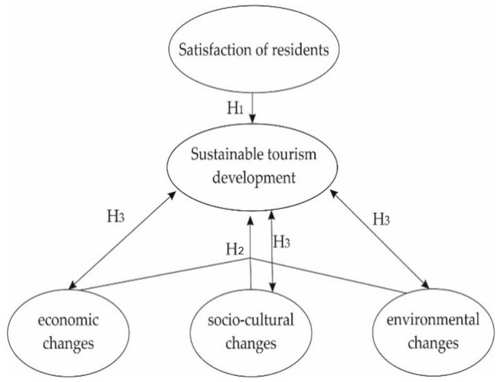

Figure 3. Conceptual and Analytical Framework.

While constructing the LSMS for creating a standardized tool, the steps followed included the construction of the tool and testing reliability, as well as the validation and normalization of the data [62]. A total of 22 items under 3 categories, i.e., economic impact (7 items), socio-cultural impact (8 items) and environmental impact (7 items) were considered (Appendix A).

First, content analysis, primary tryout (for the sample of 50 respondents), and expert opinions were taken. After making all the corrections based on the result of the primary tryout, a secondary tryout of LSMS was conducted on a sample of 100 respondents to perform item analysis and check the validity and reliability of the tool. For conducting the item analysis, two different methods were used: Method of Summated Ratings [57] was used for checking the differentiation power of each item in relation to others under overall tool testing, and each category went through a z-score and independent sample *t*-test. One sample *t*-test (H1 and O_1) was a univariate and parametric test used to determine satisfaction level of local residents about tourism development in the study area.

For measuring the relationship of each item with total items of the tool and individual items under each category, a correlation coefficient test was performed. After conducting both tests, it was found that all the selected items (22 in LSMS, 7 in economic impacts, 8 in socio-cultural impacts and 7 in environmental impacts) were specific and distinct from each other, and at the same time, all items were highly correlated with each other. For testing the validity of the LSMS tool, face validity, and content validity, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests [63] were conducted. The values of the KMO test were 0.839, 0.782, 0.811, and 0.756 for overall tool, economic impacts, socio-cultural impacts, and environmental impacts, respectively, and these values were quite significant at 0.001 level of significance. Furthermore, the reliability of the Local Satisfaction Measurement Scale (LSMS) in each category and in the event of item deletion was tested through Cronbach's Alpha test; the values found were in the range of 0.737 to 0.882 and significant at 0.001 level of significance. After performing the required tests, such as item analysis, category analysis, validity, and reliability, it became clear that the constructed LSMS tool was a standardized form of the questionnaire and most appropriate for conducting the present study and achieving and testing its proposed objectives and hypotheses. After tool construction, more than 220 samples were collected from local residents who were 18+ years of age. While editing, encoding, and scoring, it was found that few samples were incomplete; therefore, 200 samples were taken up for final analysis.

The data collected from 200 local residents were analyzed empirically and with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 23.0 and Structural Equation Modeling Software (EQS) 6.1 software packages. All responses were recorded over a five-point Likert scale and a nominal scale manually and analyzed through the following tools: descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, confirmatory category analysis, regression analysis, and structural equation modeling (SEM). Before proceeding to the data analysis, the normality of data was also checked to decide whether to use parametric inferential statistics (if data were normally distributed over NPC) or non-parametric inferential statistics (if data were not normally distributed over NPC). For the present study, data collected were normally distributed, as the values of Skewness and Kurtosis were −0.217 and −0.130, respectively, and these values fell within acceptable ranges of ±2 [64].

5. Residents' Satisfaction toward Tourism Development in Pushkar—Survey Results

The demographic information of local residents was recorded over nominal scale under the following variables: age, gender, marital status, education qualification, occupation, and income per month. After the analysis of demographic profiles of respondents, it was found that the highest number of respondents were from the 31 to 40 age group (52%), male (94.5%), married (88%), private employees (42%), and with an income between 25,001 Indian rupee (INR) to 50,000 INR (46%). Demographic profiles of local residents show that most of them were young, less educated and mainly depended on tourism for their survival (Table 2).

Table 2. Demographic profile of local residents.

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
	Age	
Below 20 Years	1	0.5
21–30	58	29
31–40	104	52
Above 40 Years	37	18.5
	Gender	
Male	189	94.5
Female	11	5.5
	Marital Status	
Married	176	88
Unmarried	24	12
Any Other	0	0
	Education	
Up to Secondary	39	19.5
Higher Secondary	87	43.5
Graduate	64	32
Post Graduate	10	05
Any Other	0	0
	Occupation	
Student	2	01
Government Employees	32	16
Private Employees	84	42
Businessmen	68	34
Any Other	14	07
	Income per Month (INR)	
Below 25,000	37	18.5
25,001–50,000	92	46
50,001–75,000	61	32
75,001–100,000	7	3.5
More Than 100,001	0	0

Source: own elaboration, primary data.

Residents of any destination play an essential role in developing tourism in responsible and sustainable ways [64]. To measure the satisfaction level of residents of Pushkar toward sustainable tourism development and its core parameters (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental development), one-sample *t*-test was conducted, and the results were computed in Table 3. To perform a one-sample *t*-test, a hypothesized mean or test value is required; in the case of perception and satisfaction, the highest mean value for positive items and the lowest mean value for negative items are considered as test values/expected values [65–67], as each tourism personnel member has the highest level of perception and wants to have the fullest satisfaction [68–72]. Thus, for overall satisfaction, the test value was 110 ($22 \times 5 = 110$), for environmental and economic satisfaction it was 35 ($7 \times 5 = 35$), and for socio-cultural satisfaction it was 40 ($8 \times 5 = 40$).

Table 3. Satisfaction level of local residents toward overall, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental development in Pushkar, India.

Variable	N	Hypothesize Mean	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t-Ratio	*p*-Value
Overall satisfaction of locals	200	110	76.01	3.364	33.990	142.893	0.000 **
Economic satisfaction of locals	200	35	27.71	1.671	7.295	61.743	0.000 **
Socio–cultural satisfaction of locals	200	40	29.18	2.088	10.820	73.287	0.000 **
Environmental satisfaction of locals	200	35	19.13	2.277	15.875	98.592	0.000 **

** Significant at 0.01 level; Source: own study.

Table 3 shows residents' satisfaction level toward overall economic, socio-cultural, and environmental development due to tourism. Overall tourism development values of the sample mean, hypothesized mean (test value), and standard deviation were 76.01, 110 and 03.364, respectively, and a mean difference of 33.990 was calculated between the mean score of locals' satisfaction and the hypothesized mean of overall tourism development in Pushkar, India. Furthermore, with the help of t-value (142.893) and *p*-value (0.000 **), it was confirmed that the existing difference of 33.990 between the hypothesized mean (test value) of overall tourism development in the study area and residents' satisfaction toward overall tourism development was significant at 0.01 level of significance, as the value of p was 0.000 ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$), which was less than 0.01. However, in the case of responsible and sustainable tourism development, there should be an insignificant difference between the test value of overall tourism development and a sample mean of local residents' satisfaction [73], whereas tourism development in Pushkar, India, and local residents' satisfaction toward it had a significant gap.

For local residents' satisfaction toward economic impacts of tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan, the values of sample mean, hypothesized mean (test value), and standard deviation were 27.71, 35, and 1.671, respectively. This shows the mean difference of 7.295 between the hypothesized mean of economic impacts of tourism and the sample mean of local residents' satisfaction toward it. Whether this difference was significant or not has been confirmed through values of t –ratio and p, which were 61.743 and 0.000 **. As the value of p was 0.000 ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$), which was less than 0.01, there was a significant difference between the economic impacts of tourism and the satisfaction level of local residents about it. However, each tourism activity has economic impacts on a destination, and it benefits the local residents directly or indirectly [74]. Collectively, local residents were satisfied about the economic development of the region due to tourism, but they were not fully satisfied with each parameter of sustainability. While analyzing the data, it was found that local residents were satisfied with test items, such as job creation, increased prices of goods, services, land, and other amenities, infrastructure, etc., whereas they showed their dissent about test items related to personal income, equal distribution of money, market for indigenous Rajasthani products, economic support from the government and NGOs, and overall economic development of the region and local communities. A complete and comprehensive economic development for local residents without any negative impact is most important in sustainable tourism development [75].

Satisfaction level of local residents toward socio-cultural impacts of tourism development in Pushkar was measured through one-sample *t*-test, where the values of the sample mean, hypothesized mean (test value), and standard deviation were 29.18, 40, and 2.088, respectively, and the mean difference of 10.820 was found between socio-cultural impacts of tourism and local residents' satisfaction toward this. Values of the t-ratio and p were also calculated in order to check whether existing difference was significant or not. The values of t-ratio and p were 73.287 and 0.000 **. Here, the value of p was 0.000 ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$), which was less than 0.01; therefore, the existing difference of 10.820 was significant at 0.01 level of significance between socio-cultural impacts of tourism and satisfaction level of local residents about it. The socio-cultural aspect of any community is a very sensitive phenomenon and can easily have a negative impact if it is not taken care of through responsibility and sustainability [76].

While conducting the interviews with local residents, it emerged that they were mainly facing socio-cultural problems, such as cultural clashes, demonstration effects, drug abuse, ethnocentrism, rape, alcoholism, devastation of indigenous culture, cuisine, heritage, art, artefacts, products, and services. Because of these negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism, local residents were not satisfied with present tourism development in the region and not sure about the future either. Positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism are crucial and vital for rejuvenating and developing responsible and sustainable tourism, and this has been well documented by several authors [77–81].

The environmental impacts of tourism were also measured through satisfaction level of local residents in the study area, where the value of the sample mean, hypothesized mean, and standard deviation were 19.13, 35, and 2.277, respectively, and a mean difference of 15.875 was found between environmental impacts of tourism and local residents' satisfaction toward it. Furthermore, with the help of t–ratio (98.592) and p-value (0.000 **), it was confirmed that the existing difference between local satisfaction and environmental impacts of tourism was significant at 0.01 level of significance, as the value of p was 0.000 ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$), which was less than 0.01. From the residents' viewpoint, Pushkar has been facing several environmental issues, such as pollution, loss of natural vegetation and landscape, degradation of the natural environment, Ghats, lake, and temples, congestion, and noise. Local residents believe that all of these have been a result of irresponsible and unsustainable tourism practices followed by the tourists, local residents, and stakeholders and that no strategic and comprehensive planning and guidelines as such have been followed by the local and state governments. Local residents' level of satisfaction toward environmental impacts of tourism is important for sustainable tourism development at any destination [27].

Figure 4 shows that local residents had high satisfaction with overall, economic, and socio-cultural tourism development in Pushkar, whereas they had average satisfaction with environmental development.

5.1. Impacts of Socio-Cultural, Economic, and Environmental Development on Sustainable Tourism Development

The socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development collectively impacts and leads to responsible and sustainable tourism development [82]. In order to measure the impacts of socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development in Pushkar, India on sustainable tourism development, a test H2, multiple regression analyses among socio-cultural development (IV), economic development (IV), environmental development (IV), and sustainable tourism development (DV) were performed.

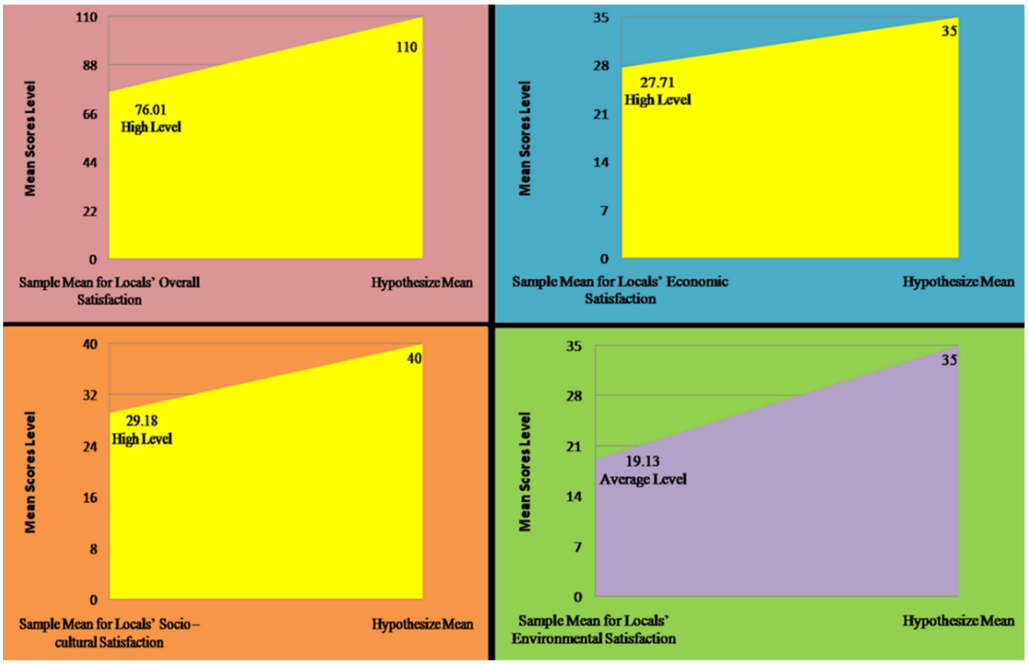

Figure 4. Satisfaction of residents toward overall, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of tourism in Pushkar, India.

Table 4 measured the impacts of socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development on sustainable tourism development individually and collectively through regression analysis, taking sustainable tourism development as a dependent variable (DV), and socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development as independent variables (IV). The values of correlation coefficient "R" and *p*-ratio between sustainable tourism development (DV) and socio-cultural development (IV) of 0.998 and 0.000 ** (0.000 < 0.01), respectively, show that there was a high positive correlation between sustainable tourism development and socio-cultural development. Furthermore, the extent of variability in sustainable tourism development due to socio-cultural development was confirmed through the coefficient of determination R^2 that was 0.996 and the share of independent variable (socio-cultural development) which was 99%. It means that socio-cultural development accounts for 99% in total sustainable and responsible tourism development. Positive socio-cultural development is an important parameter for sustainable tourism development at any destination, and it is also associated with other indicators of sustainability [83].

Table 4. Socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development (independent variable) and sustainable tourism development (dependent variable) in Pushkar.

Variable	R	R^2	Share of Independent Variable (%)	Dispersion of Regression Line	*p*-Value
Sustainable Tourism Development (DV)	Constant	0.996	99%	0.529	0.000 **
Socio-Cultural Development (IV)	0.998				
Sustainable Tourism Development (DV)	Constant	1.00	100%	0.101	0.000 **
Socio-Cultural Development (IV)	0.835				
Environmental Development (IV)	0.175				
Sustainable Tourism Development (DV)	Constant	1.00	100%	0.046	0.000 **
Socio-Cultural Development (IV)	0.316				
Environmental Development (IV)	0.250				
Economic Development (IV)	0.450				

** Significant at 0.01 level; Source: own elaboration.

For measuring the impacts of socio-cultural (IV) and environmental development (IV) collectively on sustainable tourism development (DV), the values of correlation coefficient R were 0.835 and 0.175 with socio-cultural and environmental development, respectively. The value of p-ratio was 0.000 ** (0.000 < 0.01) for both. Furthermore, the value of the coefficient of determination R^2 was 1.00 (0.835 + 0.175), which shows the extent of variability in the dependent variable (sustainable tourism development) because of independent variables (socio-cultural development and environmental development). With the help of obtained values of the correlation coefficient "R" and the coefficient of determination R2, it is concluded that there was a positive correlation between sustainable tourism development (DV) and socio-cultural development (IV) and environmental development (IV), and the share of both socio-cultural development and environmental development in development of sustainable tourism was 100% at the Pushkar region of Rajasthan, India (Table 5). Understanding local residents' satisfaction toward socio-cultural and environmental development can minimize their negative impacts and contribute to sustainable tourism development [84].

Table 5. Regression model for socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development and sustainable tourism development.

Model	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	p-Value
Constant (DV)	73.203	0.000 **
Socio-Cultural Development (IV)	0.998	0.000 **
Constant (DV)	72.867	0.000 **
Socio-Cultural Development (IV)	0.835	0.000 **
Environmental Development (IV)	0.175	0.000 **
Constant (DV)	71.485	0.000 **
Socio-Cultural Development (IV)	0.316	0.000 **
Environmental Development (IV)	0.250	0.000 **
Economic Development (IV)	0.450	0.000 **

** Significant at 0.01 level; Source: own elaboration.

With regard to the impact of all three parameters of sustainability, i.e., socio-cultural (IV), environmental (IV), and economic development (IV) on sustainable tourism development (DV), the values of the correlation coefficient R were 0.316, 0.250, and 0.450 for socio-cultural (IV), environmental (IV), and economic development (IV), respectively. The value of p-ratio was 0.000 ** (0.000 < 0.01) for all three indicators of sustainability. Furthermore, the value of the coefficient of determination R2, i.e., 1.00 (0.316 + 0.250 + 0.450), showed the extent of variability in a dependent variable (sustainable tourism development) because of independent variables (socio-cultural development, environmental development, and economic development). With the help of obtained values of the correlation coefficient R (0.316, 0.250 and 0.450 for socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development) and the coefficient of determination R2 1.00 (0.316 + 0.250 + 0.450), it can be concluded that there was positive correlation between sustainable tourism development (DV) and socio-cultural development (IV), environmental development (IV), and economic development (IV), and the share of all three in the overall development of responsible and sustainable tourism development in Pushkar was 100%. It is quite clear from the results above that socio-cultural, environmental, and economic developments are related to core components of sustainable tourism development, as also suggested in the study conducted [85].

Moreover, whether socio-cultural, environmental, and economic developments individually and collectively have a significant impact on sustainable tourism development or not was checked with the help of regression equations, and the results are presented in Table 5.

With the help of the above-computed regression analysis in Table 5, the following regression equations were formulated concerning the impacts of socio-cultural development (IV), environmental development (IV), and economic development (IV) on sustainable tourism development (DV) in Pushkar.

$$Y = \alpha 0 + \alpha 1\ (X1)$$

$$Sustainable\ Tourism\ Development = \alpha 0 + \alpha 1\ (Socio\text{-}Cultural\ Development)$$

$$Sustainable\ Tourism\ Development = 73.203 + 0.998\ (Socio\text{-}Cultural\ Development)$$

$$Y = \alpha 0 + \alpha 1\ (X1) + \alpha 2\ (X2)$$

$$Sustainable\ Tourism\ Development = \alpha 0 + \alpha 1\ (Socio\text{-}Cultural\ Development) + \alpha 2\ (Environmental\ Development)$$

$$Sustainable\ Tourism\ Development = 72.867 + 0.835\ (Socio\text{-}Cultural\ development) + 0.175\ (Environmental\ Development)$$

$$Y = \alpha 0 + \alpha 1\ (X1) + \alpha 2\ (X2) + \alpha 3\ (X3)$$

$$Sustainable\ Tourism\ Development = \alpha 0 + \alpha 1\ (Socio\text{-}Cultural\ Development) + \alpha 2\ (Environmental\ Development) + \alpha 3\ (Economic\ Development)$$

$$Sustainable\ Tourism\ Development = 71.485 + 0.316\ (Socio\text{-}Cultural\ Development) + 0.250\ (Environmental\ Development) + 0.450\ (Economic\ Development)$$

As per Table 5 and the above equations, dependent variables (sustainable tourism development) of 73.203, 72.876, and 71.485 were found with the scores of independent variables (socio-cultural development, socio-cultural and environmental development, socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development) 0.998, 0.835 + 0.175 and 0.316 + 0.250 + 0.450, respectively. It means that if the values of independent variables (socio-cultural development, socio-cultural and environmental development, socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development) are increased by one, then scores (73.203, 72.876, and 71.485) of the dependent variable (sustainable tourism development) are enhanced by 0.998, 0.835 + 0.175, and 0.316 + 0.250 + 0.450, respectively. Moreover, for all three cases above, the value of p-ratio was 0.000 (0.000 < 0.01), which was significant at 0.01 level of significance.

5.2. Relationship among Socio-Cultural, Environmental, Economic, and Sustainable Tourism Development

The effective and positive relationship among socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development strongly impacts responsible and sustainable tourism development [86]. As seen before, each one of them (socio-cultural, environmental and economic development) is equally and significantly important for sustainable tourism development, and each one of them individually and collectively must also have positive and effective relationship. To measure this relationship among socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development and test H3, structural equation modeling (SEM) was performed through the EQS 6.1 application, and the results were computed in Table 6.

Table 6. Relationship among socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism development.

Variable	Socio-Cultural Development	Environmental Development	Economic Development	Sustainable Tourism Development
Socio-Cultural Development	1.00	0.998 **	0.930 **	0.998 **
Environmental Development		1.00	0.906 **	0.992 **
Economic Development			1.00	0.952 **
Sustainable Tourism Development				1.00

** Significant at 0.01 level.

Table 6 shows the relationships among socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism developments with the help of structural equation modeling (SEM) in which the Pearson correlation coefficient *r* was calculated among socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism developments.

The values of the correlation coefficient between socio-cultural development and environmental development, economic development and sustainable tourism development was 0.998, 0.930 and 0.998, respectively. This means that socio-cultural development had a high positive relationship with environmental development, economic development, and sustainable tourism development (±0.9–±1.0 = very high correlation). Similarly, the values of the correlation coefficient between environmental development and economic development and sustainable tourism development was 0.906 and 0.992, respectively, which indicates that environmental development had a high positive relationship with economic development and sustainable tourism development (±0.9–±1.0 = very high correlation). Furthermore, the correlation coefficient values between economic development and sustainable tourism development were 0.952, indicating that economic development had a high positive relationship with sustainable tourism development (±0.9–±1.0 = very high correlation).

The regression and structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis results conclude that socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development had perfect positive relationships among themselves, and that they impacted responsible and sustainable tourism development in the study area. It is also well established that socio-cultural, environmental, and economic developments are core parameters of responsible and sustainable tourism development, as suggested by various studies conducted [86,87].

The SEM model in Figure 5 clearly shows the positive relationship of various parameters of sustainable tourism development, such as socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development among each other and with sustainable tourism development. Whenever socio-cultural development takes place at the destination, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism automatically accelerates by 99%, 93%, and 99%, respectively, and vice versa. Similarly, when environmental development occurs, economic and sustainable development increases by 90% and 99%, respectively, and vice versa. If economic development takes place, then sustainable tourism development increases by 95%. Moreover, it is clear from the model that sustainable tourism development depends on socio-cultural and environmental development, followed by economic development, as explained [87]. A simple allocation of funds ensures economic development cannot lead to sustainable tourism development.

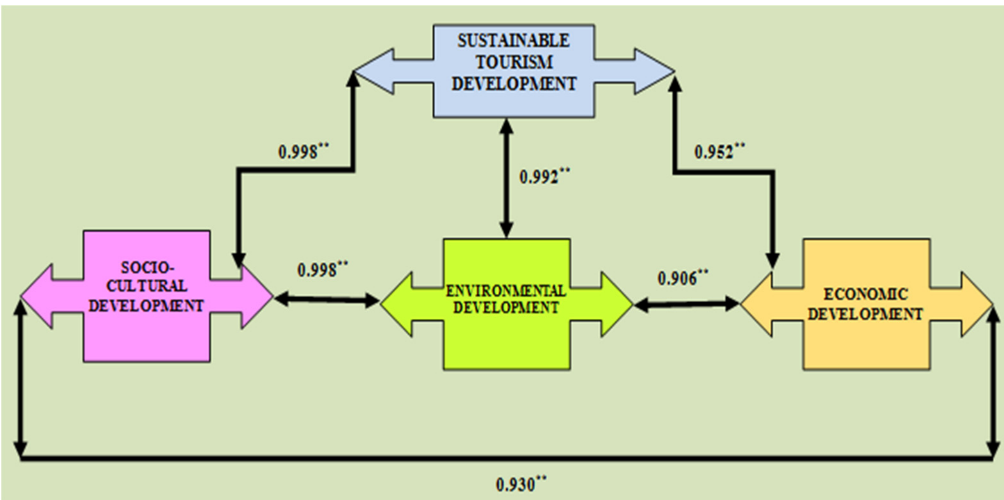

Figure 5. The SEM model final output. ** significant at 0.01 level of significance.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The research results present a complex picture of the relationships between sustainable tourism development and socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development. The latter plays the greatest role in the satisfaction of local residents. In order to achieve the set objectives of the study, hypotheses were formulated and verified: H1: "Local residents will have high level of satisfaction toward sustainable tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan." This has been rejected, with 0.01 level of significance and its corresponding objective "to measure the satisfaction level of local residents toward sustainable tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan" has been explained. Local residents of Pushkar are not satisfied with the overall tourism development in the area in terms of sustainability. There could be multiple reasons for local residents' dissatisfaction toward overall tourism development in Pushkar, such as existing government policies, infrastructure development, employment opportunities for local people, preservation and conversation of local culture, cuisine, and dance forms, heritage, Ghats, and temples, protection of ecology and environment, and many more. Policies and planning pertaining to tourism development at any destination should be based on the interests of local communities [88].

Individually and collectively, socio-cultural, environmental, and economic developments will determine the level of sustainable tourism development. Thus, the proposed null hypothesis H2—"socio-cultural, economic, and environmental developments have no significant impact on sustainable tourism"—is rejected, and its corresponding objective "to measure the impact of socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development on sustainable tourism development" has been explained. Socio-cultural, economic, and environmental developments have a significant impact on sustainable tourism development. Without positive socio-cultural, environmental, and economic development over the destinations, responsible and sustainable tourism cannot be developed [89–91]. There was a positive correlation between sustainable tourism development (DV) and socio-cultural development (IV), environmental development (IV), and economic development (IV), and the share of all three (socio-cultural development, environmental development, and economic development) was 100% in the overall development of responsible and sustainable tourism development in Pushkar. The proposed hypothesis H3—"socio-cultural, economic, environmental, and sustainable tourism developments have positive relationships"—is accepted, and its corresponding objective "to understand the relationships among socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism developments" has been explained.

The results of the present study reveal that local residents of Pushkar have different level of satisfaction toward socio-cultural development, environmental development, economic development, and overall sustainable tourism development. They have higher level of satisfaction with economic development, followed by socio-cultural and environmental development. There is a significant gap between local residents' satisfaction and socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and overall tourism development in the study area. It is not a good sign for sustainable tourism development in the region [92,93]. Furthermore, the findings of the study suggest that sustainable tourism development is significantly impacted through socio-cultural, environmental, and economic developments, as the beta values of regression equations for socio-cultural development, socio-cultural and environmental development and socio-cultural development, environmental development and economic development were 0.998, 1.00 (0.835 + 0.175) and 1.00 (0.316 + 0.250 + 0.450), respectively.

In order to develop tourism in sustainable ways, there should be an equal and appropriate development of socio-cultural, environmental, and economic aspects of a destination [90,94]. From the output of structural equation modeling (SEM), it is concluded that there is a perfect positive correlation among socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and sustainable tourism developments, as the value of the correlation coefficient "R" was above 0.9 in all cases. If development of any parameter of sustainability, such as socio-cultural, environmental, and economic, is increased, it also ensures development of other parameters of sustainability and vice versa.

On the basis of the findings of the present study, various recommendations are made to the state government, Rajasthan Tourism Development Cooperation, tourism stakeholders, local residents, and tourism planners of Pushkar tourism. It is important to reduce the negative socio-cultural impacts, such as cultural clashes, demonstration effect, drug abuse, racism, crime, robberies, prostitution, cheating on tourists, and rapes; negative environmental impacts, such as congestion, pollution, noise, degradation of natural resources, temple, Ghats, lake, waste and sewage problems, carrying capacity problems, shortage of drinking water, and ecological disturbances; and negative economic impacts, such as overdependency on tourism, lack of employment for local people, and the import of foreign tourism products, especially during the time of the Pushkar Fair. Over the years, these negative impacts have been quite visible, causing serious problems for sustainable tourism development. In order to minimize all the negative impacts, local residents, stakeholders, RTDC, and the Pushkar tourism board need to work collectively toward development and promotion of responsible and sustainable tourism.

Tourism organizations working in Pushkar, such as RTDC (Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation), RSHCL (Rajasthan State Hotel Corporation Limited), DoT (Department of Tourism), TIBs (Tourist Information Bureaus), and RITTMAN (Rajasthan Institute of Tourism and Travel Management) must play an active role in planning and managing tourism development sustainably. It is also equally important to ensure active participation and support of local bodies, such as RAJSICO (Rajasthan Small Industries Corporation), DRDA (District Rural Development Agency), AVS (Avas Vikas Sansthan), DC (District Collectorates), Municipal Councils, Municipal Corporations, and Gram Panchayats, as these are legitimate stakeholders at the destination and can play an important role toward management and development of sustainable tourism. All the stakeholders of tourism at Pushkar must work toward a common vision and direction, maintain carrying capacity, especially at the time of the Pushkar Fair, promote indigenous products, culture, heritage, and handicraft of Rajasthan, as well as strategic and scientific planning for sustainable tourism development and increasing the number of cattle during the festival (mainly camels, as their numbers keep decreasing year by year). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is also a big challenge to revive the tourism and Camel Fair in the region and ensure and develop tourism responsibly and sustainably.

There are some limitations in this study. First, the study focused on a relatively small sample of residents. Second, most of the completed questionnaires were collected during the fair, which could have influenced the respondents' answers. Other dimensions on scales could also have been used.

This study contributes to tourism literature by developing a coherent, comprehensive, and comparative understanding of the role of residents' satisfaction in the impact of tourism on economic, socio-cultural, and environmental changes. Researchers are discussing the development of coherent tools to study the effect of tourism on the local population [95–98]. Over a period of time, expectations of tourists and local residents about tourism development has been changing from general to specific, in accordance with their needs, wants, and derides [99]; therefore, it is important to ensure active participation of local residents and tourist feedback while designing and developing tourism policies and guidelines for the destinations [100].

The presented locals satisfaction measure scale can be used to measure residents' satisfaction toward tourism development in other places. Local satisfaction measurement scale (LSMS) and structural equation modeling (SEM) used in the present study could also be applicable in future research related to perception and satisfaction of residents toward tourism development under core indicator of sustainability. Depending on the conditions, the developed LSMS tool may be modified to adapt it to the specific needs of research on the satisfaction of the local community. However, present research work is limited to residents' satisfaction toward socio-cultural, economic, and environmental development of Pushkar as a sustainable tourism destination and does not include tourists, service providers, and stakeholders.

Author Contributions: This study has been designed and conducted by all of the authors collectively and comprehensively. The introduction, literature review, research design, methodology, tool construction, data collection, analysis, and conclusions were written and performed by S.T.; N.T.-P.; S.K.G. and M.P.S. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: The publication was funded by the Research Excellence Initiative program of the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland.

Acknowledgments: We thank local residents, stakeholders, and the tourism board of Pushkar, Rajasthan, for their active participation, valuable time and contribution. We also acknowledge and thank for the valuable input of our fellow research colleagues and professors.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Table 1. Economic Impact.

S.No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	Tourism has provided jobs for your local community	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Prices of goods and services have increased due to tourism development	5	4	3	2	1
3.	The personal income of local residents has increased due to tourism development	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Tourism development improves the quality of local services	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Tourism creates new markets for the local products and services	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Tourism development has increased the number of local entrepreneurs	1	2	3	4	5
7.	There is an improvement of roads and other public services due to tourism development	1	2	3	4	5

Table 2. Socio-Cultural Impacts.

S.No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	Tourism encourages varieties of socio-cultural activities performed by locals, e.g., arts, music, prayers, fair and festival etc.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Tourism has increased local awareness and recognition of the local culture and heritage	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Tourism has provided opportunities to conserve and preserve local art, culture and heritage	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Provides opportunities for acculturation	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Living standard of locals has increased because of tourism development	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Tourism has changed the traditional culture and social norms	5	4	3	2	1
7.	Tourism makes you feel insecure about your future	5	4	3	2	1
8.	Do you think tourists exaggerate problem of social abuse like drugs, prostitution, alcoholism	5	4	3	2	1

Table 3. Environmental Impact.

S.No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	Tourism development leads to urbanization	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Tourism development has resulted traffic congestion and crowd in the town	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Tourism developments strengthen efforts for environmental conservation	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Proper tourism development is required that Ghats, lake and natural habitats be protected at all times	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Construction of hotels & tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment	5	4	3	2	1
6.	Tourism facilities, amenities and ancillary service is cause irritation to the local communities	5	4	3	2	1
7.	Tourism has a negative impact on the environment through disproportionate pollution and damage to natural resources	5	4	3	2	1

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Measurement of Tourists' Perception and Satisfaction towards Tourism Development in Pushkar, Rajasthan

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Abstract: Over the period of time, developmental priorities of tourism has been changed from mass tourism to responsible and sustainable tourism. Tourism and Hospitality industry has impact on society, culture, economy and environment of the destination which affect millions of lives directly and indirectly. In order to develop tourism in sustainable ways active participation of local communities, tourism planners, visitors and other stakeholders is essential in well-coordinated and responsible manner. Tourists are the core component and legitimate stakeholders of tourism system at any destination. Therefore it is important to develop the facilities and amenities in the destination that satisfy the tourists as per their expectations, needs and wants. This research paper has measured perception and satisfaction level of tourists on five point Likert Scale towards tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan, India. It is both quantitative as well as qualitative assessment based on survey research design. Sample of 200 respondents which include 100 domestic and 100 international tourists, has been collected through self-administered questionnaire namely "Tourist Perception and Satisfaction Measurement Scale" (TPSS) and analyzed with the help of Descriptive (Frequencies, Mean and Standard Deviations) and inferential (Paired sample t-test) statistics.

Keywords: Perception, Satisfaction, Tourism Development and Sustainable Tourism.

Article History

Received: 15/10/2020; Accepted: 15/11/2020

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the largest service industries and keep growing with greater pace along with benefiting millions of people across the World such as creating employment, generating foreign exchange and leading physical, social, economic and environmental development. As per the 2019 tourism statistics published by United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) there were 1401 million tourists visited across the World and generated total 1448 USD billion. In the same year India had visited by 10.89 million tourists and received 29.62 USD billion. In order to increase tourists' inflow, Indian Government has provided e-visa facilities to 169 countries as on December 2019. Both perception and satisfaction of tourists are very important to measure in order to develop sustainable tourism. If a destination could measure the perception and provide highest level of satisfaction to tourists then these tourists would make repeat visits and spread positive word of mouth publicity, which is most required and important for sustainable tourism development.

Pushkar is one of the well-known tourist destination located in Indian state of Rajasthan and visited by thousands of tourists very year especially during the time of International Camel festival. As per Rajasthan Tourism Board in the year 2019, there were total 1192345 tourists visited the destination and out of them 423234 visited during the period of Pushkar fair. It has uncountable tourism resources to provide lively touristic experiences and satisfy needs and wants of the tourists who are coming from across the India and World throughout the year.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the growing light of tourism development, perceptions, satisfactions, motives and attitudes of tourists are also changing from general to specific and greatly influencing the development of tourism products, services and practices (Lamb et al. 2014). Solomon, 2001 explains tourist perception as a process of selection, organizing and interpreting the own travel experiences which he or she perceived as a form of basic stimuli such as sights, sounds, smells, taste, and feelings. After consuming travel products and services these perceptions converted into the satisfactions (Robbins & Coulter, 2005). Eraqi, 2006 has the view that quality and delivery of suitable tourism products and services significantly affect the perception and satisfaction level of tourists. Tourist perception and satisfaction keep changing from product to product and destination to destination (Kotler et al., 2010). Various methods and instruments have developed to measure tourist's perception and satisfaction such as Importance Performance Analysis IPA (Fishbein, 1963), SERVQUAL - Service Quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988), SERVPERF - Service Perception (Cronin and Taylor, 1992) and HOLSAT - Holiday Satisfaction (Alegre & Garau, 2010) etc.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the extensive review of literature related to tourists' perception, satisfaction and sustainable tourism development, a standardized tool namely **"Tourist Perception and Satisfaction Measurement Scale**" (TPSS) was developed in order to measure perception and satisfaction of tourists towards tourism development in the Pushkar region on 15 items i.e. Availability of information as a tourists destination, Accessibility of the destination (Air, Rail / Road), Over all cleanliness of the destination, Availability & Quality of accommodation units, Quality and varieties of food & beverages, Opportunities of Rest and Relaxation, Friendliness of local people, Availability of local handicraft and souvenir shops, ATM & Forex facilities, First aid medical facilities, Natural Beauty and climate, Availability and Quality of local cuisines, Availability Tourist attraction (Temples, Ghats, Arti, Lake etc.), Safety and security of visitors and Fair and festivals. The sample of 200 tourists (100 domestic and 100 international) has been collected through normative survey method and analyzed with the help of descriptive (Frequencies, Means and S.D.) and inferential (Paired sample t-test) statistics.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In order to measure the perception and satisfaction level of tourists towards tourism development in Pushkar region of Rajasthan, following objective and hypothesis has been formulated;

- To measure the perception and satisfaction level of tourists towards tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan.
- **$H_0$1** There is no significant difference between perception and satisfaction of tourists before and after the trip.
- **H1** There is a significant difference between perception and satisfaction of tourists before and after the trip.

For testing the Null hypothesis **H01** There is no significant difference between perception and satisfaction of tourists before and after the trip and achieving its corresponding objective "To measure the perception and satisfaction level of tourists towards tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan". Paired sample t- test and Gap analysis was conducted to measure the significant mean difference between overall tourists perception and satisfaction (N=200) and results are computed in table 1.1 and 1.2.

Table 1.1 Paired sample t-test results of overall perception and satisfaction of tourists before and after the trip

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Mean Difference	t- ratio	p-value
Tourists' Perception	200	65.74	5.095	5.80	14.241	0.000**
Tourists' Satisfaction	200	59.94	4.415			

**** Significant at 0.01 level** **Source: primary data**

***significant at 0.05 level**

Table 1.2 Results of Perception and Satisfaction of Tourists towards Tourism Development

Item No.	**Items for Perception and Satisfaction of Tourists**	Perception	Satisfaction
1.	Availability of information as a tourists destination	N= 200 Mean =65.74 S.D.= 5.095	N= 200 Mean =59.94 S.D.= 4.415
2.	Accessibility of the destination (Air, Rail / Road)		
3.	Over all cleanliness of the destination		
4.	Availability & Quality of accommodation units		
5.	Quality and varieties of food & beverages		
6.	Opportunities of Rest and Relaxation		
7.	Friendliness of local people		
8.	Availability of local handicraft and souvenir shops		
9.	ATM & Forex facilities		
10.	First aid medical facilities		
11.	Natural Beauty and climate		

12.	Availability and Quality of local cuisines		
13.	Availability Tourist attraction (Temples, Ghats, Arti, Lake etc.)		
14.	Safety and security of visitors		
15.	Fair and festivals		

For total tourists (N=200), table 1.1 and 1.2 shows the means of tourists' perception and satisfaction which are 65.74, 59.94 respectively and mean difference is 5.80 between them. Values of S.D. for tourists perception and satisfaction are 5.095, 4.415 respectively, 't' -ratio with value 14.241 indicates whether mean difference is significant or not with the help of degree of freedom and p value. Here with 0.000 p- value ($p=0.000<0.01$) which is less than 0.01 indicates a significant mean difference between perception and satisfaction of tourists before and after their trip at 0.01 level of significance. Thus null hypothesis **H01"**There is no significant difference between perception and satisfaction of tourists before and after the trip" is **rejected** and alternative hypothesis **H1 "**There is significant difference between perception and satisfaction of tourists before and after the trip" is **accepted** and its corresponding objective "To assess and evaluate the perception and satisfaction of tourists about tourism development" has also been achieved.

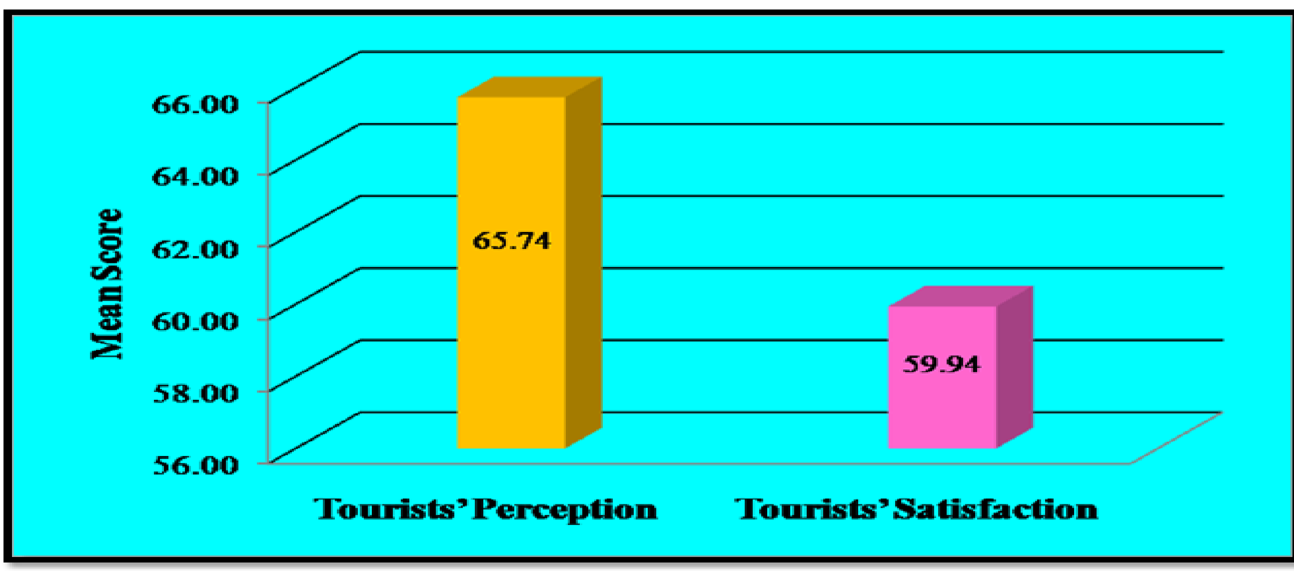

Figure 1.1 Comparative Mean score of overall perception & satisfaction of tourists before and after the trip.

Graphical presentation of mean scores in Figure 1.1 shows that; mean score of overall tourists' perception is greater than overall tourists' satisfaction before and after the trip.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. It was found that mean score of total tourists' perception was greater than mean score of their total satisfaction towards tourism development in the study area and Mean difference was significant. It explains that tourist's had high perception level as compare to their satisfaction towards tourism development.
2. Findings revealed that tourist's had high Perception level as compare to their satisfaction towards tourism development in Pushkar, Rajasthan. As per their expectations, destination was unable to fulfill their requirements, needs and wants which has created service quality Gap.
3. In order to minimize the Gap between service and quality and perception and satisfaction of tourists', it is recommended that tourism products and services at the destination must be designed as per tourists' requirements and would ensure highest level satisfaction to them.
4. There is need to develop a proper feedback methods for visitors so that they can share their expectations prior to visit the destinations and it would also help the service providers to cater travel requirements of visitors in most appropriate and productive way.
5. Develop the tourism in responsible and sustainable manners under core indicators of sustainability.
6. Need to maintain the carrying capacity, cleanliness at temples, Ghats, roads, public places and ecological balance.
7. Strengthen local communities and promote indigenous culture, cuisines, products, services and heritage as these are the prime attractions for tourists.
8. Ensure active participation of locals, stakeholders and visitors and follow **Triple Bottom Line** model.

CONCLUSION

The present study has measured the perception and satisfaction level of tourists' towards tourism development in the Pushkar region of Rajasthan, India. The Paired sample t-test and Gap analysis model is used to measure tourists' perception and satisfaction over 15 independent variables which are related to sustainable tourism development. It is clear from the findings of the study that tourists have high perception level as compare to their satisfaction towards tourism development in region and there is significant difference between their perception and satisfaction. Thus, it is concluded that there is need to pay more attention on requirements of tourists and provide them better services, facilities, amenities and activities as per their expectations so that they would get to have higher satisfaction towards tourism development at the destination which will make them to revisit the destination.

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USER ACCEPTANCE BEHAVIOUR OF ONLINE TRAVELERS: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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USER ACCEPTANCE BEHAVIOUR OF ONLINE TRAVELERS: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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Abstract

The current decade has witnessed an unprecedented growth in the online retail sector, especially, in the area of travel and hospitality. More and more people and entrepreneurs like to use this mode of sales and purchase because of the great deal of offers, ease of comparison, time saving and convenience. Various researches and organizations project this sector to replace significantly the traditional ways of retailing by 2050. The present study emphasize on the study of general patterns of user acceptance behavior towards online retail sector in general and that of Online Travel Agencies (OTA) in particular. The study further focuses on identifying the factor influencing the user acceptance towards OTA's and their modus operandi.The respondents are randomly selected from a pool of email id's and structured questionnaire based on 5 point Likert scale are used as survey instruments. The respondents include travel industry professionals, tourists and other acquaintances using online travel portals from time to time. The outcome of the study certainly play an important platform for the assimilation of the information regarding user acceptance toward OTA's and will enable the industry players to formulate the strategies towards retaining more satisfied users turning in repeated customers.

Key words: -*User acceptance behavior, online retail, Online Travel Agency.*

Introduction

"As our lives become more fractured and cluttered, it isn't surprising that consumers turn to the unrivalled convenience of the Internet when it comes to researching and buying products"(Jonathan Carson, President, International, Nielsen Online).

With the dawn of twenty first century, internet is progressively growing, which has paved the way for rapid growth of digital/electronic business phenomenon across the world. Internet has created a vigorous competitive revolution in the way consumer shops or buys today. With the advent of internet, e- commerce became widespread and the most preferred way of business transactions. So, online shopping or on-line retail is an arrangement of goods and services available online through electronic commerce medias mainly internet, intranet and worldwide web, which empowers the consumer to purchase directly from online shops at any time without stepping away from their home/work place.

Tourism has influenced the world economy to a huge extent. Travel and tourism's contribution to world GDP grew for the sixth consecutive year in 2015, rising to a total of 9.8% of world GDP (US$7.2 trillion). This sector now supports 284 million people in employment – i.e. 1 in 11 jobs (directly or indirectly),(WTTC Annual report, 2016).Internet has created revolution in the tourism industry. Online purchase of travel products has a substantial share in progressively increasing revenue generation from tourism industry. Online travel booking is the business-to-customer (B2C) transaction which contains online booking of airlines, hotel, travel packages, car rental and much more. Detailed product information, improved quality of services as well as the time saving convenience has made a call for buyers to choose more on-line travel services instead of traditional travel agencies. On-line travel booking provides earlier

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purchasing of tourism products through internet and consumed them in the offline environment which differentiates it from the traditional way of purchasing tourism product. So, it becomes vital for the online travel entrepreneur to understand the emergence of service efficiency to gain competitive advantages. Online travel agents mainly focus on developing a healthy competitive customer friendly market for tourism. Online travel agents (OTAs) such as Expedia, Make my trip, Yatra.com, Go Ibibo, Clear Trip, Travel Guru, have gained extensive attention since the beginning of electronic business development.

Userbehavioris understood as thorough study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes,used to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts, these processes have on the consumer and society. (Kuester, 2012).Analyzing consumer buying behaviour is not a new marvel for scholars, but it becomes essential to study on-line user buying behaviour in the highly competitive market and ever changing scenario of online travel business.The modern internet user in the twenty first century is young, professional, and affluent with higher levels of income and education. (Palumbo &Herbig, 1998).The academic researchers and the business world emphasize on the consumer behaviour of the electronic business, especially towards online shopping. In addition to this, parallel studies on the other hand focus on the consumer satisfaction about their online travel purchase. The study of consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, and effort) on consumption-related items (Schiffman&Kanuk, 1997).In developing countries like India, online travel business has a huge potential.Online travel business is the upcoming trend in India asit portrays a new way of selling the travel product without making a physical presence of customer. India has second largest internet population after China with 330-370 million users and it is expected to grow by at least 50 million yearly till 2020. India’s Internet economy will grow to almost Rs.10 trillion by 2018, accounting for 5% of the country’s gross domestic product as reported by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). (Juman, 2012) in his study reveals the rapid growth of India's travel marketplace and the middle class of the country.Moreover the young middle classis tech-savvy and complemented with strong hunger for travel. Today companies have entered this online space to tap its enormous potential. These players are professional and strategically very sound in attracting young population by offering convenience, choice, better bargain and speed of buying (Upasna, 2012).

Review of Literature

A number of research articles have been published to understand the buying behaviour along with the factors that influence attitudes and behavioursof online consumers in general and those of online travel product and services in particular. According to a report of Internet Retailer, (2011), the e-commerce/online retail sector has witnessed an unprecedented growth in the last decade and its growth is going to be continued in the years ahead. E- Commerce is covering the bigger slice of the overall retail sales pie and is growing far faster than retail sales (Beldona, 2005). The increasing growth of the internet has certainly had a significant impact on the way in which travel products and services are being marketed, distributed and sold(Gretzel, Fesenmaier, Formica & O’Leary, 2006). Similar to the traditional businesses, e-commerce can also be divided into four categories considering the characteristics of the buying and selling parties. These categories are: business to business (B2B), business to consumer (B2C) or consumer to consumer (C2C) or consumer to business (C2B) (Korper&Ellis, 2001; Kotler & Armstrong, 2012).The rise of the new information and communication technologies has created a new marketing reality and it changed the relations between the players (Xavier & Pereira, 2006). Marketers have realized and seen the rapidly growing status of the internet and most companies have seen it as a complement (Shaw, 2006). The competitive power and superiority has come to foreground and organizations’ understanding of competition has changed dramatically. In today's world businesses use electronic commerce channels to interact with consumer and to increase the current competitive advantage(Santos, 2003; Zhu, Wymer, & Chen, 2002; Lee & Lin, 2005). The tremendous growinggraph of the internet usage creates a hub of potential consumers to e-marketers, sothat marketers can convert their potential customers into loyal ones and retain them depending upon the service they offer and the perceived customer satisfaction of consumers (Luarn& Lin, 2003).

Some of studies uncovered the reality of today's busy consumer that consumer lives in a whirlwind of information and having a little patience for intricate purchase path (Sheridon Orr, 2013). Due to the information-intensive nature of online travel business, travel products are supposed to be very suitable for sale on the internet. The rapid growth of travel-related business houses, such as Expedia and Travelocity, along with the increasing percentage of online sale, has supported this insightful view.(Jun Vogt, & MacKay, 2007; Kah, Vogt, & MacKay., 2008; O'Connor, 1999). The e-commerce provides the consumers more and more choices, more information and more trends to buy, adding that e-commerce will remain as a medium to sell products, services and content over the internet(Korper& Ellis, 2001). Moreover individuals can buy or sell anything at any time, from anywhere through online shopping(Ko, et al, 2004). The suitability of one-stop shopping provided by online travel intermediaries is identified by their motivation to purchase travel products online. (Beldona et al.2005; Kay et al., 2000; Weber and Roehl, 1999).

A significant number of authors have defined consumer behaviour differently. Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the methods they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs (Kuester, 2012). The study of online consumer behaviour must focus on to know the current trend of purchasing as well as its importance for marketers to make a solid position in the current competitive market. Understanding the buying behaviour of consumers plays the key role in the fulfilment of main goals of a company. The research shows that the buyer behaviour is influenced by many external and internal factors, but the company can also influence the final process of buyer decision-making significantly by its efforts (Svatosova Veronika, 2013). Consumer behaviour of every individual is different from the other, depending on buying choices which is influenced by buying habits and choices that are in turn tampered by psychological and social drivers that affect purchase decision process (Brassington&Pettitt, 2000). The intention to purchase online heavily depends on factors like time saving, delivery time, less travel of distance,delivery terms, service offered, risk involved, privacy, security, personalization, search time,convenience, navigations, easy payment and customization of products etc.(Nysveen& Pedersen, 2004; Sherry, 2007;Wu, 2003;Childers et al., 2001;Tonita et al., 2004). The demographical factors like age, gender, education, income etc. also support the purchase intention positively (Bellman et al., 1999). Further, these demographic factors have the quality to influence customer trust as the primary factor for customer commitment and loyalty in addition to customer satisfaction. A few studies are done in the Indian context towards the user acceptance behaviour for online travel agency. In this paper the attempt has been made to study the user behaviour of Indian consumers and its impact on their purchase decision.

Statement of Problem

Online shopping is not very new medium in India. The demands and behaviour of customersare ever-changing in the new era of internet shopping and highly influenced by numerous factorsuch as culture, social class; references group relation, family, salary level and salary independency, age, gender etc.in spite of no face to face interaction. So it is important to analyze and identify factors influencingon-line consumers to shop travel online. These factors become success points for retailers to compete in the market and to make their product more compatible. Since customers are the determinants of marketing, identifying the factors that are essentially influencing the purchasing decision is important. Analyzing the process of shopping activities; how consumer reach final purchasing decision over the internet and what they buy, need to be recognized by online providers in order to satisfy and succeed in the competitive business environment. Thus, this research is intended to understand the online buying behaviour in developing countries like India and factors affecting online purchases.

Objective

The primary objective of the study is to analyze the user buying behaviour of online travel shoppers in India and to provide useful information to marketing professionals to develop a better marketing strategy to boost on-line travel.

Methodology

The present study is based on the survey of the online travel consumer focused on to understand various factors influencing the user acceptance behaviour towards the online travel agencies in India. The study is descriptive in nature and the respondents were selected randomly from a pool of e-mail addresses. Only 50 respondents have recorded their responses using online questionnaire. The data were collected using structure questionnaires seeking information regarding the demographic profile, motivation to use online travel shopping portals and factors influencing user acceptance behaviour through questions/statement based on a 5 point Likert scale. The data collected were then systematically encoded and analyzed using SPSS software. Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used as a tool to reduce the underlying dimension user acceptance behaviour along with inferences made using frequency distribution.

Research Findings

In order to record the factors influencing user buying behavior towards the online travel agencies. A total 50 respondents were surveyed through structured questionnaire. The demographic profile of the respondents is provided in table no-1.

Table no- 1
Demographic Profile (N=50)

Variables	Descriptions	Number	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	41	82
	Female	9	18
Age	18-25	5	10
	26-33	30	60
	34-41	11	22
	42-49	2	4
	50-57	2	4
Education Level	Higher secondary	4	8
	Graduate	6	12
	Post Graduate	33	66
	Other	7	14
Occupation	Student	16	32
	Government Service	11	22
	Private Service	17	34
	Business	6	12
Average Monthly Income	Up to Rs. 40,000/-	37	74
	Rs. 40,001/- to Rs. 70,000/-	9	18
	Rs. 70,001/- to Rs.1,00,000/-	1	2
	Rs. 1,00,001/- to 1,30,000/-	1	2
	Rs. 1,30,001/- to Rs. 1,60,000/-	1	2
	Above Rs. 1,60,00/-	1	2

Source: Primary data.

It is evident from the above table that out of total 50 respondent surveyed 41(82%) were male while 9 (18%) were female. In case of age majority 60% of the tourists belonged to the age group 26-33 years followed by 22% of the age group 34- 41 years, 10% of the age group of 18-25 years and 4% of sample belongedto the age group of 42-49 years and 50-57 years each. In case of educational level, the sample was categorized into 'Higher Secondary', 'Graduate', 'Post Graduate' and 'Other' with 8%, 12%, 66% and 14% respondents respectively.As far as the occupation of the respondent is concerned, 32% were students, 22% were government employee, 34% were private employee and 12% involved in business. Disposable income is one of the important determinant to opt for travel. Majority of the respondent (74%) were having their monthly income up to Rs. 40,000/-, followed by 18% having monthly income between Rs. 40,001/- to Rs. 70,000/-, and 2% each of respondents were equally having average monthly income ranging between Rs. 70,001/- to Rs.1, 00,000/-, 1,00,001/- to 1,30,000/-, Rs. 1, 30,001/- to Rs. 1, 60,000/- and above Rs. 1,60,000/-respectively

It is important to understand the motivation of customers for availing online travel products in order to find out the user acceptance behavior of the people purchasing products and services from various online travel agencies. The responses of respondents were sought on the various aspects of online travel business that can motivate them to avail their products and services and are presented in the Table no- 2.

Table no- 2
Motivationto avail online travel products and services

Motivating Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	S. D.
Travel Deals	14 (28)	20 (40)	11 (22)	3 (6)	2 (4)	2.18	1.04
Purpose of Visit	26 (52)	22 (44)	2 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1.52	.57
Place Description	19 (38)	23 (46)	7 (14)	1 (2)	0 (0)	1.80	.75
Facility	20 (40)	24 (48)	6 (12)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1.72	.67
Experience Review	20 (40)	23 (46)	5 (10)	2 (4)	0 (0)	1.78	.78
Customer Data Management	7 (14)	17 (34)	18 (36)	5 (10)	3 (6)	2.60	1.04
Insurance Coverage	10 (20)	10 (20)	12 (24)	12 (24)	6 (12)	2.88	1.31
Authenticated Travel related Info	16 (32)	26 (52)	5 (10)	2 (4)	1 (2)	1.92	.87
Customer Care services	18 (36)	21 (42)	7 (14)	2 (4)	2 (4)	1.98	1.02

Source: Primary Data. Figures shown in the brackets are the percentage of row total.

The responses were collected on the basis of a 5 point Likert scale and the results are interpreted using mean score following the thumb rule where mean score < 1.5 denotes strongly agree, means between 1.5 to 2.5 < agree >, 2.5 to 3.5 < neutral>, 3.5 to 4.5 < disagree> and > 4.5 is for strongly disagree. The table reveals that majority of the respondents were agreed that all the factors shown in the table have motivated them to buy travel related products and services from online travel agencies (mean value ranging between 1.5 and 2.5) except two factors including customer data management and insurance coverage about which most of the respondents were neutral (mean value ranging between 2.5 and 3.5).

In order to evaluate the underlying dimensions of user acceptance behavior of OTAs based on the views of respondents, principal component analysis with varimax rotation was conducted using all the 17 independent variables pertaining to the user acceptance behavior towards OTAs. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistics of 0.702 and Bartlett's test of Sphericity statistics of 407.95 indicated that the data were suitable for conducting factor analysis. A four factor solution was obtained on the basis of minimum Eigen value of one. These factors cumulatively explained 65.29% of the variance in the data set. The table no-3 depicts the results of factor analysis.

Factor one was labeled as 'Better offers' which consists of six items measuring convenience, information generation, better offers, degree of accessibility, choices and trade-offs and money saving. With an Eigen Value of 5.17, the factor accounted for 30.41per cent of total variance. The relatively large proportion of variance explained by this factor suggests that items under the factor 'Better offers' are influential dimension for shaping the online shopping behavior towards the OTAs. Factor two, focusing on the 'provision of information' by the OTAs to their users contained four items including the information regarding travel offer is very complex, information provided is not trust worthy and is accurate and updated along with the concern about disclosing personal information to OTAs. The Eigen value for this factor is 3.02 and it shares 17.77% of total variance that denotes that this factor moderately influences the user acceptance bahaviour. The third factor, labeled as 'purchase decision' with the eigen value of 1.57 shares 9.29% of the total variance also comprises of four items related to planning and buying travel online, consulting the online travel portal, likelihood to purchase travel products only from the familiar websites and convenience to search travel products offline. This factor also shows a moderate but significant influence on the user acceptance behavior. The fourth factor, labeled as 'orientation &appropriateness' included three items having an eigen value of 1.32 with a shared variance of 7.81% is also significant in determining the user acceptance behavior though at a moderate extent.

Further, these four factors obtained from principal component analysis were tested for reliability through Cronbach's Alphacoefficients. The coefficients ranged from a high (0.86) to a low (0.50) which indicate that the variables displayed a moderate correlation with their factor groupings and may be regarded as internally consistent and stable.

Table no-3

Factor Analysis of Attributes related to User Acceptance Behavior

S. No.	Attributes related to User Acceptance Behaviour	Valid Factors				Alpha
		F1	F2	F3	F4	
1	It is more convenient to book on-line.	**.694**	-.272	-.202	.220	.862
2	I collect information exclusively from the On-line travel Agency.	**.580**	.065	.292	.177	
6	OTA provides better offers than traditional travel agencies.	**.878**	-.098	.068	.086	
7	The degree of accessibility is higher in OTAs relatively to traditional travel agencies.	**.811**	-.091	.044	.228	
8	Travel Web sites clearly present my choices and trade-offs.	**.750**	-.058	.339	-.101	
9	On line Travel Web sites help me save money.	**.726**	-.014	.379	-.062	
14	The information regarding travel offer found on OTA is very complex.	-.078	**.773**	.257	.160	.664
15	I am concerned about disclosing personal information to OTA.	.031	**.772**	-.116	.156	
16	I do not find the information provided by OTA as trust Worthy.	-.070	**.878**	.054	-.053	
17	Information provided by OTA is accurate and updated.	.193	**.712**	.049	.116	
3	I enjoy planning and buying travel online.	.412	.042	**.660**	-.081	.689
4	Consulting the online travel portal is sufficient.	.162	-.095	**.779**	.345	
12	I am likely to purchase travel products only from the websites I am familiar with.	.244	-.008	**.549**	.424	
13	It´s more convenient to search travel offline.	-.068	.357	**.683**	-.098	
5	The possibility into getting in touch with online travel agency is higher relative to traditional travel agency.	.352	-.179	.001	**.706**	.503
10	It is hard to get orientation from OTA.	.167	.351	.273	**.552**	
11	I hardly find the appropriate product for me through OTA.	-.088	.370	.023	**.771**	
	Eigen Values	5.17	3.02	1.57	1.32	
	% of Variance	30.41	17.77	9.29	7.81	
	Cumulative % of Variance	30.41	48.19	57.48	65.29	
	Factor Level	Better offers	Provision of information	Purchase decision	Orientation & Appropriateness	

Source: Primary Data. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation.

Conclusion

Online selling of travel product is gaining substantial popularity in modern day world. The results of present research support the statement that the 'modern online consumer is young, educated and tech- savvy professionals'. It is evident from the results that majority of the respondents were from the age group 26-33 years with educational qualification post graduate. Despite having a moderate level of income this segment likes to purchase products and services from online shopping portals. Plethora of travel deals, place description, varieties of facilities and services, experience reviews by users, authenticated travel related information and customer care services are the prime motivators for online travel consumers. However, the online travel consumers were a bit hesitant about the provision of customer data management and insurance coverage services provided by these portals.Better offers, provision of information, purchase decision and orientation and appropriateness were found as major determinants for the acceptance of online mode of travel purchasing.The study further identifies minor factors like higher degree of accessibility, clear presentation of choices and trade-offs, money saving, provision of accurate and updated information and ease and joy of planning and buying travel online also influences the acceptance of online travel portals which has to emphasized by OTAs in order to increase the number of online users (customers)

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International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Systems
Volume 15 Issue 1 June 2022
ISSN: 0974-6250 (Print)

Hospitality & Tourism Systems

Pro-Poor Tourism as an Antecedent of Poverty Alleviation: An Assessment of the Local Community Perception

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Abstract *Tourism is a creative instrument for poverty reduction. Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) provides economic, socio-cultural and even environmental benefits to the globally impoverished community. The main goal of this study is to demystify the constructs of Pro-Poor Tourism and investigate the local community perception regarding the role of tourism in poverty alleviation. The present study attempts to understand the development of pro-poor tourism from social, cultural and economic dimensions by delving into the perceptions of the locally disadvantageous community providing tourism services in the Kashmir region of India. Primary and secondary data have been collected from the targeted respondents through a structured questionnaire for conducting this research. The study areas that have been selected for conducting the present study are Gulmarg (Study Area A) and Pahalgam (Study Area B) from the Kashmir region. The data collected were analysed through descriptive statistics, factor analysis and regression analysis to draw reliable and representative interpretations. The findings of this study may help the strategy makers and other community groups develop effective policy interventions for developing creative tourism practices as an anti-poverty programme that has local and global implications for promoting tourism for Poverty alleviation, ensuring sustainability.*

Keywords: *Pro-Poor Tourism, Tourism Development, Poverty Alleviation, Local Community*

INTRODUCTION

Poverty alleviation has become one of the foremost issues for many countries, including India. To eradicate it is one of the most significant global challenges. In many countries, tourism is an essential contributor to economic development and accomplishing the Millennium Development Goal (UNWTO, 2011). It is one of the foremost economic sectors, contributing to the development of world trade and boosting prosperity. When poverty reduction became a significant challenge for the world, the United Nations came up with Millennium Development Goals in the 1990s to reduce the world's extreme poverty level to half by 2015 (Zhao, 2016). In the Millennium Development Goals, several targets are set for some of the significant dimensions of poverty like hunger, access to drinking water, daily income, maternal mortality, education and a range of other priorities (UN GA, 2000; World Bank, 2005). Poverty means a lack of essential capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a clinic or school to go to, not having the land to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities (IMF & IDA, 1999).

PRO-POOR TOURISM: MEANINGS

Pro-Poor Tourism argues that tourism has a broad range of impacts on the poor (Winters et al., 2013). Amongst those, financial, livelihood, access to human, physical, social and natural capital, cultural values, optimism, pride and

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participation and vulnerability to risk and exploitation are some of the aspects which need to be considered. (Ashley et al., 2001). Pro-Poor Tourism is broadly defined as "tourism that generates net benefits for the poor (Manwa & Manwa (2014)). This encompasses economic, environmental, social, and cultural dimensions" (Ashley et al., 1999; WTO, 2002). It is neither a product nor a sector. Any form of tourism can be pro-poor. DFID (1999) report argues that PPT is not necessarily an appropriate intervention for poverty alleviation in all countries. This indicates that developing countries with high potential for tourism development can apply tourism as a poverty alleviation tool; however, it will be feasible only when there is a high level of community participation in the tourism process.

Local Community involvement plays a pivotal role in tourism development, as it has a symbiotic impact on the community towards employability and revenue generation (Kishnani, 2019). This helps alleviate the poverty of other stakeholders involved in the tourism process, either directly or indirectly. In this study, the main emphasis is laid on tourism managed and controlled by the community. With the active participation of both the community and the industry, there is a high impact on the community's livelihood and local ways of life. These local people boost their economy and generate employment (Bansal, Kansal & Walia, 2018).

Attempts have been made to link tourism with poverty reduction efforts in many countries like Africa, South America and the Caribbean, as observed from the studies of Folarin and Adeniyi (2019), Mthembu and Mutambara (2018) and Zhao et al. (2019). Nevertheless, there is a dearth of studies in the context of Jammu and Kashmir. As per the findings of the Tendulkar Committee, there was a decrease of 2.8% in the population living below the poverty line in Jammu and Kashmir from 13.2% in 2004-05 to 10.4% in 2011-12 (Jyoti, 2013). Due to the contribution of the service sector, especially the tourism industry, poverty has mitigated to some extent in Jammu and Kashmir. Based on this, the study investigates the host community perception regarding the role of tourism in poverty alleviation in Jammu and Kashmir. Very few studies have reported local community participation in poverty alleviation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL INSIGHTS

Tourism is considered an influential supporter of socio-economic development, particularly in developing countries (Senate Economic Planning Office, 2006; Honey & Gilpin, 2009). Although tourism has been adopted as a universal developmental option, still it is a subject of intense debate, the extent to which economic and social benefits inevitably follow the introduction and promotion of the tourism sector (Hall, 2007).

The most compelling reason for adopting tourism as a developmental strategy is its potential contribution to the local or national economy, as well as to the balance of payments (Stabler, Papatheodorou & Sinclair, 2010). Pro-poor tourism refers to the development of tourism so that it contributes to the cause of poverty alleviation. It has been defined as "tourism that results in increased benefits for poor people (Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership, 2004). Further, it explains pro-poor tourism in terms of the type of local benefits achieved like economic, other livelihood benefits (such as physical, social or cultural), and less tangible benefits (Gans, 1971). Zhao and Ritchie (2007) propose an integrative framework for Pro-Poor Tourism, which states that any effort for development to be effective should consider three factors, i.e., opportunity, empowerment and security. Pro-Poor Tourism is not a specific product or sector of tourism, rather an overall approach that aims to unlock opportunities for economic gain, other livelihood benefits or engagement of the poor in the decision-making process (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001). Pro-Poor Tourism tries to provide a chance to the poor for their involvement in the tourism market by investing in it through human resource involvement or skill (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008; Zhao et al., 2019). Therefore, Pro-Poor Tourism aims to open up access for the poor to the tourism sector, thereby providing them with a vital source of income (Ashley et al., 2001).

Tourism is also widely considered a labour-intensive industry and hence an effective source of employment in destination areas, whether as direct employment in hotels, restaurants, or through indirect and informal employment (Scheyvens, 2002). For tourism to provide more jobs, entrepreneurship, and income generation, collaboration is required between the local businesses and policymakers to ensure faster tourism development (Mthembu & Mutambara, 2018). In some cases, poor people are not the beneficiaries of tourism. Instead, those already in a tourism system position take advantage of PPT-related opportunities (Truong, 2013). Besides economic development and employment, tourism also brings infrastructural development to destinations (Gupta & Vijay, 2013). The growth of tourism creates a need for improved infrastructure in developing economies. In African countries, tourism development has a high-level impact on poverty alleviation and has been considered a potential poverty reduction tool for the future (Folarin & Adeniyi, 2019). Modernised transportation systems, water supplies and improvement in sanitation arrangements; better access to roads, airports, telephone systems, and other public utilities may have to be extended to realise the benefits of PPT in these countries (WTO, 2002b).

More often than not, the government and community representatives operate in asymmetric organisational structures. For community actors to acquire some leverage in their negotiations with the administration, they have to organise themselves into larger collectives to bridge the local and regional or national interests (Garg, 2017). It could be argued that all negotiation processes reflect prevailing power relations, and a community-based management model could mitigate such conflict, facilitate participation between communities and authorities at all levels and, eventually, benefit enterprise creation (Boonzaaier, 2012). Public-Private Partnerships are essential tools to ensure stakeholder engagement in a burgeoning economy, especially between government, large enterprises, and the local community (Panday & Joshi, 2016).

SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY (SET) AND INTERACTIONIST THEORY

Social Exchange Theory holds that people or communities tend to trade their support for projects in exchange for the benefits they stand to get from those initiatives. In other words, the residents' support for tourism will depend mainly on the benefits that they get or are likely to get from tourism. Hence, by weighing the economic, social, cultural, and environmental concerns, residents of a community decide whether to support tourism ventures. This is cited in the study by Panday and Joshi (2016).

Interactionist Theory focuses on meaning, identity, social relationships, and sub-cultures at a destination. It is based on the idea that human beings interact with one another, give meaning to themselves, others, and the world around them based on earnings to make decisions and take action in their everyday lives. According to Interactionist Theory, humans do not passively respond to the world around them. There should be a collaboration between the different tourism stakeholders to better the local community and the poverty alleviation of the community (Gore, 2019).

STUDY AREA: NATURE AND SCALE OF POVERTY

According to the 2011 Census, Jammu and Kashmir rank 19^{th} in population with 12541302 souls, i.e. 1.25 crore. Its area is 222236 Sq. Km. The state is agrarian and backward in the industrial sector (Sofi, 2014). The share of agriculture and allied sector has also decreased from 51.05% in 1980-81 to 31.51% in 1999-2000, 27.11% in 2005-2006 and 22.89% in 2010-2011 (Digest of Statistics, 2013).

As per the findings of the Tendulkar Committee, 10.4% of the population were living below the poverty line in Jammu in 2011-2012. The eastern part of the state accounts for a large part of its impoverished population. The three districts of Gulmarg, Kupwara and Pahalgam together account for one-third of the total poor (Bhandari & Chakraborty, 2016). Tendulkar Committee report reflected the impoverished conditions of J&K both in rural and urban settings along with other Indian states based on NSSO 61^{st} round 2004-2005. Jammu and Kashmir have 13.2% of the population living below the poverty line. Against this backdrop, this study tries to locate the role of Pro-Poor Tourism in the poverty alleviation of the local community.

Source:www.travelinkashmir.com

Fig. 1: Study Area Map

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the theoretical understandings of pro-poor tourism as a sustainable tourism practice.
- To measure the underlying dimensions of pro-poor tourism.
- To study the perception of the local community about the role of pro-poor tourism as an intervention to alleviate poverty.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The current study combines exploratory, qualitative, quantitative and descriptive methods and examines qualitative and quantitative data collected by adopting a mixed approach research design. This study aims to understand Pro-Poor Tourism as a creative touristic practice and gain support for the theoretical underpinnings by conducting an empirical investigation into the areas identified for carrying out the study and empirically check the impact of PPT on poverty alleviation.

SURVEY DESIGN

The study was carried out in Gulmarg (Study Area A) and Pahalgam (Study Area B) of the Kashmir region in India. Both the areas are known for their tourism resources and offer rich tourism products to tourists like pilgrimage tourism, adventure tourism, eco-tourism, leisure tourism, wellness tourism, and sports tourism. These destinations are simultaneously inhabited by poor communities, whose livelihood directly or indirectly depend on touristic activities and tourism income (Gupta & Raina, 2009; Najar, 2018).

Tourist arrivals to Kashmir were 611354, 316424 and 43059 in 2017, 2018 and 2019, respectively, during August to December. In 2019 from August to December, tourist arrivals in Kashmir were reduced by 86% due to political instability (Bhat & Choudhury, 2019; The WIRE, 2020). These destinations possess tremendous tourism potential, but they fail to attract high tourist arrivals (Najar & Saini, 2018).

Table 1: Tourist Arrivals in Kashmir

Year (During August -December)	Tourist Arrivals
2017	611354
2018	316424
2019	43059

Source: Bhat and Choudhury (2019).

SURVEY INSTRUMENTATION

Besides conducting interviews, 170 self-structured questionnaires based on a 5-point Likert scale were used to analyse the respondents' perceptions (local villagers, tea stall owners, food outlet retailers, provisional stores, pony operators, roadside vendors, and guides. These sample units were selected based on their main contribution towards the various tourism services at these destinations. These service providers belong to the local community of Pahalgam and Gulmarg. The sample size was based on the Krejcie, and Morgan (1970) sample size calculation formula, by which the sample size calculated was 170 respondents to appraise the effect of tourism on poverty alleviation. Since the respondents were spread across the length and breadth of the destinations and give an equal representation, the random sampling method was used to select the respondents. Out of 170 responses, only 100 responses were found useful for the analysis.

The self-structured questionnaire was developed based on the interactions with the local community and other stakeholders and some other similar studies undertaken by Wang (2006); Panday and Joshi (2016). The instrument comprises two sections. Section A consists of demographic information, and Section B consists of the statements to evaluate the effect of tourism on poverty alleviation. The scale is ranged from 1 to 5 (where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree). The validity of the developed scale was checked after cross-checking it with tourism industry stakeholders and tourism academicians.

For the qualitative assessment, in-depth interviews were conducted to understand the grass-root level perception. The objective of conducting open-ended interviews with six categories of the local community regarding tourism's contribution to poverty alleviation and employment opportunities was to enrich the current study and strengthen the investigation of the community perception regarding the role of tourism in poverty mitigation. The interview checklist was prepared after thorough literature scanning and review of the study of Yin (2011) to reach the ground level inferences. The idea of conducting a qualitative investigation was to support the quantitative assessment conducted in the study's first phase.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis and interpretation estimate the significance of the results concerning the research problem. It is the organisation of raw data to extract useful information. The analysis of the data has been done by using SPSS version 17.0. The statistical tools used in the study to measure the various constructs are the mean score, standard deviation and percentages. The dimension evaluation is done to identify the most critical areas where the intervention is indispensable. To identify the underlying dimensions of Pro-Poor Tourism, Factor Analysis has been performed. Regression Analysis has been used to achieve the research objectives and understand the relationship between the predictor variable and the criterion variable.

In Study area A, Male and females constitute 82.4% and 17.6%, respectively; 3.5% are aged up to 18 years, 50% aged between 18-30 years, 39.4% respondents aged between 30 to 50 years and 7.1% respondents aged above 50 years. About 28.2% of the respondents have a monthly income of less than Rs 10,000, 40% have an income of Rs 10,000 - Rs 20,000 and 26.5% have an income of Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000, and 5.29% of the respondents had a monthly income of above Rs 30,000. In Study Area B, Male and females constitute 79.4% and 20.6%, respectively; 5% are aged up to 18 years, 40% are aged between 18 to 30 years, 35% respondents aged between 30 to 50 years and 20% respondents aged above 50 years. About 40% of the respondents have a monthly income of less than Rs 8,000, 30% have an income of Rs 10,000 - Rs 20,000 and 25% have an income of Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000, and 5% of the respondents had a monthly income of above Rs 30,000.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Economic Interventions as pro-poverty measures	4.4512	.24331	1
Socio-Cultural interventions as pro-poverty measures	4.0221	.27979	3
Environmental interventions as pro-poverty measures	4.0647	.35492	2
TOTAL	4.1793	.20549	

Source: Primary data.

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 include the mean values of recognised factors of Pro-Poor Tourism. From analysing the data, it can be incidental that respondents agree that tourism helps in reducing poverty. According to the respondents' opinion, economic interventions are the most significant factors for alleviating poverty in the area. Environmental and socio-cultural interventions are the second and third significant and contributing factors.

RELIABILITY AND NORMALITY ANALYSIS

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.793, which is greater than 0.50; hence, it is reliable.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.793	16

Source: Primary data.

In addition, the normality test conducted with all variables passed the range of -1.96 to +1.96 for both skewness and kurtosis. Thus, the data follows the normal distribution.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

The measures of effects of Pro-Poor Tourism were evaluated by Factor Analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Okin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used to examine the appropriateness of Factor Analysis. High value (.665 > 0.5) indicates factor Analysis is appropriate.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.765
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	293.810
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

Source: Primary data.

Factor analysis of 20 items of pro-poor tourism was done to check the grouping of responses into the hypothesised quality attributes, and later on, these 20 items were reduced down to 15 items

Table 5: Factor Analysis Results for Pro-Poor Tourism

Name of the Factor	Factor Wise Dimension	Factor Loading Values	Communalities	Eigen Values	%age of Variance
1. Economic interventions as pro-poor measures	a. Tourism has increased the purchasing power of local people	.749	.721	7.873	27.218
	b. Tourism has increased the employment opportunities for local people	.651	.611		
	c. Tourism has increased investment opportunities in our area	.712	.571		
	d. Tourism has led to better infrastructural facilities in our area	.767	.661		
	e. Tourism has improved the level of income of local people	.601	.713		
2. Socio-cultural interventions as pro-poor measures	a. Tourism has brought positive attitudinal change	.671	.634	2.249	12.679
	b. Tourism has reduced social conflict in the local area	.761	.612		
	c. Tourism has led to the protection of the local heritage	.527	.673		
	d. Tourism has empowered the local women in the area	.531	.755		
	e. Tourism has led to mutual understanding between the guests and hosts	.537	.541		

Name of the Factor	Factor Wise Dimension	Factor Loading Values	Communalities	Eigen Values	%age of Variance
3. Envi-ronmetal interventions as pro-poor measures	a. Tourism has increased the awareness about the importance of natural environment in the local area	.891	.876	1.376	8.012
	b. Tourism has contributed to the conservation initiatives of the natural resources of area	.918	.868		
	c. Tourism has reduced the dependence on the forest resource in the local area	.909	.871		
	d. Tourism increased the natural appeal of the local area	.581	.521		
	e. Tourism has led to better waste management facilities in the local area	749	.681		
Cumulative %age of Variance		65.352			

It is apparent from the Factor analysis given in Table 4 that three (3) major factors have been identified that impact pro-poor tourism.

Table 6: Regression Model for the effect of Pro-Poor Tourism on Community's Poverty Alleviation (Model Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.638[a]	.512	.513	.35847

a. Predictors: (Constant), the effect of pro-poor tourism on community's Poverty alleviation.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Effects of pro-poor tourism on community's poverty alleviation	.0.637	25.568	.0.000

The results revealed in Table 5 and Table 6 suggest that poverty alleviation is a function of Pro-Poor Tourism development. The dependent variable is poverty alleviation, and the independent variable is Pro-Poor Tourism development based on the mean values. The results indicate that for a 1% increase in Pro-Poor Tourism development activity, the poverty alleviation accelerates by 51.2% (R Square = 0.512). The results further reveal that for a one-unit increase in Pro-Poor Tourism development, the poverty alleviation accelerates by 0.637 units as indicated by the β value (β value = 0.637). The results suggest a positive effect of Pro-Poor Tourism development on poverty alleviation.

In the qualitative assessment of the study, the data was collected with the help of a designed interview checklist, and the interviews with 06 stakeholders were conducted. The views obtained through the interview were transcribed in English from Hindi and local languages. The objective of conducting open-ended interviews with some of the participants was to enrich the presents study and strengthen the investigation of the community perception regarding the creative role of tourism in poverty mitigation. The idea of conducting the qualitative evaluations was to support the quantitative results.

QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

Perceived Impacts of Tourism as an Anti Poverty Intervention

Tourism has positive and negative economic, environmental and social implications for the destination. The following part of the study reveals the notions of tourism as an anti-poverty tool as held by some of the participants at the study site.

Economic Interventions as Anti Poverty Measures

Data received from the local community has revealed that the local community appreciates the economic impacts of tourism. The respondents believed that tourism benefits them in both direct and indirect ways. Residents believed that the local community gets more job opportunities due to tourism, which has triggered the economic development in that region (Isaacs, 2018). Infrastructure development and livelihood improvements of local people are the significant tourism contributions highlighted by residents.

Akbar, a tea stall owner as well as the resident of Gulmarg, stated that

"Tourism has made good contributions in the development of his village. The tourism operations of Gulmarg have been framed in such a way that they benefit the locals of the destination. All the showrooms here (Gulmarg) are of small scale, just like other shops, so that there may not be any unequal distribution of wealth among rich and poor. There were only small houses here in the past, but now big buildings can be seen due to the tourism industry's contribution. Even some selected houses in villages near Gulmarg have been converted into guesthouses with the government providing necessary facilities under homestay scheme of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India".

Abdul Aziz, a local driver, shared that

"We do not allow tourists to visit local places of Gulmarg in any non-local transport. They are bound to hire local vehicles for the purpose. The non-local transporters drop them (tourists) at Tangmarg, and after that, they have to hire the local transportation to visit the different places here (Gulmarg). Even though the hotels ought to receive the guests, they must use 50% of the local transport besides their own. We have high hopes and positive outlook of developing tourism in our region".

Socio-Cultural Interventions as Anti Poverty Measures

The local community perceives positive effects about the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Locals indicated that tourism has contributed to improving their livelihood and preserving religious and cultural heritage in their village. However, many respondents are very much concerned about the negative impacts of tourism, like changes in traditional culture and the influence on the younger generations. Nevertheless, on the whole, its benefits outweigh losses.

Afaq, a food outlet retailer, stated that

Tourism has created more positive cultural exchange between inbound tourists and we people (residents). Tourists love to eat our traditional food items, particularly Wazwan. Tourists also purchase dry fruits, walnuts, apples and carry them to their countries.

Nazir Ahmad, a local guide, stated that

Tourism in the region has developed a network with people from different countries; as a result, local people sometimes receive support from these tourists. For example, sometimes tourists provide money and clothes to children. Tourists love to mix up with we people (locals) and inculcate our culture during their stay. They (tourists) are fond of Kashmiri handicrafts, Shawls, phirans and purchase them as well. We often see tourists dressed up in Kashmiri traditional dresses.

Environmental Interventions as Anti Poverty Measures

As far as environmental impacts are concerned, the locals believe that tourism supports their natural heritage. However, traffic congestion and noise were found to be the negative aspects of tourism. The tourism operations of Gulmarg have a thrust on eco-tourism. For the accommodation of the tourists, eco-friendly structures have been developed by the local hoteliers. The significant adverse environmental impacts reported by the respondents were waste management problems.

View of Jahangir Ahmad, the trekking guide from Gulmarg

Waste materials such as mineral water bottles, beer bottles, cans and plastic bags left by the tourist groups hurt the local environment. However, some local measures are taken to minimise these impacts. Periodic village cleanup programmes are taken up, and the rubbish bins have been placed at appropriate locations.

The observation of Mr Abdul Karim, a local lodge operator

Waste materials of the hotels are properly treated through Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), and every effort is being made to preserve and protect the natural environment. Before few months some constructions were being made here, which were later demolished to avoid congestion. Vehicles causing pollution are not allowed here.

CONCLUSION

The study is based on examining qualitative and quantitative data collected by adopting a mixed research design approach. A theoretical framework was developed based on an extensive review of published literature and identifying the research gap. The study was envisaged to understand the role of Pro-Poor Tourism as a sustainable approach towards poverty alleviation. This was facilitated with underlying three main objectives: (a) to explore the theoretical understandings of pro-poor tourism as a sustainable tourism practice, (b) to measure the underlying dimensions of pro-poor tourism, (c) to study the perception of the local community about the role of pro-poor tourism as an intervention to alleviate poverty. To achieve these objectives, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted. Review of published literature and interaction with prominent professionals, academicians, and industrialists remained instrumental in designing questionnaire and interview checklists. The interview checklist was administered among different local vendors.

An empirical investigation is done to study the relationship between Pro-Poor Tourism and Poverty Alleviation. A survey instrument (self-structured questionnaire) was developed based on validated constructs, and qualitative analysis was carried out in support of quantitative assessment. It was administered among a selected sample of local community stakeholders, which include local vendors. The survey instrument was deliberated, pre-tested through face validity and instrumental validation. The instrument items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. A total of 100 stakeholders actively participated and responded to the survey instrument. It can be concluded that Pro-Poor Tourism positively contributes to poverty alleviation of impoverished communities of study areas A and B, and it plays a significant role in improving the quality of life of the local community.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the quantitative regression results, it can be concluded that Pro-Poor Tourism has a positive effect on poverty alleviation of poor communities, as it is also consistent with the Social Exchange Theory, which states that the residents' support for tourism will depend on a large extent on the benefits that they get or are likely to get from tourism. Therefore, in support of this theory, the pro-poor tourism activities are being supported by the local community to better their lives, which is verified with the regression results. Also, the Interactionist Theory is based on the idea that human beings interact with one another, give meaning to themselves, others, and the world around us based on earnings to make decisions and take action in their everyday lives. All the touristic activities and services are maximally handled by the involvement of human beings or brigades. This interaction only happens when there is constant up-gradation, involvement and development of all segments of the society. The local community should be involved in tourism decision making. Then only there can be proper interaction and collaboration between the different stakeholders of tourism that can help in poverty alleviation and has a win-win situation at the destination for all.

Destinations across the world are seeking alternative solutions to shared challenges in the development of tourism. The same is the case with Kashmir. Kashmir is a naturally and culturally rich tourist destination. Tourism is a vital component of the Kashmiri economy, which is embedded with many resources that throw up scope for practising creative processes in tourism in the framework of pro-poor tourism development. Against the above backdrop, this study recommends utilising tourism creatively to build it on more pro-poor lines in Kashmir.

It is quite possible to include marginalised stakeholders in delivering tourism services like establishing tea stalls, handicrafts kiosks, and marketing of indigenous products. To address the proposition of poverty alleviation through tourism, it is imperative to create a high-level awareness of tourism potential and enhance the knowledge of stakeholders across the entire spectrum towards the importance and role of PPT practices. The government involvement at every level of the tourist cycle is necessary, including the local community supporting the tourism development to harness its benefits. Without alterations in policymaking, pragmatic pro-poor tourism measures will bring only limited benefits if there is no practical involvement at the ground level. In addition to this, local communities must train and upgrade their skills to better their interests.

SCOPE FOR FUTURE INVESTIGATION

Due to the lack of time and resources, the research could not cover more destinations or a more significant number of research participants and is limited to the perceptions of limited respondents only and can be conducted to include the perception of other stakeholders like hotels, travel bodies, DMOS. The study has been conducted at the Kashmir division only and can be explored further in other parts of the state or country.

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Status of Tourism and Hospitality Education in Garhwal Region of Uttarakhand State in India: A Critical Evaluation

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TDJ
ANNUAL

ISSN No, 09757376
Vol. 16, No. 1, 2018

Tourism Development Journal

(An International Research Journal)

Institute of Vocational (Tourism & Hospitality) Studies,
H. P. University, Shimla - 5

Status of Tourism and Hospitality Education in Garhwal Region of Uttarakhand State in India: A Critical Evaluation

S.K. Gupta, Vijay Prakash Bhatt

Abstract

The most valuable asset of any industry is its intellectual capital. For tourism and hospitality industry, long term success depends on the ability to nurture and develop this asset. Only educated and well-trained personnel in hospitality and tourism industry enable the development of new technologies, innovative products and services, aiming to increase competitiveness of the tourism product, company and country. It is becoming increasingly clear that tourism education must keep pace with a rapidly changing industry. That means, it must continue to embrace technology and it must also address other challenges such as social development and cultural and environmental preservation. The responsibility of developing human resources for Tourism and Hospitality management lies within the hospitality organizations and within the education system of the country. The current paper is an exploratory study and is an attempt to understand and evaluate the status of Tourism & Hospitality education in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand in both qualitative and quantitative term. This paper also highlights the fundamental problems persists in the tourism and hospitality education in the region.

***Keywords*:** Tourism and Hospitality Education, Garhwal Region, Uttarakhand, Intellectual Capital

Introduction

Indian tourism and hospitality industry has seen an unprecedented growth in last couple of decades. According to the statistics published by India Brand Equity Foundation, tourism industry in India accounts for 7.5 percent of the GDP and is the third largest foreign exchange earner for the country which is expected to grow at 7.2 per cent per annum with the direct, indirect and induced economic contribution and is anticipated to reach US$160.2 billion by 2026 (http://www.ibef.org). Apart from boosting the infrastructure development and improving the living standard of communities at tourist destinations, it has been a significant contributor in the economy of the nation by providing a large number of jobs requiring highly skilled and semi-skilled manpower to fulfill the diverse needs of visiting population. The tourism products are mixture of goods and services, hence required a set of skills to keep the consumers satisfied. In order to produce skilled manpower, it is essential to maintain a quality education system to inculcate the job and task specific skills in the students aspiring to join tourism and hospitality industry.

Uttarakhand, also known as the "Adobe of the Gods" (*Devbhumi*) has attracted the mankind for its diverse geographic features, pristine natural bounty, pilgrimage centers, spirituality and vibrant customs and traditions of its inhabitant providing ample opportunities for the development of various forms of tourism. After the creation of Uttarakhand as a separate state of India in the year 2000, tourism industry has come in the forefront of the development of the state as it does not provide a fertile ground for the development of industrial sector due to its mostly mountainous geography. With the efforts of the state government, the number of tourists grown manifold in the first decade of twenty first century and it has achieved the reputation as one among the top ten tourist preferred state of India (India Tourism Statistics, 2016) with a significant number of foreign tourists. This increase in the tourist arrivals has increased the demand of manpower with diverse skills to cater variety of touristic needs which led to the mushrooming of tourism and hospitality institutions providing a wide array of diploma, graduate and post graduate programs. A variety of colleges /institutions have come into existence over the last 2 decades in Uttarakhand, particularly in Dehradun and surrounding areas. Furthermore, there has been a spurt in creation of private universities. Dehradun district has the highest number of centers of higher education. Now, Uttarakhand (with a meager 10 million population), boasts of having one Central University, ten State Universities, three Deemed Universities, ten Private Universities and four Autonomous Institutes along with approximately 300 colleges. Not only the number of aspirants of higher education is increasing day by day, but also need of the quality education. The major part of the State of Uttarakhand is hilly and rural where the presence of institutions imparting higher education is very less.

Objectives

Present study focuses on to evaluate the status of tourism and hospitality education in terms of the nature of institutions, courses offered by them, socio-economic and demographic profile of students and faculty members, skills of faculty members and infrastructure adequacy for running tourism and hospitality courses. Following are the broad objectives of the study.

1. To understand the nature of educational institutions imparting tourism and hospitality education in the study area.

2. To present the socio-economic and demographic profile of students and faculty members in these institutions along with evaluating the skills of teachers.
3. To find out the infrastructure gap in the tourism and hospitality institutions in the study area.

Background

The success of any organization is greatly dependent on the knowledge and skills of its manpower and empowering these skills sets is the responsibility of the educational institutes and training centers of both public and private domain (Burkart & Medlik, 1974; Allen & van der Velden, 2009; Dhiman, 2012). In spite of tremendous potential of the tourism and hospitality industry to produce considerable employment opportunities, the growth of this industry is rigorously limited due to the lack of adequately trained personnel which ultimately dilutes the positive economic benefits to the country's economy (Liu, 2002; Liu & Wall, 2006). The idea of establishing a core body of knowledge for tourism has been deliberated since tourism has been studied as an academic discipline (Airey & Johnson, 1999; Dhiman, 2012). Institutes offering higher education and vocational studies have sensed the need for skilled manpower and researches were instigated in finding out the most acquirable skill set required by tourism and hospitality professionals during the last quarter of 20th century (Selvadurai, Choy & Maros, 2012). As the tourism industry is a combination of multiple sectors (Burkart & Medlik, 1974), the skill required are specific to different jobs and tasks (Allen & van der Velden, 2009). The core body of knowledge for tourism identifies the key subject areas that are considered significant. According to Riley, Ladkin and Szivas (2002) this has been modified and developed over the years by a number of bodies, but most importantly by Burkart and Medlik (1974), The Tourism Society (1981), the CNAA (1993) and the National Liaison Group for Tourism (NLG) (1995). Five broad areas in which the skills of people working in tourism and hospitality might need up gradation such as: business, hospitality, management, language and culture, and sales and service (Graetz & Beeton, 2001). Nowadays "graduates are expected to be competent in a broad range of areas, comprising both field-specific and generic skills" (Allen & van der Velden, 2009; Cervera-Taulet & Ruiz-Molina, 2009). They need to upgrade occupation-specific skills and transversal skills such as communication, team- working, self-management, creativity, and innovation (Learning while Working, 2011).

Tourism Education Future Initiative, where senior tourism educators and industry expert are united, have identified four categories of skills that would be important for industry-: skills related to destination stewardship; politics and ethics; enhanced human resources and dynamic business skills (Sheldon, Fesenmaier, Woeber, Cooper, & Antonioli, 2007). Other scholars have discovered that skills like foreign language proficiency, communication, decision-making abilities, and others can be singled out as the most important ones for the needs of tourism and hospitality industry (Luka & Donina, 2012; Zehrer & Mossenlechner, 2009). Equal attention should be paid to problem-solving, maintaining professional and ethical standards, and recognizing operational problems (Christou & Sigala, 2001; Cervera-Taulet, & Ruiz-Molina, 2009; Weber, Crawford, Lee & Dennison, 2013). Raybould and Wilkins (2005) determined that the most valuable skills considered by the industry are: skills to deal effectively with customers' problems, operate effectively and calmly in crisis situations and maintain professional and ethical standards in the work environment.

However, very less research attempt has been done on tourism and hospitality education in India. Hospitality and tourism education is always viewed as a factor for tourism development of any region (Bagri & Babu, 2009). Hospitality and tourism education is significant in developing right kind of manpower which in turn can make better planning and bring required professionalism to industry (Bhardwaj, 2002; Gupta, 2003). The issues around hospitality education such as the lack of uniformity and standardization of courses contributes dilemma among students and employer (Amoah & Baum, 1997). The variableness in terms of syllabi and resultant products restrict the healthy way for employment prospects (Bagri & Babu, 2009) and they fail to meet the expectation of the employer (Baum, 1995). Quality of students in India is not up to the international standards. Umbreit (1992) argues that educators must take the lead in providing their student with a relevant curriculum for the next century. He believed that changing the curriculum is imperative so that the graduate can be successful in industry. The interrelationship between education and training plays an important role in the human resource development in hospitality and tourism sector (Doswell, 1994) and if tourism education is to provide a valuable starting point for the development of human capital, then greater dialogue between industry and education would be useful (Ladkin, 2005).

Methodology

Present research work has adopted both descriptive and exploratory research designs by using both qualitative and quantitative techniques to achieve the aims and objectives of the study by collecting and analyzing both primary as well as secondary data. Structured questionnaire was used as a tool for gathering primary data. Unstructured interviews, discussion and primary observation methods were also used to accumulate the relevant information on the issues otherwise not revealed clearly. The universe of the proposed research was the four major districts of the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand (Pauri, Haridwar,Dehradun and Tehri Garhwal)wheremajorityof educational/training institutes are located. Primary data were gathered from 100 faculty members and 250 students of institutions running Tourism and Hospitality courses during February to May 2017. The data were analyzed using statistical tools including descriptive statistics and inferences were drawn to support the current study.

Findings and Discussion

With the growing demand of skilled professionals in tourism and hospitality industry worldwide, a large number of the universities and institutions both public and private have shown their interest in offering various Degree, Diploma and Certificate courses at both undergraduate and post-graduate level in tourism and hospitality domain. Following this trend, a number of institutions providing such courses also has come up in the study area. Present study attempts to evaluate the nature of institutions, courses offered, demographic profile of the students and faculty members and the infrastructure gap in tourism and hospitality institutions in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand.

Nature of Tourism and Hospitality Institutes

In Garhwal region, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University has a notable contribution towards the development and promotion of tourism and hospitality education and producing tourism professionals since many years. Private institutes are making their presence strongly felt, but without doubt it can be said that there is a shortage of institutions imparting quality education as per the requirement of trade and industry. The self-financed institutions/colleges offering Tourism and Hospitality education are located mostly in plains- Dehradun, Haridwar, Rishikesh and Roorkee in Garhwal region. These institutions/colleges are getting affiliations mainly from three Universities viz. H. N. B. Garhwal University, Sri Dev Suman University and Uttarakhand Technical University. Further, Uttarakhand Open University is also offering several courses in Tourism and Hotel Management at Under Graduate and Post Graduate level under distance mode of education through its study centers. The details of prime institutions offering tourism and hospitality education in the study area along with the number of affiliated institutions and students enrolled in year 2017 is presented below.

Table – 1: Information about Universities/Institutions in Garhwal

Sl. No.	Name of the Organization	Total No. of Affiliated Institutes	No. of Students Enrolled
1	HNB Garhwal Central University Srinagar, Garhwal	08 01(University Campus)	 741 140
2	Sri Dev Suman (State) University	04	41
3	Uttrakhand Technical University	06	1227
4	Uttrakhand State Open University and Study Centre	32	576
5	Three Private University	--	290
6	Institute of Hotel Management (IHM)	--	260

Source: Compiled by researchers from different sources

As per the figures shown in above table, it is evident that HNB Garhwal Central University, Sri Dev Suman (State) University, Uttarakhand Technical University and Uttarakhand State Open University apart from three Private Universities are offering tourism and hospitality education through their campuses and around 20 affiliated institutions. Uttarakhand State Open University is also offering such courses through its study centers in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. At present around 3500 students are being enrolled by these institutions in Tourism and Hospitality Programs.

Courses Offered

As far as the courses offered by these institutions are concerned, Bachelor of Hotel Management (BHM) is being offered by most of these institutes at graduate level. However, the bachelor course at Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition is titled as B. Sc. Hospitality and Hotel Administration. Apart from BHM, Uttarakhand Open University also provides Bachelor's Degree in Tourism Studies (BTS) whereas HNB Garhwal Central University Campus Srinagar, Garhwal, Uttarakhand Open University, Haldwani along with 3 Private Universities offer Master degree in Tourism with nomenclature MBA (TTM), MTTM.

Master of Hotel Management (MHM) is being offered by Uttarakhand Technical University and Uttarakhand State Open University through their study centers/affiliated institutes.

Diploma courses offered by these institutions include Diploma in Food Production and Diploma in Food & Beverage services. Diploma in Tourism Studies is being offered at undergraduate level while PG Diploma in Accommodation Operation and PG diploma in Tourism and Elementary Hoteliering are offered at post graduate level. Institute wise Course Distribution and Current Enrollment (during 2016-17) of the students in these organizations are presented in the table below:

Table – 2: Institute wise Course Distribution and Current Enrollment

Sl. No.	Institution	Course Offered	Duration (Years)	No. of Seats	Total Enrollment
1	Central University Campus Srinagar, Garhwal	BHM MBA (TTM) PGDTH	04 02 01	60 40 20	100/30 32/16 08/08
2	Eight Private Institution Affiliated to Central University	BHM	04/03	605	741/250
3	Four Affiliating Institutes and Colleges under Shri Dev Suman (State) University	BHM	03	240	41/41
4	Six Affiliating Institutes under Uttarakhand Technical	BHM MHM	04/03 02	632 30	1227/400 20
5	Private Universities	BHM Graduation in Tourism	04 03 02	140 45 15	255/115 20/15 15/7
6	Institute of Hotel Management	B. Sc. Hospitality &	03	120	260/90

	(IHM), Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition	Hotel administration Diploma in Cookery Diploma in bakery& Confectionary Diploma in food & beverage service	1.5 1.5 1.5	60 35 30	58 27 14
7	Uttarakhand State Open University and its Study Centers	BHM MHM Master in Tourism BTS DTS	03 02 02 03 01	-- -- -- -- --	494 42 24 07 09

Source: Compiled by researchers from different sources

In addition, there are certain other institutions, not affiliated to any of the affiliating institutions mentioned in above table but recognized by some other agencies or NGOs, offering certificate courses ranging from 3 to 6 months or one-year duration. The focus of these institutions is generally the youth from lower middle-class families aspiring to get employment in budget class hotels, restaurants etc.

Student Intake, Pass out and Dropout

Course wise intake capacity of tourism and hospitality courses offered in the study area in regular mode is presented in the following table. The figures in table suggest that Graduation in Hotel Management (BHM, B. Sc. HM, BBAHM etc.) is the most sought after course with an annual intake capacity of around 1800 students however the filled seats are only around 950 for the year 2016-17.

The intake for Bachelor in Hotel Management course is 53%., for Graduation in Tourism is 33.5%, for Master in Hotel Management is 66%,for Master in Tourism is 42% while intake for PG Diploma in Tourism & Hoteliering is only 40 % during year 2016-17.

Table – 3: Course wise Total Number of Seats/Students in Regular Mode

Graduation in Hotel Management		Master in Hotel Management		Under Graduate in Tourism		Diploma in Hotel Management		PG Diploma in Tourism		Master in Tourism	
Seats	Intake	Seats	Intake	Seats	Intake	Seats	Intake	Seats	Intake	Seats	Intake
1812	950	30	20	45	15	125	99	20	08	55	22

Source: Compiled by researchers from different sources

Similarly, the number of students admitted in correspondence mode in the study centers of Uttarakhand Open University in Garhwal region is displayed in the following table. Out of total 576 enrolled students 494 were in Bachelor in Hotel Management (BHM), 42 were in Master in Hotel Management (MHM), 24 were in Master in Tourism (MBA in Tourism), 07were in Bachelor in Tourism Studies (BTS) and 09 were in Diploma in Tourism Studies (DTS).

Table - 4: Course wise Total Number of Seats/Students in Correspondence Mode

Bachelor in Hotel Management	Master in Hotel Management	Master in Tourism	Bachelor in Tourism Studies	Diploma in Tourism Studies	Total
494	42	24	07	09	576

Source: Compiled by researchers from different sources

In case of the pass-out ratio in these courses, it has been observed that majority of the students pass the course within stipulated time duration. However, those couldn't get through the exam still have chances to get it cleared through the facility of back papers and improvement exams.

Further, it has been observed that around 2% students leave the course and that is in the first year hence the dropout ratio of tourism and hospitality courses alike other professional courses in quite low.

Demographic Profile of the Students

The demographic background suggests that 91.6% of the students were male and a majority of them belonged to age group of 19 to 22 years. Further, most of the students hailed from Garhwal region followed by those from Kumaon, Delhi and NCR, North eastern states of India, Nepal and Bhutan.

Table - 5: Demographic Profile of the Students

Demographic Characteristics	Category/Class	Frequency(N=250)	Percentage
Gender	Male Female	229 21	91.6 8.4
Age Groups	15 to 18 Years 19 to 22 Years 23-26 Years 27 Years and Above	58 156 35 1	23.2 62.4 14.0 0.4
State of Domicile	Garhwal	119	47.6
	Kumaon	66	26.4
	Outside Uttarakhand	50	20.0
	North eastern states of India	7	2.8
	Nepal	3	1.2
	Bhutan	5	2.0

Source: Primary Data

In case of the per month income of the parents it is evident from following table that 76% of the parents were having per month income up to Rs. 20000/- followed by 16.8% respondents with their parents' income between Rs. 20001/- to Rs. 40000/- per month and 4.4% have mentioned their parents' income between Rs. 40001/- Rs. 60000/- . A very rare percentage of students have revealed their parents' income in the upper slabs than Rs. 60000/- per month as mentioned in the table. Hence, it can be inferred that majority of the students are from lower middle class income families. Further, the state government also reimburses the fee of scheduled caste/scheduled tribe students to the concerned institutions.

Table - 6: Income of Parents (per month)

Income of Parents (per month)	Frequency	Percent
Upto Rs. 20000/-	190	76.0
Rs. 20001 to Rs. 40000/-	42	16.8
Rs. 40001/- Rs. 60000/-	11	4.4
Rs. 60001/- Rs. 80000/-	1	.4
Rs. 80001/- to Rs. 100000/-	3	1.2
Above Rs. 100000/-	3	1.2
Total	250	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Profile of Faculty Members

A total 100 faculty members were interviewed and their demographic profile is displayed in the following table. According to data shown in table, the sample of faculty members comprised of 87% male and 13% female. The age-wise composition of the sample suggests that majority of the respondents belonged to the age group '31-35 Years' (31%) followed by '26 -30 Years' (24%), 'above 40 Years' (19%), '36 -40 Years' (16%) and '20 -25 Years' (10%). 82% of total 100 respondents were married while remaining 18% were single.in case of the state of domicile, 81% respondent faculty members belonged to Uttarakhand, U.P., Delhi and NCR whereas the rest 18% were from other parts of the country. Taking a look on the highest education obtained by the respondents, majority of them were post graduate (65%) followed by graduates (22%), Ph. D. (10%) and PG Diploma holders (3%).

Table - 7: Demographic Profile of the Faculty

Demographic Characteristics	Category/Class	Frequency(N=100)	Percentage
Gender	Male Female	87 13	87.0 13.0
Age Groups	20-25 Years 26-30 Years 31-35 Years 36-40 Years >40 Years	10 24 31 16 19	10.0 24.0 31.0 16.0 19.0
Marital Status	Married Unmarried	82 18	82.0 18.0
State of Domicile	Within the State, U.P., Delhi NCR	81 18	81.0 18.0

	Other		
Highest Level of education	Ph.D. Post-Graduation PG Diploma Graduation	10 65 3 22	10.0 65.0 3.0 22.0

Source: Primary Data

In consideration of the educational qualifications prescribed to teach the diploma, under graduate and post graduate students, an attempt was made to know the qualification of the faculty members teaching in the tourism and hospitality institutions in the study area. Results of the study shows that 63% of faculty members were having Diploma in HM, 2% were having Graduation in Tourism, 23% were having Graduation in HM, 13% were having Graduation in HM with 1st Division, 34% having PG in Tourism, 21% PG in Tourism with 1st Division, 26% were having PG in HM and 14%were having PG in HM with 1st Division. It is important to note that as per norm the qualification for assistant professor in hotel management discipline,a candidate must have a first division either in UG or in PG.

Hospitality and tourism institutes in the study area are lacking in the adequate number of professors and associate professors as most of the faculty members employed in these institutes are assistant professors as shown in the following table. Again it is interested to note here that most of private institutes do not have associate professors and professors however universities have them. The reason can be attributed to the higher salaries demanded by the associate professors and professors and by those having requisite qualification.

Table - 8: Designation of Faculty Members

Designation	Frequency	Percent
Assistant Professor	91	91.0
Associate Professor	3	3.0
Professor	6	6.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Primary survey revealed that a single largest group of faculty members employed in hospitality and tourism institutes in the study area have a salary between Rs. 15000 to 25000 per month which is quite low in comparison to those faculty in government sector.

Table - 9: Salary per month (INR)

Salary per month (INR)	Frequency	Percent
Rs. 15000/- to Rs. 25000/-	65	65.0
Rs. 25001/- to Rs. 35000/-	21	21.0
Rs. 35001/- to Rs. 45000/-	4	4.0
Rs. 45001/- to Rs. 55000/-	4	4.0
Above Rs. 55000/-	6	6.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary Data.

Existing Infrastructure and Infrastructure Gap

Adequate infrastructure is as essential as the quality of faculty members for imparting quality hospitality education. The affiliating institutions must ensure that the institute being affiliated should fulfill all the norms in terms of infrastructure requirement. As discussed above, most of the private institutes offering tourism and hospitality courses are affiliated to HNB Garhwal University, Sridev Suman University and Uttarakhand Technical University. However, Uttarakhand Open University conducts such courses under distant education through its study centers while Institute of Hotel Management and State Institute of Hotel Management are the autonomous institutions and follow the guidelines of Ministry of Tourism of Central Government and State Government respectively in collaboration with National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT).

Besides these individual entities, All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi formulates the guidelines for infrastructure in terms of land requirement, intake of students, qualification of faculty and staff, equipment/gadgets to be installed in classrooms/labs, size of library, hostel facilities and other relevant infrastructure/facilities. Training kitchen with modern equipment/gadgets, training restaurants with automated Point of Sale (POS) and other related software/hardware, housekeeping lab, computer lab with internet facility and library with printed and online resources are prerequisites for running degrees/diploma related to hotel and hospitality management courses. On the one hand, the Tourism related courses require less infrastructure as the courses require more excursions than classroom education. However, apart from modern classrooms and library facilities these courses require software related to ticketing, itinerary planning and costing as prerequisites.

Present study has observed a significant gap in the infrastructure available in the hospitality institutions required by the industry and the facilities available at the institutes in the study area. It has been observed that, apart from a few institutes, most of the institutes develop these infrastructure facilities just as a formality to obtain affiliation from university. Further, the affiliating organizationmust strictly formulate the guidelines for required infrastructure and amend them from time to time in order to update the latest development in the industrial arena and also strictly enforce the guidelines while granting affiliation.

Rating of Institutes and Teachers by Students

Tourism and hospitality institutes were rated by the students regarding the reputation of the institute, recognition of students' problem by institute, choices of specialized courses, institutional collaboration, quality of faculty members, fee structure/value for money, availability of placement programs, recognition of qualification in international arena, quality of lecture rooms, efficiency and competence of teachers, infrastructure, provision of information technology i.e. internet connectivity, wi-fi, library facility and green practices in the campus on a five point scale ranging from very poor to very good. Surprisingly, students rated their respective institutes as good on all aspects except for 'Recognition of qualification in international arena' which was rated as fair/average indicating that there is a high need of improvement regarding the recognition of qualification in international arena. However, researcher's personal observation rates majority of the institutes as below average in facilities like institutional collaboration, availability of placement programs, faculty, infrastructure and provision of information technology.

Further, the feedback from students were recorded about the competencies of faculty members in their respective institutes and teachers were rated very good but need to improve teachers focus on syllabi. It is apparent from the results of the study that students are well aware of the qualities a teacher should possess. Again, it has been learned from informal discussions that many of the private institutes don't follow the guidelines for recruiting the teachers as they are not in position to pay expected remuneration to the qualified and efficient teachers.

The results of study also suggest that following factors are important for the effective and efficient teachers and these qualities she/he must possess:

Factor 1: Realization of Career Goals and Concern for Students
Factor 2: Teaching Techniques
Factor 3: Updated Knowledge and Innovation
Factor 4: Understandability and Punctuality
Factor 5: Focus on syllabi
Factor 6: Feedback
Factor 7: Regularity in Classes

Table – 10: Rating of institute by Students

Attributes	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Mean	SD
Reputation of the institute	0 (0.0)	8 (3.2)	84 (33.6)	134 (53.6)	24 (9.6)	3.69	.68
Recognition of the problem	0 (0.0)	10 (4.0)	81 (32.4)	119 (47.6)	40 (16.0)	3.75	.76
Choices of specialized courses	0 (0.0)	17 (6.8)	83 (33.2)	110 (44.0)	40 (16.0)	3.69	.81
Institutional collaboration	0 (0.0)	27 (10.8)	82 (32.8)	93 (37.2)	48 (19.2)	3.64	.91
Quality of faculty members	1 (0.4)	16 (6.4)	75 (30.0)	114 (45.6)	44 (17.6)	3.73	.83
Fee structure/value for money	0 (0.0)	19 (7.6)	83 (33.2)	117 (46.8)	31 (12.4)	3.64	.79
Availability of placement programmes	2 (0.8)	30 (12.0)	77 (30.8)	100 (40.0)	41 (16.4)	3.59	.92
Recognition of qualification in international arena	2 (0.8)	21 (8.4)	97 (38.8)	96 (38.4)	34 (13.6)	3.55	.85
Quality of lecture rooms	1 (0.4)	11 (4.4)	77 (30.8)	115 (46.0)	46 (18.4)	3.77	.81
Efficiency and competence of teachers	0 (0.0)	13 (5.2)	88 (35.2)	105 (42.0)	44 (17.6)	3.72	.81
Infrastructure	0 (0.0)	13 (5.2)	88 (35.2)	105 (42.0)	44 (17.6)	3.58	.85
	4	25	74	92	55	3.67	.97

Provision of information technology i.e. internet connectivity, Wi-Fi	(1.6)	(10.0)	(29.6)	(36.8)	(22.0)		
Library facility	1 (0.4)	17 (6.8)	81 (32.4)	105 (42.0)	46 (18.4)	3.71	.85
Green practices in the campus	2 (0.8)	29 (11.6)	77 (30.8)	100 (40.0)	42 (16.8)	3.60	.92

Source: Primary Data. Figures in brackets are the percentage of row total.

Conclusion and Implications

The results of the study reports that the academic institutions imparting higher education in the study area have sensed the growing demand of skilled manpower in travel trade and responded positively by introducing a variety of tourism and hospitality related programs of different durations at various levels. Programs related to the hotel and hospitality management and administration are dominating. It has also been observed that despite a large number of institutes of tourism and hospitality studies in the study area only a few are having requisite infrastructure. Some of them are very professional, some are up to the mark and a few of them are also below the mark in terms of infrastructure, quantity and quality of teaching staff, number of students enrolled and overall in terms of the focus on quality professional education despite satisfactory ratings by the students. Similarly, the teachers have shown their satisfaction in terms of the working conditions, salary and opportunities for career development provided by these institutions but informally they did not hesitate to criticize the same. Especially, the dissatisfaction is more among the teachers in private institutions due to comparatively low salaries than government teachers at same level, longer working hours and variety of the tasks undertaken from them. It has been revealed by some teachers that job security is based on the number of admissions provided by them. "If someone fails to bring-in the students he has to lose his job" stated by the few respondents when asked informally. Hence, the affiliating institutions must consider such adversities and remove the affiliation of the institutions with inappropriate infrastructure and must also fix the minimum number of students to be enrolled for running a particular course.

There must be some industry professionals in the board of studies to finalize the curriculum and the curriculum should be revised from time to time. On the question on the quality of students joining the hotel management institutions, it is found that it is still considered as a last choice or low priority program by majority of the students as the bright students prefer to opt medical, engineering, IT, business management and other programs. However, the situation is now improving because of increased job opportunities for hotel management graduates in many other sectors like call centers, airlines, banks, shopping malls, cruise ships, multiplexes and others. A large number of them are also able to find jobs abroad. But, for better placements of the students it is quite essentials for the hospitality institutions to collaborate with hotel chains/properties for training and placement, both on and off campus, of the students.

The focus of management of these institutions is to produce quantity but nor the quality of manpower as a significant number of the faculty members are not competent enough and lacking in updated knowledge and skills required in the rapidly advancing travel and hospitality industry. A discrepancy in the salary and fee structure among public and private institutions were also noted.

Acknowledgement

Authors gratefully acknowledge, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Uttarakhand for funding Research Project on "Status of Tourism and Hospitality Education in Garhwal Region of Uttarakhand: A Critical Appraisal." The current paper is the outcome of that project. Sincere thanks to all respondents for their opinions and support.

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STAKEHOLDERS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN PUSHKAR REGION OF RAJASTHAN

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DOI: 10.21163/GT_2021.161.08

ABSTRACT:

This article aims at assessing satisfaction of different stakeholders (Hoteliers, Restaurants, Handicrafts Shopkeepers and Transporters) in Pushkar. Their satisfaction level is assessed with core indicators of sustainability. It is a quantitative as well as qualitative assessment based on survey research design in study area. Data was collected through 250 self-administered questionnaires which includes (40 Travel agents, 50 hoteliers, 50 Restaurants, 50 Handicrafts and Souvenir, 30 Foreign exchange agents and 30 transporters) and were analyzed by quantitative methods. Descriptive statistics (Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations) and inferential statistics (t-test) was performed to assess and analyze stakeholders' satisfaction with reference to 11 core indicators of sustainability such as: Site protection, Stress, Use Intensity, Social Impact, Developing Control, Waste Management, Planning process, Critical ecosystems, Consumer satisfaction, Local Satisfaction, Tourism Contribution to Local Economy. The results of study suggest that stakeholders have different level of satisfaction with different core indicators but on core indicators like Developmental stress, Use intensity, Developing control, Waste Management and critical ecosystem, stakeholders have low level of satisfaction. In order to develop a destination in a responsible and sustainable manner, stakeholders must have very high level of satisfaction on each core indicator of sustainability.

Key-words: *Stakeholders Satisfaction, Sustainable tourism, Responsible tourism, Core Indicators*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is the center of focus since the Brutland report (WCED 1987), followed by the Earth summit in 1991 and United Nations World Tourism Organization set agenda for the 21st century for the sustainable growth and development of Tourism. Most important mile stone in the history of sustainable tourism development was year 2015 when seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations. Now Tourism is an important global socio-economic activity which has an impact on economy, ecology and environment, on societies and culture both positive and negative in many ways. Sustainable tourism is an attempt to develop tourism in such a way that has positive impact on the environment, society, economy, local culture, local people and whatever related to tourism directly or indirectly. Pushkar, bordered by *Nag Pahar* (Snake Mountain), known as *the rose garden* of Rajasthan state of India represent a famous tourist destination for pilgrimage It has a unique cultural heritage which is valorized at the international Pushkar Fair. Tourism and Hospitality industry is very much affected through the perception and satisfaction of the various stakeholders who are directly and indirectly involve in the entire process of tourism at any destination. Stakeholders' perceptions are always considered in relation to expectations and compare with their satisfaction to ensure growth and development of sustainable tourism (Hardy 2005; Alazaizeh et al. 2019).

Sustainability includes all essentials that constitute a complete tourism experience. According to the majority of contributors (Voda et al. 2019; Sharpley 2000; Butler 1991; Vellas and Becherel

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1999; WCED 1987) ‘sustainable tourism development’ aims at economic, social and environmental tourism development that concerns to the continuous improvement of tourists’ experiences. The tourism industry has great potential to achieve sustainable development goals. The determination of sustainable tourism is to create a balance between environment protection, preserving cultural integrity, creating social justice and promoting economic benefits, meeting the needs of the local community in terms of improved living standards both in the short and long term in both developed and emerging nations (Swarbrooke and Horner 2004; Mitchell and Hall 2005).

Sustainable development has been discussed extensively in tourism sector as it can meet up needs of tourists, service providers, locals and whosoever being associated with this sector (Eagles et al. 2002). Thus, it has become important to develop a destination under core indicators of sustainability (Sebele 2010; Taylor 1995). Various studies have been conducted on different aspects of sustainability such as cultural, social and environmental impacts, perceived economy and perceived benefits (Choi and Murray 2010; Dyer et al. 2007; Ko and Stewart 2002; Nunkoo and Ramkissoon 2011; Oviedo-García et al. 2008; Yoon et al. 2001). Studies have also found that stakeholders’ satisfaction level play a significant role in view of sustainable tourism development at any destination (Gursoy et al. 2002; Gursoy and Kendall 2006; Gursoy and Rutherford 2004; Kaltenborn et al. 2008; Nicholas et al. 2009). A wide variety of factors, including social, cultural and economic considerations at each level of the tourism system, affects the implementation of sustainable tourism practices. A few studies on sustainable tourism and ecotourism related to the Garhwal region have been undertaken by Gupta and Bhatt, (2009, 2012); Gupta and Rout (2016, 2017 and 2019). However, a few studies have been conducted on stakeholders’ satisfaction towards sustainable tourism development at Pushkar region of Rajasthan India. In order to fill this research gap, this study aims to measure the satisfaction of different stakeholders towards tourism development under core indicators of sustainability.

2. STUDY AREA

Pushkar is located northwesty from Ajmer in central east part of Indian state of Rajasthan on western side of Aravalli Mountains. Bordered by *Nag Pahar* range, it lies between North latitude 26°29'23" and East longitude 74°33'3" and sprawl around 10 kilometers (see **Fig. 1**).

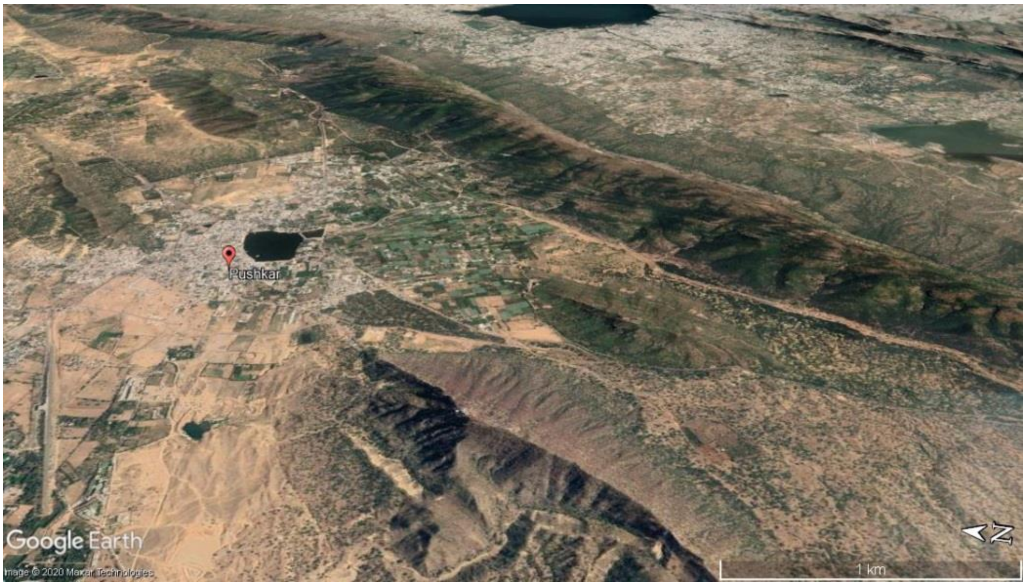

Fig. 1. Location of Pushkar study area of Rajasthan, India.

It is an important Centre of pilgrimage for Hindus. The place has a magnetic appeal with 400 temples that are blue white and a number of Bathing Ghats. The town resounds with chanting of prayers and religious songs, along with drums and gongs. Pushkar is a lively tourist attraction where tourists are flocking from the world over. There is a dash of commercialism but the town retains its mystique and traditional charm. Pushkar is the well-known tourist destination across the India and Globe as it hosting international fair every year. In the year 2019 out of total 1192345 number of tourists, 423234 tourists visited during Pushkar fair only.

3. DATA AND METHODS

In view of assessment and evaluation various stakeholders' satisfaction towards core indicators of sustainability, following research objectives and hypotheses are formulated;

1. To assess and evaluate satisfaction level of stakeholders' towards tourism development in the Pushkar region under all the core indicators of sustainability.
2. To measure the satisfaction level of stakeholders' towards tourism development in the Pushkar region under each core indicator of sustainability.

H01: There is no significant difference between stakeholders' satisfaction and tourism development in the study area under all core indicators of sustainability.

H2: There is significant difference between stakeholders' satisfaction and tourism development in the study area under each core indicator of sustainability.

On the basis of review of literature pertaining to sustainable tourism development, a survey questionnaire was developed on Stakeholders' satisfaction measurement scale (SSMS). Eleven core indicators of sustainability i.e. Site protection, Stress, Use Intensity, Social Impact, Developing Control, Waste Management, Planning process, Critical ecosystems, Consumer satisfaction, Local Satisfaction and Tourism Contribution to Local Economy were included in this questionnaire.

Data was collected from 250 stakeholders which includes (40 Travel agents, 50 hoteliers, 50 Restaurants, 50 Handicrafts and Souvenir, 30 Foreign exchange agents and 30 transporters) self-administered questionnaires by using stratified random sampling technique and five point Likert Scale. Reliability, normality and validity of the data and tool was also checked by examining the Cronbach's alpha, percentage of missing data, mean, standard deviation, item discrimination, skewness and kurtosis. Furthermore, collected data has been analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics; Central tendency (Mean), Z-score, frequency distribution, percentile, Norms, Standard deviation (SD), whereas in Inferential statistics; One sample t-test was computed.

4. RESULTS

To assess and evaluate satisfaction level of stakeholders towards tourism development in the Pushkar region under all the core indicators of sustainability, one sample t- test and Gap analysis was conducted to know the mean difference between stakeholders' overall satisfaction and tourism development in the study area and results are computed in **Table 1.**

Table 1 shows that the sample mean of stakeholders' satisfaction towards tourism development is 34.42, value of hypothesize mean is 55 (test value) and mean difference between them is 20.576, Values of S.D. and t-ratio are 2.144 and 151.711 respectively. Whether mean difference is significant or not with the help of degree of freedom (248) is further confirmed by the p value. Here p value is 0.000 ($p=0.000<0.01$) which is less than 0.01. There is a significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of stakeholder satisfaction towards tourism development, therefore null hypothesis **H01** is **rejected** at 0.01 level of significance and there is significant difference between stakeholders' satisfaction and tourism development in the study area under all core indicators of sustainability.

Further, with the help of graphical presentation it is understood that sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is lying below the level of satisfaction on tourism development under core indicators of sustainability as per the **Table 2**.

Table 1.
Results of One Sample t – test for Satisfaction of all Stakeholders on Tourism Development under Core Indicators of Sustainability

Variable	N	Hypothesize Mean	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t-ratio	p-value
Total Stakeholders' Overall Satisfaction	250	55	34.42	2.144	20.576	151.711	0.000**

** Significant at 0.01 level Source: Primary Data

Table 2.
Level of Satisfaction on Tourism Development under Core Indicators of Sustainability

Mean Scores	Level of Satisfaction on tourism development under core indicators of sustainability
1-11	Very Low
11-22	Low
22-33	Average
33-44	High
44-55	Very High

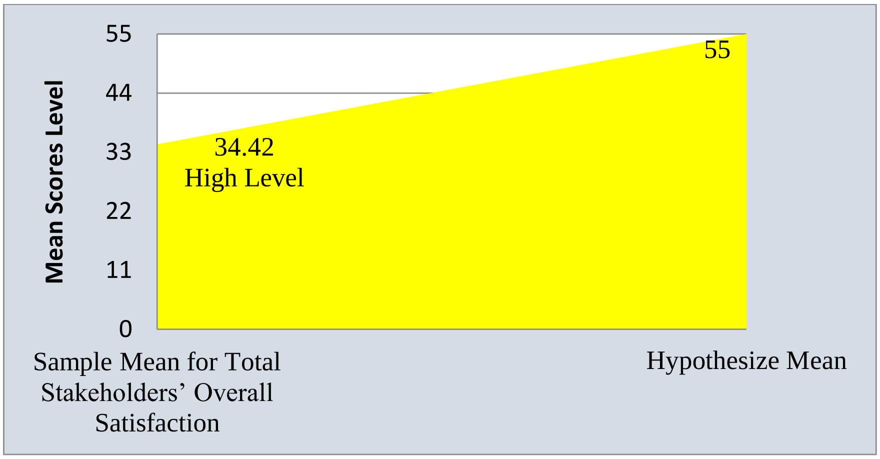

Fig. 2. Area graph of level of total stakeholders' satisfaction on Tourism Development under Core Indicators of Sustainability.

Figure 2 shows that Total stakeholders collectively have high level of satisfaction towards Tourism development under all core indicators of sustainability as sample mean (34.42) falls under high level of satisfaction category (33-44). To measure the satisfaction level of stakeholders towards tourism development in the Pushkar region under each core indicator of sustainability, One sample t- test and Gap analysis was conducted to know the mean difference between stakeholders' satisfaction towards each core indicator of sustainability such as Site protection, Stress, Use Intensity, Social Impact, Developing Control, Waste Management, Planning process, Critical ecosystems, Consumer satisfaction, Local Satisfaction and Tourism Contribution to Local Economy. It is observed that Stakeholders have different level of satisfaction with different core indicators and results are computed in **Table 3**.

Table 3.
Results of One sample t – test for Satisfaction of all stakeholders on Tourism Development under each Core Indicator of Sustainability

Core Indicators of Sustainability	N	Hypothesize Mean	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t-ratio	p-value
CI-1	250	5	4.48	0.582	0.520	14.122	0.000**
CI -2	250	5	1.67	0.572	3.332	92.118	0.000**
CI-3	250	5	1.58	0.494	3.416	109.361	0.000**
CI-4	250	5	4.02	0.909	0.976	16.972	0.000**
CI-5	250	5	1.62	0.617	3.380	86.567	0.000**
CI-6	250	5	1.80	0.766	3.200	66.076	0.000**
CI-7	250	5	4.20	0.739	0.800	17.116	0.000**
CI-8	250	5	1.76	0.621	3.244	82.557	0.000**
CI-9	250	5	4.39	0.626	0.608	15.356	0.000**
CI-10	250	5	4.43	0.592	0.568	15.164	0.000**
CI-11	250	5	4.48	0.589	0.524	14.069	0.000**

** Significant at 0.01 level Source: Primary Data

For First Core indicator of Sustainability (CI-1 **Site protection) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is 4.48 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 0.520 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.582, 14.122 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 (p=0.000 < 0.01) which is less than 0.01 indicates significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards first Core indicator of sustainability (CI-1 **Site protection).**

For second Core indicator of Sustainability (**CI-2 Stress) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders satisfaction is 1.67 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 3.332 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.572, 92.118 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 (p=0.000 < 0.01) which is less than 0.01 shows significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 2nd Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-2 Stress).**

For third Core indicator of Sustainability (**CI-3 Use Intensity) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders satisfaction is 1.58 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 3.416 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.494, 109.361 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 (p=0.000 < 0.01) which is less than 0.01 specifies significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 3rd Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-3 Use Intensity.**

For forth Core indicator of Sustainability (**CI-4 Social Impact) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders satisfaction is 4.02 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 0.976 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.909, 16.972 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 (p=0.000 < 0.01) which is less than 0.01 indicates significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 4th Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-4 Social Impact).**

For fifth Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-5 Developing Control) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is 1.62 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 3.380 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.617, 86.567 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 (p=0.000 < 0.01) which is less than 0.01 shows significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 5th Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-5 Developing Control).**

For sixth Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-6 Waste Management) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stake holders' satisfaction is 1.80 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 3.200 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.766, 66.076 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 ($p=0.000 < 0.01$) which is less than 0.01 indicates significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 6th Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-6 Waste Management).**

For seventh Core indicator of tourism development (**CI-7 Planning process) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders satisfaction is 4.20 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 0.800 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.739, 17.116 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 ($p=0.000 < 0.01$) which is less than 0.01 shows significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 7th Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-7 Planning process).**

For eighth Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-8 Critical ecosystems) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is 1.76 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 3.244 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.621, 82.557 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 ($p=0.000 < 0.01$) which is less than 0.01 shows a significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 8th Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-8 Critical ecosystems).**

For ninth Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-9 Consumer satisfaction) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is 4.39 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 0.608 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.626, 15.356 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 ($p=0.000 < 0.01$) which is less than 0.01 shows a significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 9th Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-9 Consumer satisfaction).**

For tenth Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-10 Local Satisfaction) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is 4.43 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 0.568 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.592, 15.164 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 ($p=0.000 < 0.01$) which is less than 0.01 shows a significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 10th core indicator of sustainability (**CI-10 Local Satisfaction).**

For eleventh Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-11 Tourism Contribution to Local Economy) Table 3** shows the sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is 4.48 and value of hypothesize mean is 5 (test value) and mean difference of 0.524 between them and values of S.D., t-ratio, and p value are 0.589, 14.069 and 0.000 respectively. Hence, p value 0.000 ($p=0.000 < 0.01$) which is less than 0.01 shows a significant mean difference between sample and hypothesize mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction towards 11th Core indicator of sustainability (**CI-11 Tourism Contribution to Local Economy).**

5. DISCUSSION

Based on the above findings it is concluded that hypothesis **H2 "**There is significant difference between stakeholders' satisfaction and tourism development in the study area under each core indicator of sustainability has been **Accepted** and its corresponding objective "To measure the satisfaction level of stakeholders' towards tourism development in the Pushkar region under each core indicator of sustainability was **achieved.** Further, with the help of graphical presentation it is understood that sample mean of total stakeholders' satisfaction is lying below the level of satisfaction on tourism development under each core indicator of sustainability as per **Table 4.**

Table 4.

Mean score and Level of Satisfaction under each core indicator of sustainability.

Mean scores	**Level of Satisfaction**
1 to 2	Low satisfaction
2 to 3	Moderate Satisfaction
3 to 4	High Satisfaction
4 to 5	Very high satisfaction

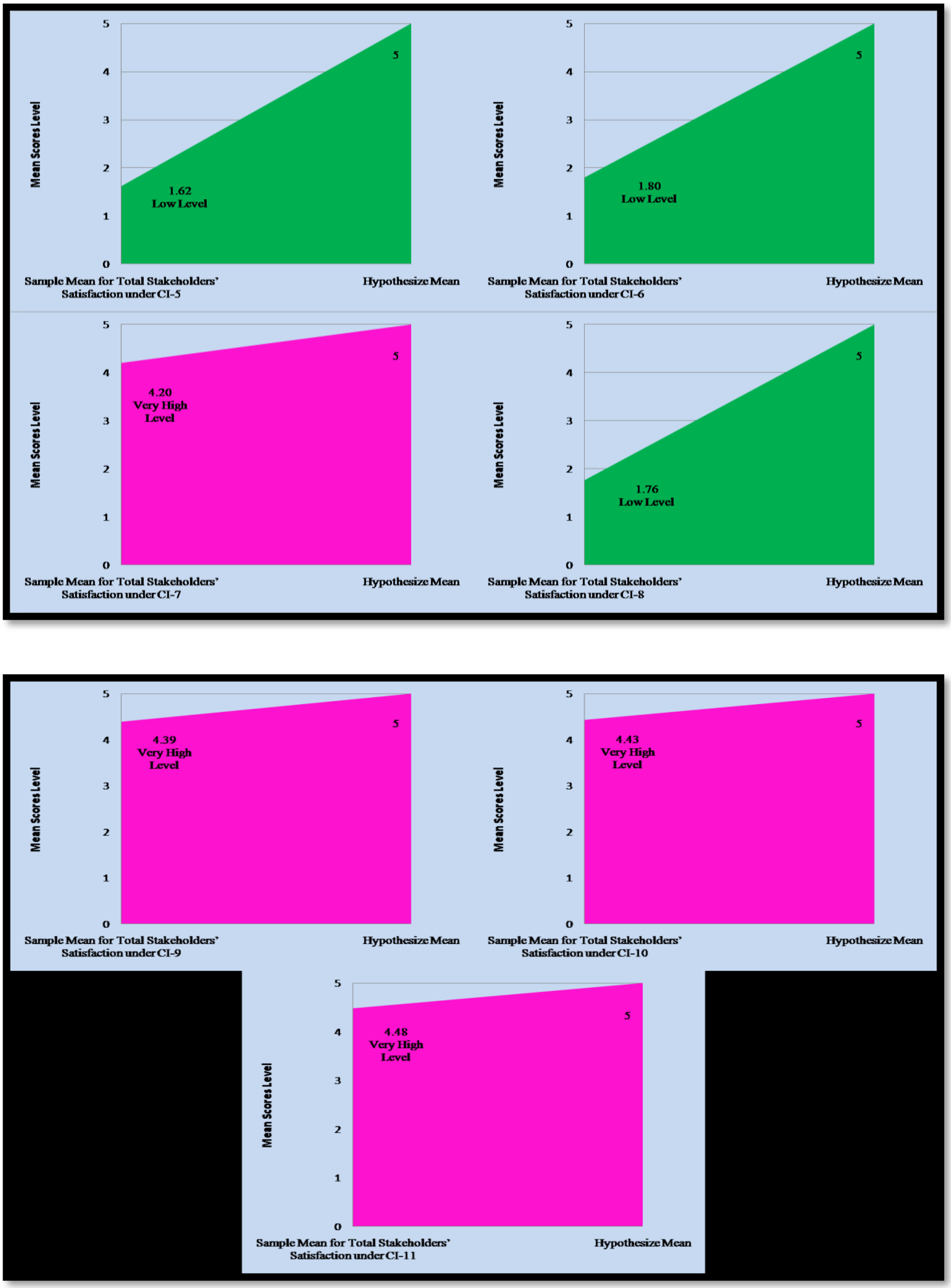

Fig. 3. Area graph of level of total stakeholders' satisfaction category on tourism development under each core indicator of sustainability.

From the **Figure 3** it is clear that stakeholders have very high satisfaction on core indicators.

As hypothesize mean is more than sample mean in reference to satisfaction of total stakeholders towards tourism development in the Pushkar under core indicators of sustainability and mean difference is significant, it is concluded that total stakeholders had high level satisfaction towards tourism development. Total stakeholders altogether have very high level of satisfaction with core indicator 1 (site protection), CI-4 (Social Impacts), CI-7 (Planning process), CI-9 (Consumer satisfaction), CI-10 (Local satisfaction), CI-11(Tourism contribution to local economy) whereas they have low level of satisfaction with CI-2 (Stress), CI-3 (Use intensity), CI-5 (Developing control), CI-6 (Waste management) and CI-8 (critical ecosystem). But transporters have highest level of satisfaction followed by foreign exchange units, hoteliers, handicrafts units, travel agents and Restaurants units towards tourism development in the study area in term of sustainability.

Findings suggest that stakeholders have reasonably satisfied towards tourism development in the Pushkar under core indicators of sustainability. But it is recommended that tourism must be developed in more sustainable way under core indicators of sustainability and should ensure very high level of satisfaction of the stakeholders. Tourism planners and policy makers should focus on minimizing development Stress, maximize the uses of local products and services, ensure carrying capacity, Developmental control, proper waste management and healthy and peaceful ecosystem. On these core indicators stakeholders have low satisfaction. Further efforts should be taken to minimize the leakage and allow equitable distribution of tourism products and resources among the various stakeholders i.e. Foreign exchange agents, Hoteliers, handicrafts units, travel agents, foreign exchange units and Restaurants.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Pushkar is one of the most visited and well-known tourist destinations across India and World, where tourists keep flocking throughout the year. It also hosts International Cattle festival annually which itself attracts lakhs of tourists. Due to sudden outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic the entire tourism business of the region got affected severely. Pushkar has complete shut down since March 2020 and no tourist was allowed inside the city. All the hotels, home stays, restaurants, travel agent units, foreign exchange units, handicraft and souvenir shops, transport units, meditation Centre’s and other travel related outlets was closed till July and further restricted movements of Domestic and local tourists were initiated. Lots of Local residents of Pushkar are dependent on the tourism sector. The COVID -19 pandemic has caused massive disruptions in economy, health, developmental activity, employment, sustainability and foreign exchange of the region. This pandemic has some positive impacts on Pushkar as destination such as natural cleaning of Holi Pushkar lake, control of air pollution, better waste management, speedy completion of the construction work of Ghats, sewage treatment, temples and roads, up gradation of environment and ecological balance. Big challenges lie before the local administration, tourism board, different stakeholders, visitors and local communities to organize International Pushkar Fair which is scheduled from 22nd to 30th November 2020. Amidst of COVID-19 pandemic Rajasthan and Pushkar Tourism Boards are working hard and ensuring utmost preparedness towards Sustainable Tourism Development and successfully organization of the Pushkar fair.

For sustainable development the negative impacts of tourism at the study area like demonstration effects, cultural conflicts, spiritual frauds, ethnocentrism, westernization and uncivil practices are to be reduced. Pushkar is well known tourist destination across the world because of its magnificent international camel festival but unfortunately over the years loss of its traditional character and undue commercialization is a great sense of concern .Hence the all organizers like Rajasthan Tourism Board; Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Pushkar Tourism Board and Various other Local Authorities and Destination Management Organizations have play a pivotal role to maintain the traditional ethnicity of the fair. It is observed that the participation of cattle owners is gradually decreasing year by year. Simultaneously carrying capacity of the destination would also be maintained especially at the time of Pushkar fair.

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Asset based community development in mountain environs: a strategic application for sustainable community based tourism development in the Jaunsar-Bawar region of Uttarakhand, India

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Abstract

Asset based community development has been discussed a length for the last decade. It is considered to be a novel approach and has become instrumental for many communities to improve their socio-economic status. Communities subsist in the Himalayan uplands and are generally in search of innovate livelihood opportunities given their existing exceptional natural and heritage assets. Tourism development on a local scale can benefit the communities in the region if opportunities to do so are vigorously pursued. This research briefly explores the different dimensions of asset based community development by taking the notion of the local community as its core. Community based tourism has intersected with an asset based community development approach and now represent the potential benefits that can be gained by the entire region of Jaunsar-Bawar. A qualitative research paradigm based upon conceptual analysis was used in the paper and discusses the diverse phenomenon of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) through inceptive and conceptual paradigms. The research suggests a way forward to support the development of mountain communities which possess a wide range of existing natural and cultural assets in the Himalayan landscape of Jaunsar-Bawar.

Keywords: Asset based community development, community based tourism, tourism development, community development, India.

Introduction

Lately, Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) has grabbed the attention of community development practitioners around the world as an innovative strategy for community-driven development in urban and rural neighborhoods (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). Over many decades, top-down development approaches have not been able to deliver real and sustainable development outcomes for the masses in the context of developing countries, thus providing an impetus and a need to search for alternative development approaches. The Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach is one of the approaches that is not only a ‘people centered’ one, but also a ‘citizen-driven’ one (Fuimaono, 2012). The approach of Asset-Based Community Development was propounded by John L. McKnight and John P. Kretzmann as a challenge to traditional solutions to urban problems, which focus on the needs and deficiencies of neighborhoods (The ABCD Institute, 2008). The needs-based approach defines poverty as the absence or lack of the basic elements required for human survival (Booy, Sena & Arusha, 2000).

A STUDY OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN TOURISM & TRAVEL TRADE ENTERPRISES

Pankaj Kumar* and S.K. Gupta**

ABSTRACT

Medium and small size enterprises are dominating the tourism and travel trade industry especially at developing tourism destinations in Himalayan state Uttarakhand, India. This study was done with the hypothesis that the industry is facing low employee retention and high employee turnover. Through this research paper, the researchers have examined the employees and employers attitudes towards the reasons of leaving or changing the job of employees working at various positions in these tourism and travel trade enterprises. The analysis reveals that seasonality of job, followed by inappropriate division of works; low salary and poor growth are the main reasons.

Keywords : Employee retention, Employee Turnover, Medium and small enterprises, Tourism and Travel trade industry, Uttarakhand

Introduction

Travel and tourism is one of the largest industries in India. Its total contribution to the country's economy is significant. Travel and tourism's contribution to world GDP has grown for the sixth consecutive year in 2015, rising to a total of 9.8% of world GDP (US$7.2 trillion). This sector now supports 284 million people in employment i.e. 1 in 11 jobs (directly or indirectly), (WTTC Annual report, 2016).It is being driven by employment, economic-development, poverty alleviation, community development, heritage conservation and sustainable development and motivated by the further human demand for a variety of activities like religious, adventure, recreation, education, and entertainment. Tourism and travel trade organizations promote destinations, prepare tour packages and offer it as a product to the tourists. Travel agent helps travelers by providing them travel related information by which tourist opts the best possible destination and tour package as per interest and budget. They provide advice on demand and make arrangements for transportation, accommodation, ground handling, escorting, etc. for tourists at tourist generating region and tourist destination region.

Tourism and travel trade sector is diversified from larger organizations to medium or small enterprises. Even after huge share in terms of providing total employment and overall contribution to GDP, a multitude of small and medium sized, private or public owned and

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The Indian Himalaya's Unique Attributes: Hemkund Sahib and the Valley of Flowers

Article *in* Geographia Technica · October 2018

DOI: 10.21163/GT_2018.132.05

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THE INDIAN HIMALAYA`S UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES: HEMKUND SAHIB AND THE VALLEY OF FLOWERS

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DOI: 10.21163/GT_2018.132.05

ABSTRACT:

The Indian Himalayan ranges with towering snowclad peaks and deep valley river rapids present a variety of common geographical features. The high mountain environments gained social values due to the influence of the human ancient cultures. The spiritual dimension of the geographical space generated its unique attributes. This research investigates some of the most intriguing mountain locus which are defined by a cumulus of special characteristics. We identified the uniqueness generating factors using the geomedia techniques. Furthermore, this study analyses the interconnection between Hemkund Sahib and Valley of Flowers Geosystems` different components. Our research findings present the functionality of two selected dynamic Himalayan geosystems in a significant equilibrium state. This result of this paper will contribute to the preservation of Hemkund Sahib and Valley of Flowers' unique features and future promotion using the new technical Geography advances.

Key-words: *Himalayas, attributes, Hemkund Sahib, geo-apps, Valley of Flowers.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian Himalaya's unique attributes based on the Geosystems grounded theory approach, using the modern technical Geography tools in an attempt to provide innovative solutions for the increasingly visited mountain sites (Voda et al, 2014). This paper has analyzed geographical spaces that are characterized by special features, generated from the interaction between the environmental components and the central element of any geosystem: the human being.

The Valley of Flowers National Park lies in the main valleys of Alaknanda and Dhauli Ganga in the Garhwal Himalayas in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand State in India. Valley of flowers also known in Hindu mythology as Nandan Kanan meaning "Garden of Indra in Paradise" has been declared as a National Park (VOFNP)as per Notification No. 4278/XIV-3-66-80 with effect from September 6, 1982, the intention having been declared under Notification No. 5795/XIV-3-66-80 of 1 January 1981. After notification of the Park, grazing and camping are not permitted.

Given the status of World Heritage site in 2005 VOFNP is one amongst the nine zones or part of the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve (NDBR) which is spread across an area of 5860.69 sq km. Located between the Latitude 30° 41' – 30° 48'N and Longitude 79° 33' – 79° 46'E VONP covers an area of 87.5 sq. km. The altitude of the valley ranges from 3200 m to 6700 m.

River Pushpawati flows through this valley which has its source in the Tipra Glacier which extends up to Ghori Parbat peak. It is a flat valley 5 km long and 2 km wide. The

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main valley portion of the Park runs in the east west direction along the banks of river Pushpawati (Gupta, 2002).

The park is surrounded by Gauri Parbat (6590m) and Rataban (6126 m) in the east, Kuntkhal (4430 m) in the west, Saptsring, in the south and Nilgiri Mountain (6479 m) in the north. The credit for the discovery of the Valley of Flowers generally goes to the British mountaineer Frank S. Smythe and R.L. Holds Worth who accidentally reached the valley after a successful expedition of Mount Kamet in 1931. Fascinated by its beauty and grandeur Frank S. Smythe revisited this area in 1937 and published book "The Valley of Flowers" (Smythe, 1938) which made it world famous.

The valley offers a rich plethora of unique floral wealth out of which 31 rare and endangered plant species including 11 species listed in the Red Data Book (RDB) of the Indian plants recorded within the Valley of Flowers National Park. The surrounding areas also have some beautiful Himalayan grassland and other valleys which bears many exquisite Himalayan flowers like the Himalayan lotus.

Fig. 1. Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib in Google Earth geo-app (Google Earth, 2018).

Near the Valley of Flowers is the sacred place of Sikhs the Hemkund Sahib **(Fig.1)**. It is situated at an altitude of 4329 m, and sacred to both Sikhs and Hindus. Hemkund Shrines are one of the highest temples in India (Fonia, 1998; Kuniyal et al, 1998).

The Sikhs revere this place because their tenth Guru described its location in his holy writings, in the *Dasam Sahib* (the books of the Tenth Guru). Considered the Geosystem`s unique cultural attribute, Hemkund Sahib location was discovered in 1934 by Sant Sohan Singh in remembrance and prayer to see the place where their tenth guru, Guru Govind Singh meditated and realized his oneness with God along the banks of Lokpal Lake. A small Gurdwara was developed in 1935-36 (including enlarging the ancient Hindu "Lokpal" temple) and later in 1968 the construction for the present Gurdwara began which got completed in 1993. For the Hindu the lake known as Lokpal constitute the unique attribute of this geographical location from the Himalayas. Here, Lakshman, the younger brother of Lord Rama, had meditated. A small temple is dedicated to Lakshman and it stands next to the Gurudwara. Lakshman / Hem Ganga stream originates from the Lokpal Lake, which later meets river Pushpawati near Ghangharia and further flows as Bhyundar Ganga to join the river Alaknanda at Govindghat (Kaur, 1985).

The Sikh pilgrims have been the biggest draw for tourism in this area. Every year near about 400000 pilgrims visit Hemkund and Laxman temple before 2013 but only few thousands visits the valley. Tourism plays a very important role in the sustainable development of the area as about 95% of the indigenous population depends on it. The main influx of tourists consists of Sikhs.

There is no significant difference between the common functional attributes of the Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib Geosystems. Climate is moist temperate and alpine type, with short cool summers and long severe winters influenced by southwest monsoon in the summer, and western disturbances in winter. During the snow period (7 months early October to late April) the vegetation survives under snow with the help of tubers and rhizomes.

2. STUDY AREA ACCESSIBILITY

The nearest airport is Jolly Grant, which is 306 km away from the research area. The nearest broad-gauge railhead is Rishikesh (about 271 km), while Haridwar railhead is at a distance of about 295 km by road from Govindghat which is about 25 kilometres before Badrinath. It is located on Rishikesh --Srinagar - Joshimath- - Govindyhat-Badrinath route. The Valley of Flowers is a trek of about 13 km from Pulna village which is 3 km from Govindghat. Govindghat is the base of the route to the Ghangharia base settlement (14km from Govindghat) and from Ghangharia subsequently one trail goes towards Valley of Flowers (3-4km) and another steep trail to Hemkund Sahib (6km). Four-wheel drive services are available to drop tourists from Govindghat to Pulna. Pony and palanquins are available on fixed prices by Eco Development Committee (EDC) for Ghagharia /Hemkund Sahib from Pulna. Helicopter service is also available from Govindghat to Ghangharia. The trek route for Valley of Flowers is relatively easy compared to trek stretches like from Bhyundar to Ghangharia, or that for Hemkund Sahib, which are much steeper.

Fig. 2. The access route from Rishikesh to Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib (Google Earth, 2018).

This trek route from Govindghat is maintained by the PWD. The Eco Development committees of Ghangharia and Govindghat are looking after the cleaning of the trek route (Gupta, 2010).

There is no settlement within the National Park (**Fig. 2**). Four settlements exist between the Park fringe and the motor road such as the tourist settlement of Ghangharia, villages Bhyundar, Pulna and the tourist settlement of Govindghat. The local population is about 80 families/households (about 375 persons) in Pulna, the winter settlement. Except the school going children and few elderly people, these villagers migrate to Bhyundar and Ghangharia, the summer settlements from May to early October. While women stay back at Bhyundar with small children, the men folk move further 3.75 km to Ghangharia, which is the central place/base in upper valley for tourist activities for 4 months from June – September every year.

Small commercial establishments have been registered and regularized by a local NGO body known as Eco-Development Committee (EDC), Bhyundar under the aegis of the Department of Forest. Around 60 shops from Govindghat to Ghangharia and 15 shops from Ghangharia to Hemkund Sahib, while at Ghangharia itself some 40 private establishments of lodges/restaurants/photo studios/souvenir shops, etc. are registered. These establishments erected on Private/*Nap* land are called "*Chak*" and those on Forestland are called "*Chatti*" and these are either run by the villagers themselves or given on rent.

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper research based on the Geosystem grounded theory, has focused on the technical geography advances role in the unique attributes' identification and assessment from the Indian Himalayas. Being the most famous and intriguing, the Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib Geosystems, situated in the Himalaya Mountains near the China border, has been selected for this study.

Data was gathered from different geomedia sources, non-structured interviews and field observations were carried on site in between May-June 2013 and September 2018. The collected data were analyzed using geomedia techniques that imply geo-coding procedures and theoretical sampling for the Geosystem`s carrying capacity assessment (Haidu, 2016; Voda et al, 2017).

Our theory consistency derives from the dynamic balance of the Hemkund Sahib and Valley of Flowers Geosystems, which are continuously developing in a self-sustainable way. There is a powerful connection between the environmental components and the human factors that generates the geosystems` functionality.

The theoretical elaboration is based on the reproducibility capacity of our defined geographical spaces. Their systemic characteristics and elements properties, inductively derived from gathered geo-data were identified and judged with respect to a number of evaluative criteria such as consistency, integration and predictiveness.

The Geosystem grounded theory explanatory power facilitates its application in different world`s regions as long as the defined geographical spaces fit to data. Constructed as a problem orientated endeavor, our geosystemic theory was created from solid data patterns, produced through the elaboration of Hemkund Sahib and Valley of Flowers plausible models.

Our research problems have been structured in accordance to the scientific inquiry task focused on the protection, conservation and self-sustainable development of identified geosystems. Once identified, the problems were selected for consideration, developed and modified.

Our geomedia techniques has also used Geosearch and Geocoding services from ArcGIS World to validate locations coordinates and Pic2Map geo-application to analyze EXIF data embedded in the photos taken on site with Xiaomi Redmi 3S and MI A2 smartphones (Ernawati et al, 2018).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Domestic tourists form a major portion of the total tourists visiting the Himalayas. A key factor for this high domestic tourist inflow in the area is the presence of holy pilgrimages like Badrinath, and Hemkund Sahib. The shrines remain closed for six months during winters. Badrinath, by virtue of being one of the four Hindu sacred places (*Dhams)* of the country had been and continue to be the biggest pilgrim puller evidently, witnessing 10755883 tourist arrivals (including foreigners) in 2008 and 941092 arrivals in 2012. However, a significant decrease has been noticed in the tourist arrival at both these shrines during year 2009 over the previous year (Kandari and Gusain, 2013). The reason for this downfall can be attributed to severe road blockage due to early monsoon. The Himalayan weather problems caused by torrential rain, cloud bursts and flash floods during mid-June 2013 in this region of Uttarakhand had resulted in the severe damage to tourism infrastructure and badly affected the tourism industry and tourist traffic for the year 2013,2014 and 2015 (Gupta & Vijay, 2013).

The pilgrim/tourist traffic is witnessing erratic growth in the Hemkund Sahib and Valley of Flower areas. **Fig.3** illustrates the pilgrim/tourist traffic trends at these two places from 2005-2017. It would also be pertinent to mention here that barring Valley of Flowers, Hemkund Sahib is important from the religious/pilgrimage perspective.

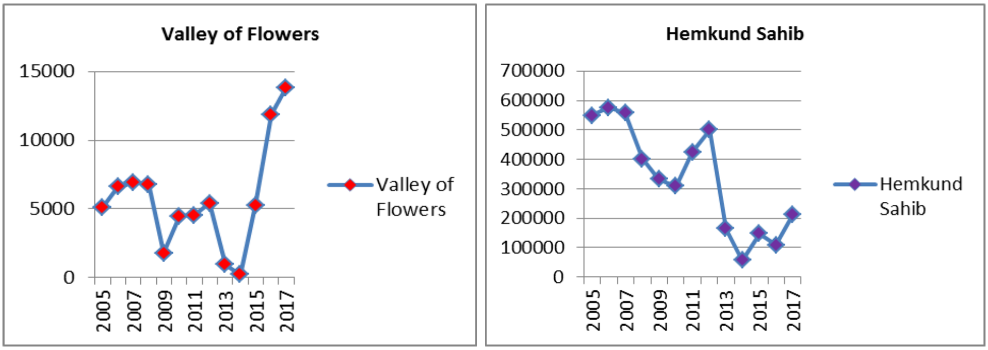

Fig. 3. The dynamic of tourist arrivals in the Valley of Flowers (left) and Hemkund Sahib (right), strongly influenced by climatic factors during 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

According to Kuniyal et al (1998) the Himalayas were affected by the influence of pilgrims and the lack of infrastructural services. They proposed the sustainable reuse and recycling of the tourist garbage instead of the openly dumping of the solid waste. After 20 years the problem is solved, as we observed during our expedition in September 2018.

EDC collects non-biodegradable waste into sacks and dump it at Govindghat from where it is sent either for recycling or for disposal.

Pulna (about 3 km from Govindghat) and Bhyundar (about 9 km from Govindghat) are the only villages, which can offer shelter (by local residents sharing their dwelling units) in an emergency of trek path getting blocked on the way to Ghangharia. Camping in tents is provided with the permission of District Forest Office (DFO), Joshimath through EDC assistance, on Forest land of the non-core zone area. From Pulna normally the trek starts in the morning during onward journey to Ghangharia/Hemkund Sahib and the return treks end at Govindghat in the evening. Gurudwara at Govindghat can accommodate up to 6000 persons comfortably and the one at Ghangharia can accommodate up to 12000 visitors in the rush season (June-July). All the visitors have to sleep on floors for which enough mattresses and blankets are available, even to meet the needs of rush season.

Sikh *Gurudwaras*, managed by the trust that oversees the operation of the pilgrimage to Hemkund Sahib, offer food and lodging at Rishikesh, Srinagar, and Joshimath enroute to Valley of Flowers-Hemkund Region. Govindghat has one Gurudwara, few private lodges and forest rest house for night stay. Ghangharia is the base settlement offering accommodation facilities to the tourists for night halt either for onward travel to Valley of flowers and Hemkund Sahib or return travel to Govindghat (**Fig.4**).

Govind Dham Gurudwara is the largest accommodation at Ghangharia. Due to its high accommodation capacity, apart from free food arrangements (*Langar*), majority of the visitors who are mainly on pilgrimage to Hemkund Sahib avail the Gurudwara facility. Thus, the economic flow in favor of the local communities is highly affected. The government provided accommodation like GMVN Tourist Rest House (TRH) and Forest Rest House (FRH) charge relatively high and fixed tariffs. There are around 20 private guest houses/lodges providing relatively cheaper accommodation due to fierce competition to get high occupancy. Though the accommodation in rest houses/lodges has attached bathrooms/toilets with piped water supply, hot water that is must at these cold temperatures is unavailable through piped means. But water separately heated on large kerosene/gas stoves are provided by these establishments at a reasonable cost.

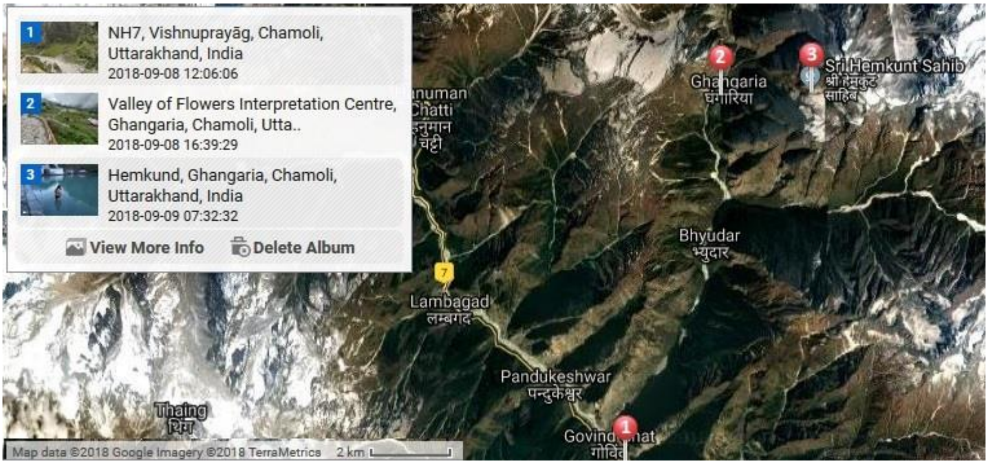

Fig. 4. The Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib route from Govind Gath to Ghangharia (Pic2Map, 2018).

At Valley of Flowers, being declared the National Park night stay is not permitted. Similarly, at Hemkund Sahib Accommodation facilities are only for Gurudwara Staff and Lokpal staff in the Gurudwara and small Dharamshala respectively and they do not encourage general stay for those who are not acclimatized to stay at such heights due to conditions of severe cold and relatively low level of oxygen. Hence, visitors need to return back and stay at nights in Govind Dham Gurudwara or other accommodation at Ghangharia (**Fig.4**).

Facilities for the Holy Bath (*Ishnan*) were observed at Hemkund Sarovar. The Sarovar with considerable cold water can generate real problems for the bold tourists who enter in the lake. There are no lifeguards on site. However, the Gurudwara staff (many of them young volunteers/*sevadars*) were expected to take care of pilgrim requirements and the first aid center at Hemkund Sahib with a doctor provides emergency services and necessary medicines.

Down in the valley, the Govindghat Gurudwara has dispensary and ambulances. In *Govind Dham Gurudwara* there is a 24 hours facility dispensary room, with one doctor and two beds for nursing the patients. Also, a small government dispensary with one doctor exists near the Govind Dham Gurudwara.

Numerous small teashops, snack bars, and temporary sheds have come up between Govindghat, Pulna, Bhyundar, Ghangharia, and Hemkund Sahib to cater to the needs of tourists during summer. Food is also available at many basic restaurants at Govindghat and Ghangharia, while the Gurudwaras at Govindghat and Ghangharia offer free food at the *Langar* facility. Similarly, at Hemkund Sahib free *hot khichri* & *tea* and *prasad* is served to all the visitors. For quenching thirst with potable drinking water, one has to mainly depend on the packaged mineral water or soft drinks (mostly in plastic bottles, with exception of tetra packaging for thicker fluids like fruit drinks/juices).

Moreover, we observed that the overall spatial development and growth of Ghangharia has already happened in a haphazard manner, while structures have poor architectural aesthetics/construction quality with no proper water supply or solid waste disposal system in place. Currently, EDC collects eco-fee from so called hotels, lodges and restaurants, *Chatti's* and *Chak* Stalls for the four-month tourist season for environmental management along the trek path. Sewage is mostly disposed through individual septic tanks and soaks pits. Other effluents from kitchen/utensil wash flows down through open drains along the slopes at Govindghat**,** Pulna/ Bhyundar, Ghangharia and Hemkund Sahib. EDC has installed urinal toilets made up of pre-fabricated board body fixed on thin MS angle frames. No proper water supply is available.

Some of the EDC members from the local villages are trained guides in nature interpretation services and hence apart from their businesses they can earn additionally through guiding. From Govindghat, the taxi services are available up to Pulna village from where trek begins. Donkeys, mules (**Fig.5**), porters, and *palkies*-litter vehicles (**Fig.6**) can are hired mainly from Pulna or Ghangharia.

The pilgrims and tourists can rent mules and donkeys on fixed rate during peak season by the EDC by issuing of proper receipt by clearly showing the registration number of the Mule and Donkey-Kandi wala for Ghangharia, and Ghangharia to Valley of Flowers, Ghangharia- Hemkund or Pulna-Hemkund and back. The mule and donkey service constitute one of the local Geosystem`s special characteristics rarely met in other parts of the world.

Fig. 5. The mules and donkeys from the route to Ghangharia (authors expedition`s photos).

About 800-1000 mules operate on this trek path in peak season (about 500-600 at Pulna and 300-400 are available from Ghangharia). The quadrupeds are well trained and always supervised by local guides who permanently communicate between them.

Telecommunication service is available at Ghangharia connected to a Satellite Telephone Exchange of Department of Telecommunications. Our observations pointed out that such facilities are not good en route the trek path or at Bhyundar or Pulna. There are no good telecommunications facilities at Hemkund Sahib. However, the in case of emergency wireless facility can be availed from forest officials.

Fig. 6. The open portable litters between Ghangharia and Hemkund Sahib (authors expedition`s photos).

The pilgrimage phenomena to Hemkund Sahib generated another unique characteristic of the local Geosystems: the smaller litters in the form of open chairs, carried by one or four carriers (**Fig. 6**). During our exploratory research on the mountain trails we tried to understand what is driving this type of activity, undertaken by the local communities' men. However, the experience offered is unique and intriguing for any western tourist.

Security infrastructure is supposed to be offered by the Police posts that exist at Govindghat and Ghangharia, but they do not have jurisdiction in Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib area (which basically falls under the jurisdiction of *Patwari,* Department of Revenue based at Pandukeshwar). Any accident happening in Valley of Flowers –Hemkund region is to be attended/ recorded by the *Patwari* and the Police station at Govindghat is only informed for any assistance, if required.

The Valley of Flowers nature information center at Ghangharia is available in the Forest Rest House complex. At this nature interpretation center, regular (30 minute) slide shows on Valley of Flowers and wild life are held in the evening hours (from 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm) throughout the 4-5 months of tourist season. Currently this slide show is conducted by few nature enthusiasts / interpreters / guides from the EDC members/local host community of Bhyundar / Pulna village trained by the office of the DFO & Deputy Conservator of Forest, Nanda Devi National Park, Joshimath.

The Hemkund Sahib Geosystem`s information flux is considerable better developed, aligned to the latest technological advances. The smartphone geo-application created by Mebonix (**Fig. 7**) meet the basic needs of the pilgrims in search for general information about the geographical location coordinates, accessibility, accommodation, brief historical introduction, news and weather conditions (Mebonix, 2017).

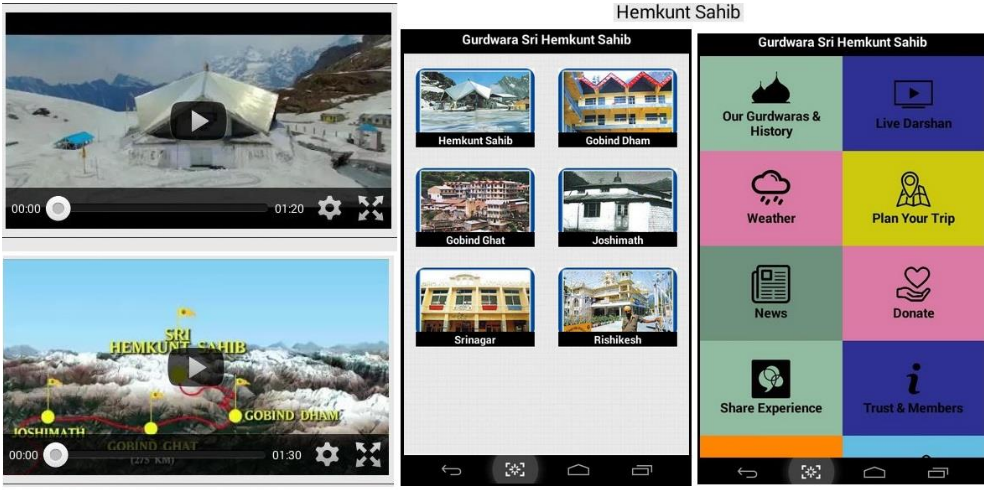

Fig. 7. The Sri Hemkund Sahib geo-application for Android (Mebonix, 2017).

Apart from the supervision of the smartphone applications development, the Sri Hemkund Sahib Management Trust is organizing and providing free accommodation (along with mattresses & blankets), *langar* food, cloak room and toilets at Gurudwaras to visitors of all faiths and nationality. They make the arrangements for health care and free medical treatment at Gurudwara dispensaries, including ambulances at Govindghat, offer support in cases of any deaths along the trek journey and bears the cost voluntarily for the body transportation down to Govindghat and then to the place of choice of their relatives within India, irrespective of the deceased person belonging to any faith or nationality.

The Sri Hemkund Sahib Management Trust is also giving funds to EDC for the entire trek path maintenance/cleanliness in each tourist season and provides assistance through

Gurudwara *Sevadars* (volunteers) for the trail repairs at higher altitudes after avalanches en route to Hemkund Sahib.

Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib Geosystems coexist harmoniously in the Indian Himalayas because of the human factor, who responsibly intervened and established the institutional framework for the protection, conservation, planning and development of the geographical space. The main institutional stakeholders include the Eco-Development Committee (EDC), Gurudwara Sri Hemkund Sahib Management Trust (GSHSMT), Van Panchayat/Forest Council, Zila Panchayat (ZP) and the Department of Forests.

Eco-Development Committee (EDC)

In 2003 Eco-Development Committee (EDC) was set up under the provisions of State's Joint Forest Management Rules, and it took up the task of solid waste collection from June 2003 onwards. Their responsibilities are:

• To keep the trek trail clean and region free from polythene / plastics

• To provide employment opportunity to rural unemployed

• To conserve the environment of this valley region

• To provide facility of prepaid booking of mule/donkey

• To provide the *yatrees* /tourists all information and help

EDC collects the Eco-development fee from Mules and Commercial Establishments, utilizing funds from its revenue on training/capacity building of the local community members and local service providers with the assistance of Department of Forests.

The Van Panchayat Responsibilities mainly include Protection and Conservation of Forests under its Area as per Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.The activities are:

•Patrolling of Forests/Land under its area and control over illegal tree felling pruning of tree branches, and fodder grazing

•Permit the individuals/tour operators to pitch tents on the Van Panchayat land at Kanjila for a nominal fee or lease for short-term for tent resorts every season.

Zilla Panchayat (ZP) has performed the following functions in the Valley of Flowers-Hemkund region:

• Maintains the ZP parking at Govindghat, fix the parking rates (large vehicle, small vehicle, two-wheelers) and collect the parking charges on contract

• Provides toilet facilities at Govindghat

• Provides land for mule sheds at Ghangharia and Govindghat.

• Fixation of rates for transportation services (mules/porters/palki) on the trek path

The Valley of Flowers-Hemkund region is a part of the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve (NDBR), and especially the Valleys of Flowers National Park being one of the two core zones (core zone-II) of the NDBR. The region is under active control of the Office of the District Forest Officer, Department of Forests, Joshimath. A Forest Range Officer is deployed in the region with facilities at Govindghat and Ghangharia. The management of the Valley of Flowers National Park has been based on the following objectives and considerations:

•Keeping control on the extent and wide spread growth of the fast growing and pioneering flowering herb – the *Polygonum polystachyum*.

• Development and upkeep of the trek route within the tourism zone of the park.

• Maintenance of the park and keeping it free from any kind of polluting material.

• Providing impetus to the tourism and providing local employment (through EDC, etc.).

• Strict control on illicit removal of herbs and on poaching.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The Valley of Flowers Geosystem common attributes are harmoniously functioning in an interdependent relationship with all the environmental components and generate the natural dynamic of the perfectly equilibrated geosystem. But our exploratory research goal was not limited to the assessment of the common Himalayas` attributes such as those found in the Valley of Flowers Geosystem.

This research also investigated the special attributes presence in the natural Himalayas` geosystems where the local communities were perfectly integrated. The findings confirmed that Hemkund Sahib Geosystem represents an excellent model of human-nature interaction. The results suggest that Hemkund Sahib unique functional attribute is based on the indigenous people cultural and historical heritage that helps them in the permanent adaptation to changes process. They naturally learn how to constantly adjust to new challenges. Interestingly, Hemkund Sahib- the famous Sikh Shrine is steadily emerging as a strong religious resort as well as a tourist destination despite the fact that its geographical location is not accessible by road. It involves an arduous trekking on a steep slope for the last six kilometers. Naturally, there is also dearth of way-side facilities. Despite this, the pilgrim arrivals recorded at 340578 in 2002 increased to 557129 in 2007 witnessing an overall increase by over 63.5 % and per annum average growth of over 10.5 % during the six years under reference. But similar trends followed in the year 2009, 2013, 2014 and 2015 due to climatic factors.

Statistics on non-pilgrim tourist destination, i.e., Valley of Flowers gives an idea on visitor trends to non-religious destinations located in the higher Himalayan part of India. Unfortunately, despite being world class destination for their extra-ordinary resource potential, it has largely failed to attract tourists anywhere close to the underlying potential. Valley of Flowers, the fabulously flower carpeted rock garden of Frank Smyth, which was declared as Biosphere Reserve in 1982, has been able to attract only 6944 tourists in 2007 as against 557129 pilgrims/tourists to nearby Hemkund Sahib. Such a poor share of the former appears to be all the more dismaying in view of the fact that till Ghangharia, there is common trek for the two destination and that Valley of Flowers is only about 4 km from there while Hemkund Sahib is located at 6.5 km from there and the trek is considerably arduous in case of the latter. True, that entry to the Valley is restricted on account of its highly fragile ecosystems, but still the number of visits is too less than the prevailing carrying capacity.

The research findings answer to all the access, security, hygiene, accommodation, transport and communication problems. Based on the results, we estimate an increasingly higher rate of development due to the technological advances that facilitate information sharing and the enhancement of the geographical place virtual illustration.

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International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Systems
Volume 12 Issue 1 June 2019
ISSN: 0947-6250 (Print)

Hospitality & Tourism Systems

Community Based Tourism Development Amid Complex Mountain Issues: A Strategic Analysis of Chakrata Region of Uttarakhand

S.K. Gupta*, Prakash Chandra Rout, Pankaj Tyagi*****

Abstract *The hope of livelihood enhancement for the mountain dwellers has been a climacteric and novel effort by many international and national organizations lately. Community based tourism development in these rural hinterlands is one of those efforts by many organizations and agencies. However, these developmental initiatives in the name of tourism remain in black and white. The very work through this piece of research has highlighted the ongoing developmental discourse of tourism in Chakrata region of Uttarakhand in India. Issues pertaining to infrastructure, policy, and community preparedness are top in the fray. The research has synthesized the core constraints and challenges the Himalayan region has been confronting. In the same time the results have provided some feasible strategies to make tourism development ideal in the region.*

Keywords: *Community Based Tourism, Community Development, Tourism Development, Community Issues, Tourism Policy*

INTRODUCTION

The global significance of mountains is increasingly recognized with the inclusion of a specific chapter in 'Agenda 21'and the declaration of the year 2002 as the International Year of Mountains (Nordic Centre for Spatial Development (NORDREGIO), 2004). The individual safety and welfare of one sixth of the world's human population, and water supply of almost half of all people are directly or indirectly reliant on the functional integrity of mountain ecosystems. The two key components which make mountains so important and sensitive are (1) altitude and (2) slope (Korner, 2003). Mountain areas cover 24% of the planet earth's land surface (UNEP-WCMC, 2002) and are dwelling to 12% of the global human population (Huddleston & Ataman, 2003), with a further 14% living in their immediate vicinity (Mebeck, et. Al. 2001). All major rivers of the world have originated in mountains and more than half of the world's mountain areas play a vital role in bringing water to downstream regions (Viviroli et al., 2007). Mountain regions are repositories of biological and cultural diversity and provide vital services with a tangible economic value-include water, power, minerals, medicinal plants, and fibers-to mountain communities and, even having greater significance to often heavily populated downstream areas. Mountains also impact the climates of their surrounding regions and serve as vital carbon sinks (ICIMOD, 2010). Mountains can be found on every continent include remarkable ranges such as the Himalayas, the Andes, the Alps and the Rockies, and less well-known highlands such as the Elburz Mountains in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Cairngorms in Scotland and the Fouta Djallon Highlands in West Africa. They are characterized by immense global diversity – from tropical rain forests to permanent ice and snow, from climates with more than 12 m of annual rainfall

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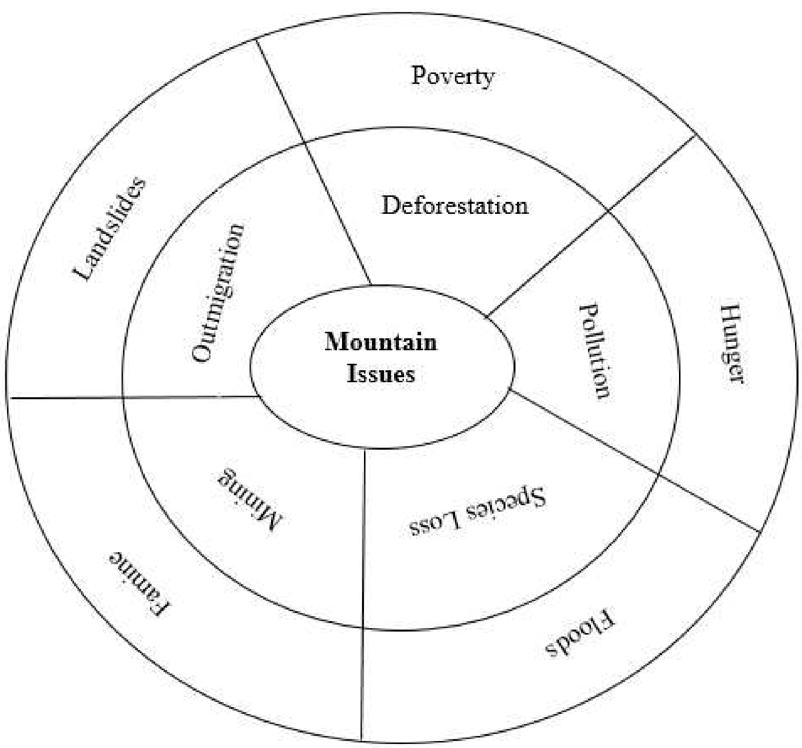
to high-altitude deserts, and from sea level to almost 9000 m in altitude (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2011).

Spreading far beyond national borders in many areas, mountain systems have become the object of international treaties and trans-boundary collaboration initiatives; like the Andean Community, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention. Nevertheless, despite mountains' strategic importance, many mainstream national and international development efforts have deserted mountains, which are often perceived as remote, inaccessible areas that are "hard to reach". A combination of government neglect, insufficient private investment and environmental fragility has worsened the socio-economic situation of many mountain people (Ariza, et al., 2013). Development of mountain areas is often designed by decisions taken in political and economic hubs in lowland areas. The welfares behind these decisions are short-term rather than long-term, and extraction of resources takes precedence over the sustainable development of mountain areas. To give a cessation to political and economic marginalization, mountain areas need to be recognized as equivalent partners in development. Strategies to reach this goal include decentralisation, local institution building, recognition of local civil rights to natural resources, and establishment of platforms and joint networks to give mountain populations a "voice" (Mountain Agenda, 2002).

KEY MOUNTAIN ISSUES

Though mountains signify irreplaceable centres of biological and cultural diversity, people living in mountain regions are mostly affected by poverty and hunger, and mountain ecosystems are highly exposed to environmental risks and degradation. Until lately, however, law-makers have not taken meaningful interest in the protection and development of mountains (Villeneuve, et al., 2002).The 'water tower of the world 'confronting a growing number of problems including floods, landslides, famine, pollution, climate change, armed conflicts, population growth, deforestation, exploitative agriculture, mining and tourism practices (Price et al., 2004). The most widely reported impact in the'greater Himalayan region', sometimes called the 'Roof of the World', is the rapid reduction in glaciers, which has profound impacts on downstream water resources. The impacts of climate change are overlaid on a variety of other environmental and social stresses, many already recognised as severe (Ives & Messerli, 1989).



Source: authors

Fig. 1: Mountain Issues

As accessibility to mountain areas and mountain population have increased, mountain capitals and its dwellers have moved downhill while environmental degradation and social ills have climbed uphill. Landslides, land degradation, desertification, deforestation and glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) are key environmental issues in mountain regions, which are particularly vulnerable to natural hazards. Atmospheric variations are now a key challenge for those concerned with mountain environments: evolving issues are climate change and emissions of aerosols and acidifying substances. These processes result from emissions from the industrial, transport, and domestic sectors (Iyngararasan, et al., 2004).

While the global mountain and its people are facing the aforementioned issues, the Chakrata region of the state Uttarakhand, India has no exception from it. The region is still struggling with the issues of economic and social reformation. Under this circumstances the Himalayan region has a plethora of natural, cultural and social assets to act as a lifesaver. These assets can be strategically used by the mountain community in ‘Community Based Tourism Promotion’ where the local members will own and run the community based tourism enterprises for their overall wellbeing.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The global mountain area defined is almost 40 million square kilometers, or 27% of Earth’s surface. Assuming a lower mountain boundary of 1,000 meters at the equator and a linear reduction of this boundary to 300 meters at 67°N and 55°S reduced the total ‘‘mountain’’ land area by 5.4 million square kilometers or 3.7 % of the global land (Spehn, et al., 2005). Major part of the Earth’s terrestrial surface is roofed by mountains, which host a larger proportion of the Earth’s biodiversity than would be expected by area (Korner, 2004, Mutke & Barthlott, 2005). Mountain dwellers is particularly vulnerable to food insecurity. Slopes with steep and differing elevations often make the soil shallow, poor in micronutrients, limited and difficult to cultivate and unsuitable for mass agricultural production. Distance from roads, poor infrastructure and marginalization render access to markets more difficult. Further, the occurrence and magnitude of extreme climatic events are traditionally higher in mountains than in lowlands, a situation that is increasing due to climate change (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2015).

The concept of CBT can be traced back and linked with alternative development approaches formulated during the 1970s which were concerned with issues beyond strict economic reasoning, such as empowerment and self-reliance (Telfer, 2009). Community development contains associations of groups of persons who combined their actions not individually (Flora et al., 1992). The life style of the communities in many ways enormously influenced by tourism development like augmenting rates of crime; increased the living cost, generation of water waste, and congestion of traffic (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2009). CBT considered to be an effective way of implementing policy coordination, avoid conflicts between different stakeholders in tourism, and obtaining synergies grounded on the exchange of knowledge, analysis and ability among all members of the community (Kibicho, 2008).

TOURISM IN THE CHAKRATA REGION

Chakrata, part of “Jaunsar-Bawar” region, is located in Dehradun district of the state Uttarakhand in Garhwal Himalayas between 30 º 31’ to 31 º 3’ N latitudes and 77 º 42’ to 78 º 5’ E longitudes, covering an area of approximately 1,999.50 km^{2}in India. Physiographically the highly mountainous region is situated between the upper courses of river Yamuna and Tons. The climate of Chakrata varies from sub- tropical to temperate (Cheema et al., 2014).

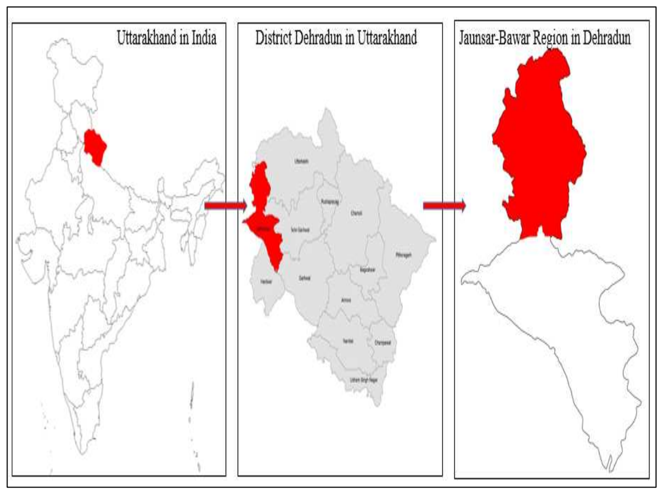
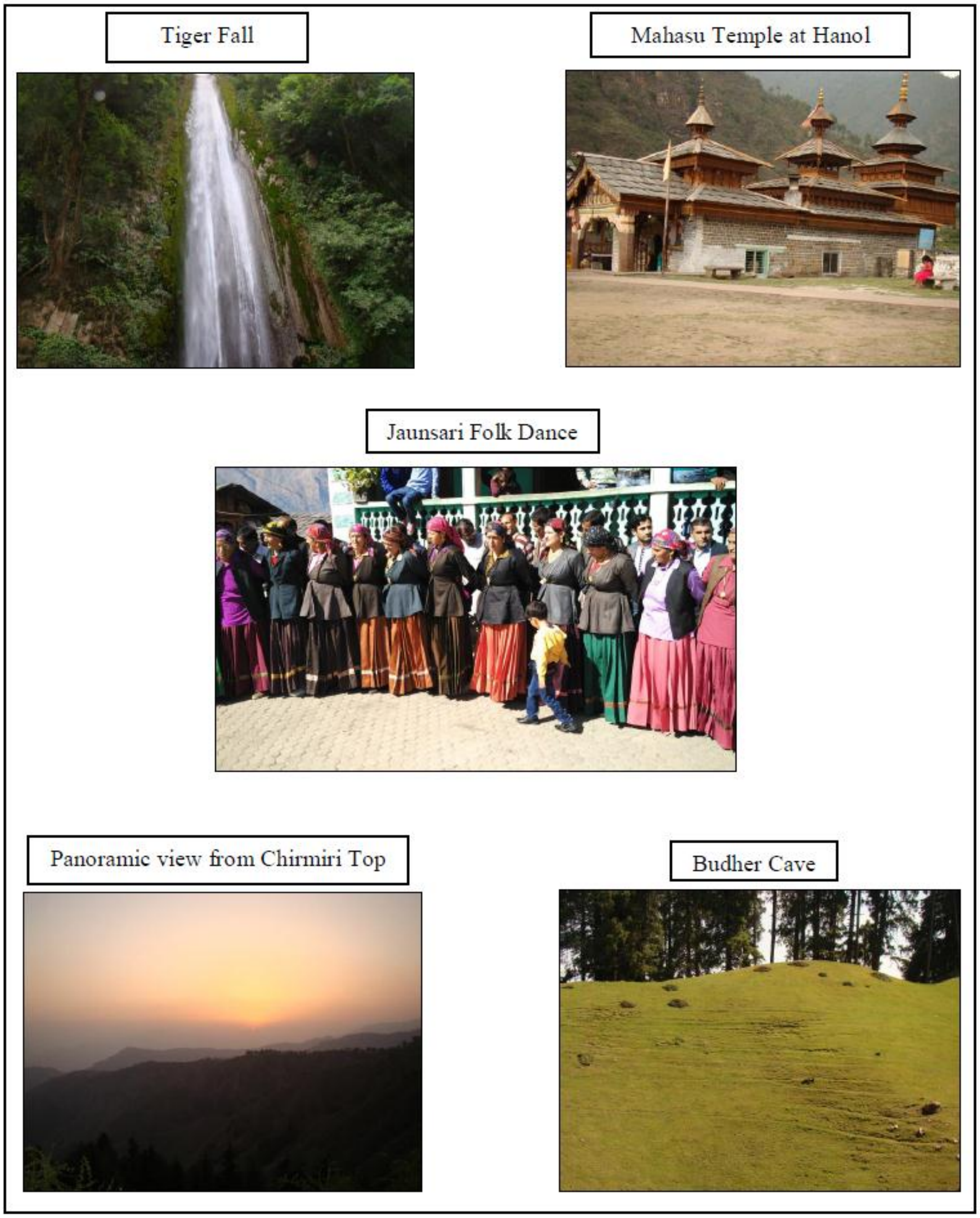


Fig. 2: Map of Chakrata

The Himalayan region of Chakrata has a great potential to enthrall globetrotters. The tourism resources in this aboriginal land are yet to be explored by many.

The destination holds a variety of resources in its lap to cater all segments of tourists. Tourism development is still in its nascent stage due to poor market linkages. The recent State Government initiative to identify tourism potential villages in the region has created a hope for tourism development in the region. The destination suffers from poverty, education, hunger, migration and lack of inward investment opportunities. At this juncture community based tourism promotion in this aboriginal Himalayan land seems to be an ideal strategy to strengthen the local economy at large. Community based tourism promotion in this region can provide value to the local natural and socio-cultural resources, in the same time.



Photos: courtesy S.K. Gupta & Prakash Chandra Rout

Fig. 3: Tourism Resources of Chakrata

OBJECTIVES

The study has undertaken with the following objectives:

- To highlight the issues which are continuously obstructing the development of mountain areas?
- To understand the importance of mountains for human survival.
- To understand the community preparedness towards community based tourism development in the region.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on the survey response of community members towards the preparedness to support community based tourism in the region. The study is descriptive in nature and the respondents were selected through random sampling techniques. The data were collected using structured questionnaires to seek information on the socio-demographic profile of the community members and questions pertaining to community preparedness to take part in CBT. Three hundred and fifty questionnaires were filled in the month of May, June and October of the year 2015 and January, February, April and June of 2016 from the community members of the region. Three point ordinal scale was used for purpose of the study. Statistical Packages for Social Science Research (SPSS) Version-20 was used for the purpose of analyzing the data. Statistical analysis frequencies are used for the analysis and interpretation the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Socio Demographic Characteristics of the Community Members

In Table 1, the socio demographic characteristics of the sample respondents from the 18 different villages are divided in gender, age, education, occupation and monthly income. In terms of gender out of 350 samples 228 (65.1%) were males and 122 (34.9%) respondents were female. The age distribution of the sample respondents was from 18 -60 years. Out of which 89 (25.4%) respondents were in the age group of 30-40 years, 87 (24.9%) were in the age group of 40-50, 68 (19.4%) were in the age between 20-30, 55 (15.7%) were between the age 50-60 and 51 (14.6%) were in the age group of <20 respectively. As the mountain communities are far away from the mainstream development, therefore sound educational services are yet to reach there. The study found the clear disparity in the education qualification having a higher illiteracy rate among the respondents 135 respondents (38.6%) and 127 (36.3%) respondents were just able to reach up to the high school. On the other side, only 54 (15.4 %), 17 (4.9%), 17 (4.9%) of samples participated in the research were able to receive Intermediate, Graduate and Postgraduate education from within and outside of Jaunsar-Bawar region. As evident in the mountainous region, the major occupation of the respondents was farming. Out of the total respondents 156 (44.6%) were farmers, followed by 39 (11.1%) businessmen, 34 (9.7%) livestock keeper, 17 (4.9%) service men (both government or private) respectively. However, 36 (10.3%) respondents were unemployed. It put more emphasis on the development of Community Based Tourism Development to generate employment.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	228	65.1
Female	122	34.9
Age		
Up to 20 years	51	14.6
Up to 30 years	68	19.4
Up to 40 years	89	25.4
Up to 50 years	87	24.9
Up to 60 years	55	15.7
Education		
Up to High school	127	36.3
Intermediate	54	15.4
Graduate	17	4.9
Post Graduate	17	4.9
Illiterate	135	38.6
Occupation		
Farmer	156	44.6
Livestock keeper	34	9.7
Business Man	39	11.1
Day Labor	51	14.6
Service-Govt. or Pvt.	17	4.9
Unemployed	36	10.3
Other	17	4.9
Monthly Income		
<15000	267	76.3
15,000-30,000	66	18.9
30,000-40,000	9	2.6
> 40, 000	8	2.3

Source: Primary Data

On the basis of occupation 267 (76.3%) respondents are earning less than Rs. 15000/- per month, 66 (18.9%) of the respondents are earning an average income between Rs.15000-3000 per month, 9 (2.6%) of the community respondents are in the bit higher income group between Rs. 30000-40000 monthly and only 8 (2.3%) respondents of the sample population are able to earn a higher income of more than Rs.40,000/-.

COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS TOWARDS COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM

In order to promote community based tourism in the rural hinterland it was worth appropriate to understand the community preparedness towards it.

Table 2: Community Preparedness towards the promotion of CBT

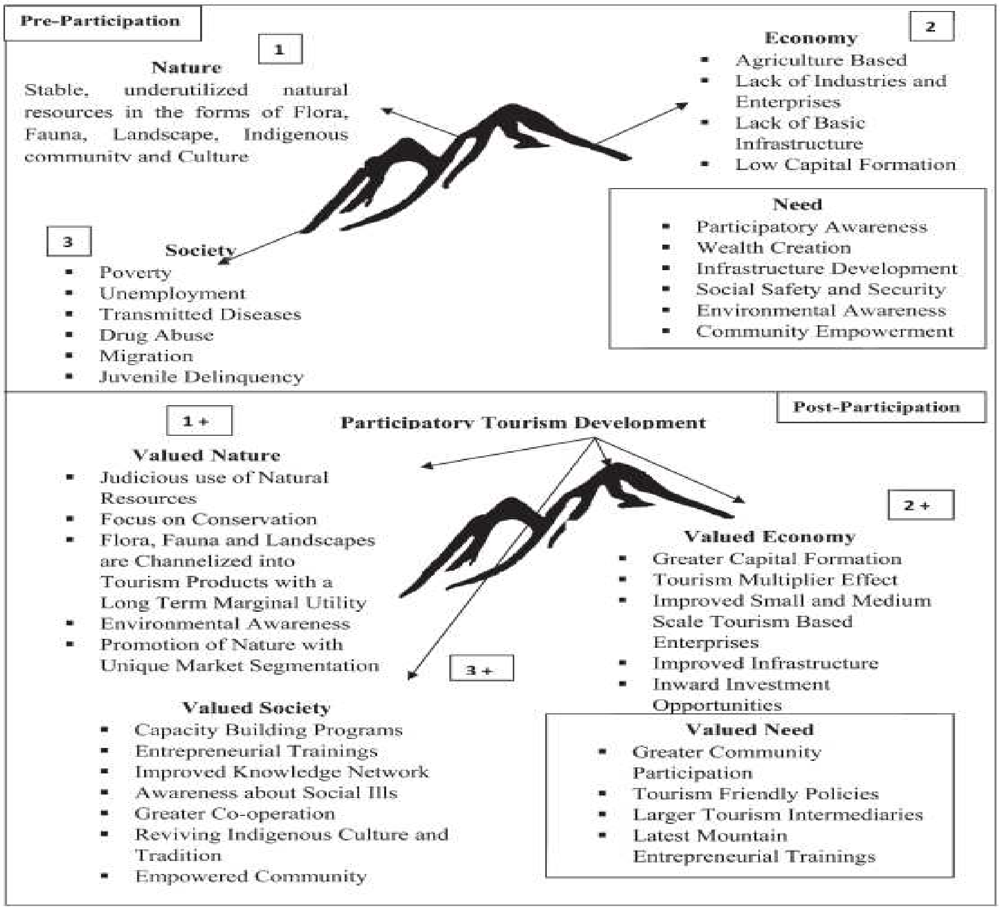
Dependent Variables	Mean	SD	Agree	Ignorant	Disagree
I am optimistic that CBT has bright future	1.5714	.71759	197 56.3%	106 30.3%	47 13.4%
I am willing to support the development of CBT in Chakrata	1.5457	.72761	208 59.4%	93 26.6%	49 14.0%
I am willing to protect local natural, cultural resources and environment in the process of development of CBT	1.5657	.73782	204 58.3%	94 26.9%	52 14.9%
I am willing to participate in making the policies and decisions for CBT	1.4971	.72905	225 64.3%	76 21.7%	49 14.0%
I am willing to participate in CBT development and planning	1.5486	.75450	214 61.6%	80 22.9%	56 16.0%
I am willing to work in collaboration with other stakeholders	1.6343	.80327	200 57.1%	78 22.3%	72 20.6%
I am willing to engage in independent CBT projects (e.g. running family hotel, restaurants, commodity, transportation)	1.5886	.85437	229 65.4%	36 10.3%	85 24.3%
I am willing to work in community based ecotourism enterprises (e.g. green hotels, green travel agencies, ecological scenic spots)	1.5171	.71696	215 61.4%	89 25.4%	46 13.1%
I am willing to accept community based tourism education and training	1.4686	.70030	228 65.1%	80 22.9%	42 12.0

Source: Primary Data

The nine dependent variables that were taken to understand the community preparedness to willingly participate in the promotion of CBT show a positively significant result. In order to understand the existence of CBT for a longer period 197 (56.3%) respondents were agreed, 47 (13.4%) were disagreed and 106 (30.3%) respondents were ignorant with a mean and standard deviation of 1.5714 and .71759. 208 (59.4%) respondents were agreed to willingly to support the development of CBT in Chakrata, 93 (26.6%) were disagreed to support CBT in the region and 93 (26.6%) respondents were ignorant. In order to understand how local resources (natural, cultural and environmental) can be well protected, 204 (58.3%) respondents were agreed to willing to protect the environment, 52 (14.9%) respondents were disagreed to protect the environment and 94 (26.9%) respondents were ignorant with a mean of 1.5657 and standard deviation of .73782. The dependent variables related to the community willingness to take part in policy and decision making had also shown a positive response with 225 (64.3%) were agreed, 49 (14%) were disagreed and 76 (21.7%) respondents were ignorant. In order to understand the community willingness to participate in CBT development and planning 214 (61.6%) respondents were agreed, 56 (16%) respondents were disagreed and 80 (22.9%) were ignorant with mean and standard deviation of 1.5486 and .75450. Community willingness to work in collaboration with other stake holders has also shown a positive response with 200 (57.1%) agreed, 72 (20.6%) disagreed and 78 (22.3%) respondents were ignorant towards it. Two hundred twenty-nine (229, (65.4%)) respondents were agreed to engage in independent CBT projects and to answer the same question 85 (24.3%) were disagreed and 36 (10.3%) respondents were ignorant. Question pertaining to community willingness to work in community based ecotourism enterprises, a higher number of 215 (61.4%) respondents were agreed, 46 (13.1%) were disagreed and 89 (25.4%) respondents were ignorant. To answer the last question of dependent variables on community willingness to accept tourism education and training 228 (65.1%) respondents were agreed, 42 (12.0%) were disagreed and 80 (22.9%) of the respondents were ignorant with a mean of 1.4686 and standard deviation of .70030. The table reveals that majority of the respondents were optimistic and willing to support community based tourism in the region (mean value ranging between 1.46 and 1.63).

THE VALUE TOURISM CAN ADD TO THE COMMUNITY

Tourism has a great potential to add value to the community. According to Gupta & Rout (2016) community participation can mobilize community's natural, cultural and social assets to further by adding a value to it. According to their Pre-*and Post-Tourism Participatory Model*the active participation of community in the centre give a new life to its above mentioned three assets, where the community are in the urge of awareness, wealth creation, infrastructure development, community safety and security and empowerment. The participatory model has further delivered that community participation make a paradigm shift in the post participation. The post participation results show a greater value in all three spheres e.g. nature, culture and society.



Source: adopted from Gupta & Rout (2016).

Fig. 4: Pre-and Post-Tourism Participatory Model

A SUCCESS STORY

The Case of 'Road less Travel Venture'

The Road Less Travel venture, a Community Based Ecotourism initiative on the foot of Trans-Himalaya laid its foundation stone in the year 2012 in the Korwa village of Chakrata *tehsil* in the district Dehradun of the state Uttarakhand in India. The IIM alumni of the region took pain to lead from the front. Though the initiative was a trade-off between a lucrative career and the economic wellbeing of the region but they choose the later one and the entrepreneurial venture is a grand success. The alumni started this entrepreneurial venture in the name *'The Blue Canvas Resort'* in the outskirt of the Chakrata cantonment. Now the travel venture deals with a wide range of travel activities start with pick from the station to drop at the door-step. The resort has 15 lettable tents with other on premises facilities like game room, restaurant-cum-coffee shop and a souvenir shop etc. for tourists. The neoliberal approach that blends both modern management and traditional technological approach is very much in appliance within the resort. Most of the furniture's of the resort are self-made; grains, pulses, vegetables used in the resort are locally produced. Even the staffs working in the resort are from the local vicinity and the handicraft items sold in the souvenir shop are locally made. The folk cultural shows that performed before the guest are by the local crews. It is evident that community based tourism promotion along with a strong local participation is a long association of an endless journey to showcase a participatory success story of a Himalayan mountain. The venture deals with various adventure activities like camping, trekking, rappelling, caving, nature trails etc. in destinations around the local vicinity like Chakrata, Deoban, Mundali, Budher, Kanasar, Chirmiri top and Tiger fall. The allocentric travelers those who want to explore the unexplored region of Jaunsar-Bawar can have a glance to the travel portal of the Road Less Travel Venture for a better travel treat in the region. The participatory approach has a positive impact on the local economy. The entrepreneurial success is currently benefiting the mountainous region through job creation, cultural promotion, corporate social responsibility activities and proper waste disposal system by its all endeavor. The attempt of the entrepreneurial venture in promoting the local art and craft, culture and strengthen the local economy in a micro scale is worth appreciable.

CONCLUSION

The above discourse based on the socio-economic development of mountain communities through tourism as a mainstream agenda has brought some significant highlights. The thematic approach of community based tourism development in the region certainly may mitigate the long-standing issues related to economic, socio-cultural and environment in many ways. Lately the State Government has also identified tourism potential villages in the region, however not much developmental initiative had taken to promote tourism full-fledged in the region. In order to venturing into CBT the state government support through various tourism related community centric polices are the key for its success. In the same time government's intervention through various long and medium term projects to create awareness and empowerment of various stakeholders of CBT is also utmost important. The case study of the 'Road less Travel Venture' is a perfect example of a successful community based tourism enterprises in the region. It is hoped that tourism policy makers, government, researchers and tourism agencies can collaboratively work with result based management (RBM) approach to mobilize the local assets to create successful CBT development models in the region. The outcome of successful CBT will certainly contribute to the welfare of these deprived communities of Himalaya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors gratefully acknowledge ICSSR for funding the major research project on *"Planning for Community Based Ecotourism through Integrated Value Chain Development in Jaunsar Region of Uttarakhand: An Analytical and Strategic Framework"*. The current paper is the outcome of that project.

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Destination Evaluation and Tourism Economic Impact Assessment: A Case Study of Varanasi

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PDF

Published
2019-12-21

Issue
Vol. 21 No. 14 (2019)

Section
Articles

Abstract

Tourism has been recognized as an important instrument for development of the community, society and the destination region. A number of attractions and destinations around the world can be acknowledged for their development especially through tourism. Economic impact of tourism development is quite visible on the destination community through employment generation and infrastructure development in the region. There are multiple impacts occur when a place is developed as a tourism destination. Around the world, in many developing and developed countries, the impacts viz. environmental, socio-cultural and economic has been observed and analyzed in number of studies before. This study is for destination evaluation and assessment of economic impacts of tourism in the study area Varanasi. Both primary and secondary data has been used to assess the objective. The analysis reveals that, the tourism development in the study area has made both positive and negative impacts. There is a significant increase in employment generation, quality of life of local community and significant tourism and basic infrastructure development in the region. While some negative economic impact has also been observed in the form of increase in land price and rented accommodation for the residents.

ISSN: 0972-7310

Journal of Tourism

An International Research Journal on Travel and Tourism

Vol. XXII, No. 2, 2021

Centre for Mountain Tourism and Hospitality Studies (CMTHS)
HNB Garhwal Central University, Srinagar Garhwal, India

JOURNAL OF TOURISM

An International Research Journal on Travel and Tourism

Vol. XXII, No. 2, 2021 December 2021 ISSN: 0972-7310

CONTENTS

KEYWORDS

Behavioural Intentions,
COVID-19,
Online Payments,
Travel Technologies,
Garhwal Region,
India.

Exploring Behavioural Intentions of Tourists towards the Online Mode of Payments before and after COVID-19 Pandemic: An Investigation from Garhwal Region of Uttarakhand

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Abstract

Appropriate understanding of the behavioural intentions of tourists is a critical and most fundamental determinant for tourism development and consumers' satisfaction (Severson & Yaffe-Bellany, 2020). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every intention of tourists in relation to travel significantly over the past two years. When considering the mode of payment used by tourists while traveling depends on multiple factors such as the nature of the destination, availability of e-resources, technology, accessibility of banking system to residents and service providers, information, security, and regulatory framework, etc. The present study aims to investigate the behavioural intentions of tourists about the different online modes of payments before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of the study show the impact of COVID-19 on the technological behaviour of

INTRODUCTION

These days online payment applications are par excellence for the tourists while traveling, visiting destinations, and making payments (Rodríguez-Torrico et al., 2019). When tourists purchase any tourism product they depend on the available mode of payments and sources of information, where the online modes of payments have a privileged role (Coromina & Camprubí, 2016; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). A greater degree of uncertainty in the minds of tourists towards makings payments for tourism products and services is there when tourists intend to make and use an unfamiliar mode of payments (García-Milon et al., 2019). Smartphones facilitate the use of online modes of payments and changes tourists' behavioural intentions and decision-making processes towards online and offline modes (García-Milon et al., 2020). Tourists gather information about different modes of payments from various e-sources, compare products and prices (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017). However, something unimaginable happened in the year 2020. COVID-19 emerged and caused a worldwide syndemic and destruction (Horton, 2020). This dramatically affected entire tourism and its associated sectors and left the global tourism industry helpless and hopeless. More reformulations and innovative solutions are needed to ensure its survival and the encouragement of tourists about online modes of payments is one most important among them.

The highly contagious and communicable nature of COVID-19 did not allow performing events where social human interaction is more such as tourism, transportation, and hospitality, etc. (Wen et al., 2020). Measures that facilitate limited interpersonal contact are to be promoted like responsible and sustainable tourism (Fong et al., 2020). In this context, uses of contactless systems i.e. modern technologies (e-booking and tourists and suggest that behavioural intentions of tourists have changed significantly towards the mode of payments after the pandemic. Nowadays after the pandemic online mode of payment is preferred to offline mode of payment. Based on results appropriate suggestions and recommendations are also made to tourists, service providers, and tourism stakeholders.

Artice History
Received: 15 July 2021
Revised: 15 November 2021
Accepted: 24 December 2021

payments) have been seen as one of the best solutions to overcome and revive the tourism industry across the World (Nanni & Ulqinaku, 2020; Zeng et al., 2020). After COVID-19 pandemic technologies are more used in education, official work, buying, selling, and conducting several other activities of our daily lives. Therefore, it is important and foreseeable that tourism planners, destinations operators, local vendors, tourists, and other associated tourism stakeholders will increase the use of technological devices, applications, and systems in relation to conducting safe and sustainable tourism. Indeed, before the COVID-19 pandemic, people were not much aware and used to digital modes of payments as they feel more comfortable and secure with offline modes. The shutdown and contactless guidelines of WHO and Governments have made people more accustomed to using information and communication technologies (ICTs) for conducting their businesses and performing routine affairs and digitalization of payment systems is most prominent among them. Although many destination management organizations and companies were already using and promoting an online mode of payments, it was most challenging for remote and offbeat tourism destinations (Choi et al., 2016; Law et al., 2018). Poor internet connectivity, insufficient banking services, and lack of awareness are some of the most prominent setbacks while promoting online payments and digitalization in such tourism destinations. Although there have been several studies conducted on the impact of COVID-19 on tourism from a different dimension (Zenker & Kock, 2020; Kala, 2021), tourists' behavioural intentions towards online payments due to a pandemic is still unexplored that needs to be studied and addressed. To minimize this gap, the present study has been conducted with an aim to investigate behavioural intentions of tourists towards online payments modes before and after COVID-19.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist behavioural intentions about tourism products, resources, activities, and amenities act as a guiding force for designing and packaging of travel packages and accordingly tourism stakeholders target the customers (Jin et al., 2017; Rabbiosi, 2011; Timothy, 2005). Previous studies have also suggested that tourists' perception, satisfaction, and experience while visiting destinations have been greatly affected by behavioural intentions (Chen, 2013; Law & Au, 2000; Lloyd et al., 2011; Yüksel, 2007). It ensures positive perception and a high level of satisfaction for tourists and allows them to participate in different and distinct tourism activities according to their needs and wants (Hsieh & Chang, 2006; Way & Robertson, 2013). In addition, online modes of payments benefit tourism destinations and tourists both by saving time, energy, and money (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Jin et al., 2017) and is a safe and secure mode of income and payment (Chang et al., 2006; Jin et al., 2017). Online payment modes are highly preferred and valued by tourists, and are also quite useful to tourism service providers (Choi et al., 2016; Jin et al., 2017). In addition, e-payment applications involve very simple steps to make the payments and get unique experiences (García-Milon et al., 2020).

New technologies have completely modified e-payment systems and, in particular, mobile applications such as phone pay, Google pay, Paytm, and mobile wallets, etc. have been adopted by tourists as an indispensable tool while traveling (Ripp´e et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2016). On the other hand, smartphones are also reconfigured and upgraded online payment systems by creating hyper-connected frameworks through which tourists can make payments anywhere and at any time (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017). Android smartphones help in satisfying tourists' multiple needs and desires related to mobility, purchasing, information, payment, and interaction, etc. (Wang et al., 2014), and are considered as "ideal travel companions" for tourists (Rodríguez-Torrico et al., 2019). Therefore, tourists use modern technologies and applications with the help of mobile phones and conduct their travels effectively and hassle-free.

Acceptance and use of online payments through mobile phones in tourism have been undertaken in the last decade, which demonstrates a significant benefit to both tourists and service providers (Kim & Law, 2015; Law et al., 2018). The most widely accepted and used model is the 'Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which was introduced by Davis (1989) and furthermore 'Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology' (UTAUT) by Venkatesh et al. (2003). TAM is an important theoretical model for studying human technological behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Davis et al., 1989; Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Thompson et al., 1991). With the help of TAM (Technological Acceptance Model) and UTAUT (Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology) models, key variables and frameworks for the tourists' technological behaviours have been identified and those variables help the tourism suppliers to understand the technological behaviours of visitors (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Furthermore, behavioural intention of tourists related to technology acceptance is affected by factors like facilitating conditions, social influence, performance expectancy, and effort expectancy (Venkatesh et al., 2003). These factors have been used to understand and investigate varied technological behaviours of tourists' at tourism destinations (Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014; San Martín & Herrero, 2012) More recently, the technological behaviour of tourists is focused on digital modes of payments through multiple mobile applications (Bakar et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2018). UTAUT is allowing some additional variables for a more comprehensive study of this even without making the model unwieldy and overly complex. In order to enhance the acceptability and applicability of the UTAUT, future researches may also identify additional relevant factors related to behavioural intentions of tourists towards travel technology (Venkatesh et al., 2012).

The emotional effect is also another important factor of tourists' technological behaviour, and is helpful in the adoption of new technological applications. Previous studies suggested that emotions affect the behavioral intentions of tourists in acceptance and use of travel technology (Beaudry & Pinsonneault, 2010; Lu et al., 2019; Partala & Saari, 2015). Emotions of tourists about mobile technologies can be studied from several perspectives such as pleasure-arousal emotions (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) and this has been shown as a good predictor of tourist behaviour (Bign'e & Andreu, 2004; Kulviwat et al., 2007; Yüksel, 2007). Some other studies incorporated pleasure-arousal emotions into UTAUT and TAM. Kourouthanassis et al. (2015) is an exception who argued emotion as an antecedent variable and incorporated with arousal and pleasure factors towards acceptance of travel technologies while conducting tourism. However, pleasure-arousal emotions along with TAM and UTAUT models have not been completely used to investigate tourists' behavioral intention to use different mobile technologies including online payments. A further addition to pleasure-arousal emotions combining cognitive dimensions of tourists with TAM and UTAUT models could better explain behavioural intentions of tourists towards mobile and travel technologies (Tamilmani et al., 2019). In addition, the growth and development of modern technologies and contact-free digital solutions such as mobile payments will be essential and important for the recovery and revival of tourism from COVID-19.

The tourism and hospitality industry is characterized by a high level of social human interaction , was entirely paralyzed during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is, indeed, one of the sectors which have suffered the most from this pandemic. Almost all kinds of travel have been restricted across the world, almost all hotels were closed, and planes were parked on the ground and the travel business was completely shut down for an uncertain period (UNWTO, 2020b). This has severely affected service providers, stakeholders, tourists, and more important the local residents who are purely dependent on tourism for their livelihood. Tourists have a negative attitude and high-risk perceptions towards travel and tourism due to the health alerts and frequent occurrence of COVID-19 cases (Neuburger & Egger, 2020). This all leads to focus on alternative travels such as responsible and sustainable and encourage to go with contactless travel amenities and activities (Huang & Min, 2002) such as online booking and payments (Fall & Massey, 2005), use of fewer travel intermediaries (Hystad & Keller, 2008), a reduction of high human contact in tourism activities, a preference for safe and trained outdoor activities (Wen et al., 2005), and greater attention being paid to cleanliness and hygiene (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). Since COVID-19 is an unprecedented global crisis that has devastated the tourism and hospitality industry completely, there is a need to make immediate behavioral changes among tourism professionals towards revival, recovery, and re-visiting the tourism destinations (Chebli & Said, 2020). Shaw et al. (2020) pointed out that there is a need to change and adopt a lifestyle that must have long-term and permanent behavioural changes and implications. According to Ivanov et al., (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic not only impacted but also imprinted upon daily lives, habits, perceptions, satisfaction, behaviours, and attitude of tourism personnel towards the tourism and associated sectors and segments. If we really wish and want to revive and rewrite tourism a lot of efforts are needed which is a challenge (UNWTO, 2020a).

Research Gap

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, uncountable researches have been conducted on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on different areas of tourism. But a very few studies have been carried out on travel technologies in view of the pandemic. Furthermore, none of the studies has been conducted on behavioral intentions of tourists towards travel technologies and online modes of payments before and after the COVID-19 pandemic in the study area, which makes the present work more notable and applicable to the tourism planners, policies makers, tourists, and service providers to understand the importance of travel technologies and online modes of payments at the tourism destinations.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS

Based on an extensive review of literature following research objective and hypothesis have been formulated in order to conduct the present work and to minimize the existing research gap. The objective of the study is to investigate the behavioural intentions of tourists towards the online mode of payments before and after the COVID-19 pandemic and the corresponding Hypothesis (H1) states that tourists have similar behavioural intentions about the online mode of payments before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

STUDY AREA

Uttarakhand is one the Himalayan states of India, located between 28°43´N to 31°27´ N 77°34´ E to 81°02´ E and share international borders with China and Nepal and inter-state boarder with Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Garhwal region of Uttarakhand is known for Char Dhams (Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath) and adventure tourism destinations such as Auli, Rishikesh, Hemkund sahib, Chopta, Tugnath, Nanda Devi and Valley flowers National park, Chakrata, Dayara Bugyal and many more. Majority of the destinations are located in remote and offbeat areas where accessibility, internet and banking connectivity is a concern in term of tourism and tourists.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Tool construction and Sampling

Two sample sets have been collected with the help of a self-constructed questionnaire via multistage sampling technique over two different periods of time, first, one during the onset of COVID-19 in 2019, followed by the second post after COVID-19 in 2021. Trained and skilled interviewers were selected for the non-COVID-19 sample, and for the COVID-19 sample digital means such as Google forms, emails were used to disseminate and collect data. The size of both samples was (N=1000) which includes 500 each pre and post COVID-19. Initially, a large number of samples; 600 each pre and post was decided but while editing and compiling data it has been found that around 200 respondents have not filled up the entire questionnaire therefore they all been booted out from the study and the final 1000 samples have been selected for the analysis. The choice of selecting destinations for the study from the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand was based on the following criterion; frequently visited tourism destinations, remote areas, and offbeat destinations as these three criteria are most useful for conducting any comprehensive study in view of tourism destinations (Statista, 2020). COVID-19 has had a strong impact in India and Uttarakhand where Kumbh Mela (The largest religious gathering in the World) was celebrated and also acted as a spreader of COVID-19 infection. A self-constructed questionnaire was based on studies variables, objective and hypothesis of the present study and also validated through previous models UTAUT, TAM, and PAD and studies (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Venkatesh et al., 2003, and Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

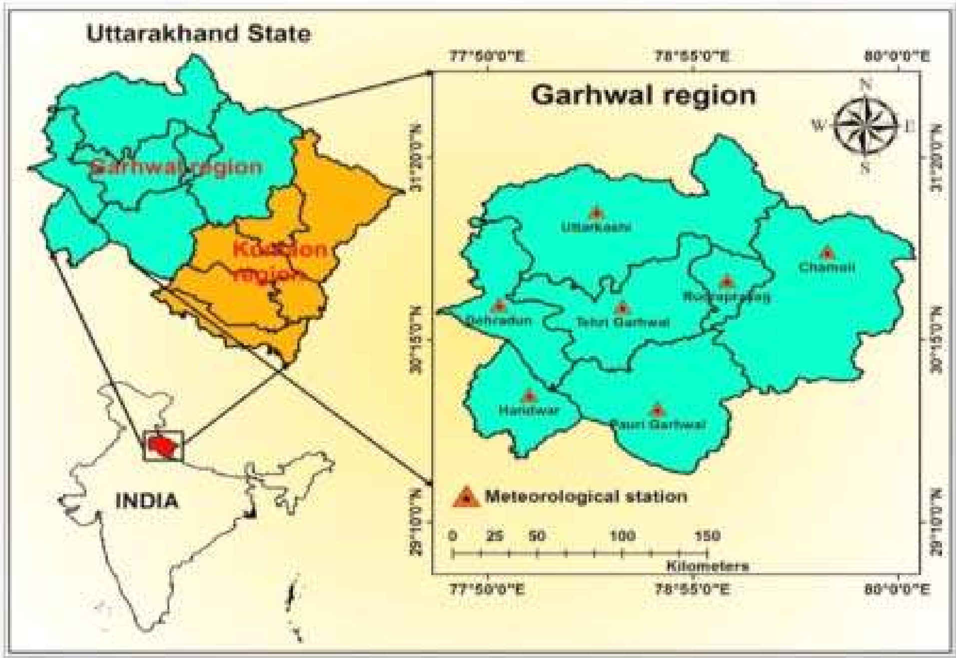

Figure 1 Map of study area
Source; (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348947424)

Data Analysis

The SPSS 26 was used to analyze the data. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis of the data and for achieving and testing the proposed objective and hypothesis. Under inferential statistics paired sample t-test was used as this is the most reliable test for investigating the pre and post-test situations (Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015) and also fulfill the data normality assumptions (Chin, 1998; Ram et al., 2014, Hair et al., 2013; Sarstedt et al., 2011). Moreover, demographic profiles and online payment awareness of respondents have been analyzed through descriptive statistics and computed in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the tourists (N=1000) which included 837 (83.7%) males and 163 (16.3%) females belong to the different age groups which included below 20 years 48 (4.8%), between 21-30 years 421 (42.1%), between 31-40 years 310 (31%) and above 40 years 221 (22.1 %). Out of 1000 tourists, 787 (78.7%) were married followed by 200 (20%) unmarried and 13 (1.3%) in other categories, and all of them belong to India. In terms of educational qualifications, the highest number of tourists 403 (40.3%) were graduates followed by 305 (30.5%) post-graduate, 167 (16.7%) higher secondary, 63 (6.3%) up to secondary and 62 (6.2%). In terms of occupation, 24 (2.4%) were students, 128 (12.8%) were government employees, 471 (47.1%) were private employees, 103 (10.3%)

Table 1: Demographic Profile (N = 1000)

Demographic variables		Frequency	%
Age	Below 20 year	48	4.8%
	21-30 year	421	42.1%
	31-40 year	310	31%
	Above 40 year	221	22.1%
Gender	Male	837	83.7%
	Female	163	16.3%
Marital Status	Married	787	78.7%
	Unmarried	200	20%
	Any other	13	1.3%
Nationality	Indian	1000	100%
	Foreigners	0	0%
Educational Qualification	Up to Secondary	63	6.3%
	Higher Secondary	167	16.7%
	Graduate	403	40.3%
	Post Graduate	305	30.5%
	Any other	62	6.2%
Occupation	Student	24	2.4%
	Govt. Employees	128	12.8%
	Private Employees	471	47.1%
	Business	103	10.3%
	Any other	174	17.4%
Income (Monthly)	Below 25000	123	12.3%
	25001-50000	472	47.2%
	50001- 75000	282	28.2%
	75001-100000	85	8.5%
	More than 100001	38	3.8%

Source: Primary Data

Table 2: Travel Related details

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Have you ever heard/ used M-wallet for digital transaction in the past		
Yes	829	82.9%
No	171	17.1%
Which of the following m-wallet do you use often for digital transaction		
Airtel Money	36	3.6%
My M-Pesa	14	1.4%
JioMoney	33	3.3%
PhonePe	173	17.3%
GooglePay	218	21.8%
BHIM	234	23.4%
Paytm	210	21%
SBIPay	65	6.5%
HDFC PayZapp	17	1.7%
Do you think that demonetization encourage you towards digital transaction system		
Yes	787	78.7%
No	213	21.3%
What mode of payment you prefer during your visit to tourists places		
Net banking	5	0.5%
Credit/Debit card	49	4.9%
Cash	793	79.3%
M-wallet/app	153	15.3%
Cheque	0	0%
How often do you use mobile wallet services		
Everyday	304	30.4%
Several times in a day	267	26.7%
Several times in a week	401	40.1%
Several times in a Month	7	0.7%
Never	21	2.1%
What motivates you to visit these places		
Temples/ Monasteries / Pilgrimage	282	28.2%
Water rafting	76	7.6%
Tracking	273	27.3%
Other Adventures	111	11.1%
Leisure	39	3.9%
Spirituality	128	12.8%
Yoga	64	6.4%
Health and wellness	27	2.7%
Have you visited		
Popular Mass Tourist Destination	361	36.1%
Satellite nearby destination to popular destination	272	27.2%
Offbeat /Remote destinations	367	36.7%
Are you satisfied with M-wallet payment availability and facility at		
Popular Mass Tourist Destination	728	72.8%
Satellite nearby destination to popular destination	224	22.4%
Offbeat /Remote destinations	48	4.8%

Source: Primary Data

were having business, and 174 (17.4%) belong to other professions. The different income groups were below Rs.25000 monthly income included 123 (12.3%), income from Rs.25001 to 50000 included 472 (47.2%), income from Rs 50001 to 75000 included 282 (28.2%), between Rs 75001 to 100000 included 85 (8.5%), and income above 100001 included 38 (3.8%) respondents. Overall respondents belong to young male tourists, having moderate to high disposable income. Further, information related to their travel and modes of payments is also being investigated and presented in table 2.

Table 2 depicts the travel-related information of tourists (N=1000). Out of total respondents, 829 (82.9%) tourists were aware, and 171(17.1%) were unaware about available digital modes of payments. Airtel Money 36 (3.6%), My M-Pesa 14 (1.4%), JioMoney 33 (3.3%), PhonePe 173 (17.3%), GooglePay 218 (21.8%), BHIM 234 (23.4%), Paytm 210 (21%) SBIPay 65 (6.5%), and HDFC PayZapp 17 (1.7%) were majorly used by respondents. On enquiring about use frequency, 302 (30.2%) used everyday, 267 (26.7%) used several times in a day, 401(40.1%) used several times in a week and 7 (0.7%) used several times in a month. Interstingly 21 (2.1%) never used online payments. 787 (78.7%) tourists believe that demonetization leads to increased uses of digital modes of payments, whereas 213 (21.3%) do not think so. Regarding the use of different modes of payment majority of respondents, 793 (79.3%) have made payment by Cash 793 (79.3%), followed by M-wallet/app 153 (15.3%), Credit/Debit card 49 (4.9%), and net-banking 5 (0.5%). The highest number 282 (28.2%) of respondents/tourists have visited the study area because of temples/ monasteries/ pilgrimage.

It was followed by tracking (27.3%), spirituality (12.8%), adventures activities (11.1%), water rafting (7.6%), Yoga (6.4%), leisure (3.9%) and Health & wellness (2.7%). However, the majority of the tourists were visiting the offbeat /remote tourism destinations 367 (36.7%) along with Popular Mass Tourist Destination 361(36.1%) and Satellite nearby destination to popular destination 272 (27.2%). In view of M-wallet payment availability and facility at these destinations, tourists are more satisfied with Popular Mass Tourist Destination 728 (72.8%) as compared to satellite nearby destination to popular destinations 224 (22.4%) and offbeat /remote destinations Destination 48 (4.8%).

Moreover, behavioural intentions of tourists towards different online modes of payment as discussed above are also been measured before and after the

Table 3: Paired sample t-test results for behavioural intentions of tourists towards online mode of payments before and after COVID-19 pandemic (N = 1000)

Variable	Mean	S.D.	MeanDifference	t- ratio	p-value
Pre-COVID	12.54	05.021	19.73	14.341	0.000**
Post -COVID	32.27	11.219			
Pre-COVID-item-1	02.05	03.712	02.19	12.012	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-1	04.24	05.621			
Pre-COVID- item-2	02.11	05.871	01.67	15.621	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-2	03.78	07.358			
Pre-COVID- item-3	01.49	06.932	03.03	12.911	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-3	04.79	08.712			
Pre-COVID- item-4	03.22	05.781	01.69	11.870	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-4	04.91	06.281			
Pre-COVID- item-5	02.71	05.921	02.16	11.320	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-5	04.87	07.301			
Pre-COVID- item-6	01.32	06.812	02.58	15.939	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-6	03.90	05.601			
Pre-COVID- item-7	02.32	06.491	02.34	13.262	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-7	04.66	05.821			
Pre-COVID- item-8	01.43	06.528	03.11	14.391	0.000**
Post –COVID- item-8	04.54	03.321			

** Significant at 0.01 level (Source: Primary Data)

COVID-19 pandemic. Awareness of tourists' intentions is important to develop and redesign the tourism destinations and available facilities and amenities (Bavel et al., 2020; Fong et al., 2020).

Table 3 shows the mean scores of tourists' (N=1000) behavioural intentions about online modes of payments before and after COVID-19 pandemic towards overall and each item are 12.54, 32.27, 02.05, 04.24, 02.11, 03.78, 01.49, 04.79, 03.22, 04.91, 02.71, 04.87, 01.32, 03.90, 02.32, 04.66 and 01.43, 04.54 respectively and mean difference of 19.73, 02.19, 01.67, 03.03, 01.69, 02.16, 02.58, 02.34 and 03.11 exits between pre and post COVID-19 respectively, Value of S.D. 05.021, 11.219, 03.712, 05.621, 05.871, 07.358, 06.932, 08.712, 05.781, 06.281,, 05.921, 07.301, 06.812, 05.601, 06.491, 05.821 and 06.528 03.321 for overall and each item respectively. Further, value of t- ratio for respective groups are 14.341, 12.012, 15.621, 12.911, 11.870, 11.320, 15.939, 13.262 and 14.391. Here p value is 0.000 ($p=0.000<0.01$) for each group and variable which is less than 0.01 shows that there is a significant mean difference between behavioural intentions of tourists towards online modes of payments before and after COVID-19 pandemic at 0.01 level of significance. Thus, the proposed alternative hypothesis "H_1" Tourists have similar behavioural intentions of about online mode of payments before and after the COVID-19 pandemic" has been rejected and its corresponding objective "Study the behavioural intentions of tourists' towards online mode of payments before and after the COVID-19 pandemic" is also being achieved towards overall behavioural intentions and each item; item-1 (Received benefits & utilities while using M-wallet for financial transactions), item-2 (M-wallets are difficult to use/ inferior than convention payment modes), item-3 (Using M-wallet shows joy and happiness among users), item-4 (Opinions of families, relatives & friends matters while using m-wallet), item-5 (M-wallet is safe while using electronic payment system), item-6 (Feeling satisfied from M-wallet services), item-7 Low (visiting frequency at the bank teller/ATM) and item-8 (Payment through M-wallet is prestigious and shows status too).

Figure 2 shows that there is a significant gap between pre and post COVID-19 behavioural intentions of tourists towards using online modes of payments and likewise to other aspects of tourism. COVID-19 pandemic plays an important role in the digitalization of travel technologies and changing behavioral intentions of tourists towards online modes of

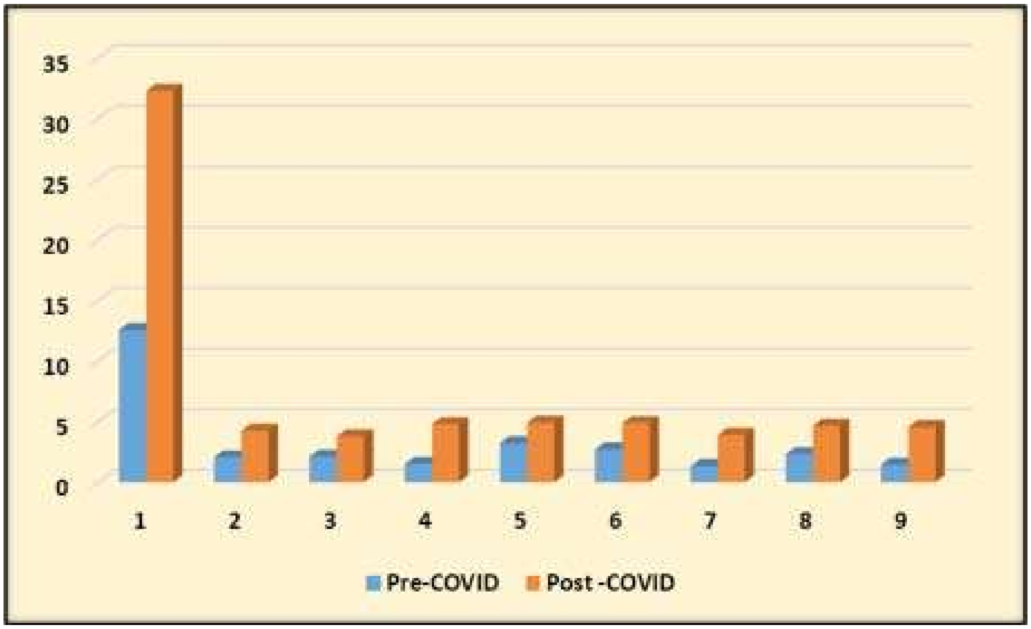

Figure 2: Behavioural intentions of tourists towards online modes of payments before and after COVID-19 pandemic

payments and contactless travels (Johns Hopkins University, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic had severely impacted and affected almost all industries across the world. Tourism and hospitality is the most affected among them, which has seen the cancellation and cessation of all kind of tourism businesses and activities for an uncertain period of time. Revival and recovery seem to be slow and complex (UNWTO, 2020b). None of the crises so far has affected the tourism sector as COVID-19 did, but at the same time, we have modern and advanced technologies that never had in the past (G¨ossling et al., 2020). Over the period of time, digital development and modern technologies have changed the behavioural intention of tourists towards tourism and its various components, activities, and amenities (Zenker & Kock, 2020). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic entire way of thinking and behavioural intentions of tourists have completely changed not only online modes of payment, travel technologies but about whole tourism and its associated activities. There is a need for revival and recovery of tourism from its beginning after COVID-19 and all of us have to play a very crucial role towards this through modern innovative, technologies, contactless travels, revival strategies, and more. Encouragement of modern travel technologies including digitalization in the payment system is one of the important milestones in way of revival of tourism post-COVID-19. Tourism destinations like the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand where residents of offbeat destinations are not more comfortable with travel technologies and online modes of payments, need to be educated, connected with the banking system, and make them understand the benefits of online payments work.

Acknowledgement

Authors gratefully acknowledge ICSSR for funding the major research project on *"Exploring Tourists Behavioural Intentions towards the use of selected Mobile wallets for digital payments"*. The current paper is the part of the ongoing project taken by the author.

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A STUDY OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN TOURISM & TRAVEL TRADE ENTERPRISES

Pankaj Kumar* and S.K. Gupta**

ABSTRACT

Medium and small size enterprises are dominating the tourism and travel trade industry especially at developing tourism destinations in Himalayan state Uttarakhand, India. This study was done with the hypothesis that the industry is facing low employee retention and high employee turnover. Through this research paper, the researchers have examined the employees and employers attitudes towards the reasons of leaving or changing the job of employees working at various positions in these tourism and travel trade enterprises. The analysis reveals that seasonality of job, followed by inappropriate division of works; low salary and poor growth are the main reasons.

Keywords : Employee retention, Employee Turnover, Medium and small enterprises, Tourism and Travel trade industry, Uttarakhand

Introduction

Travel and tourism is one of the largest industries in India. Its total contribution to the country's economy is significant. Travel and tourism's contribution to world GDP has grown for the sixth consecutive year in 2015, rising to a total of 9.8% of world GDP (US$7.2 trillion). This sector now supports 284 million people in employment i.e. 1 in 11 jobs (directly or indirectly), (WTTC Annual report, 2016).It is being driven by employment, economic-development, poverty alleviation, community development, heritage conservation and sustainable development and motivated by the further human demand for a variety of activities like religious, adventure, recreation, education, and entertainment. Tourism and travel trade organizations promote destinations, prepare tour packages and offer it as a product to the tourists. Travel agent helps travelers by providing them travel related information by which tourist opts the best possible destination and tour package as per interest and budget. They provide advice on demand and make arrangements for transportation, accommodation, ground handling, escorting, etc. for tourists at tourist generating region and tourist destination region.

Tourism and travel trade sector is diversified from larger organizations to medium or small enterprises. Even after huge share in terms of providing total employment and overall contribution to GDP, a multitude of small and medium sized, private or public owned and

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operated businesses have been felt difficult to co-ordinate and legislate (Cohen 1993; Mukul Guha, 1981; and Clifford, 1987). According to Lattin, G.W, (1979) and Lanfant, (1980) tour operators or travel agents are the intermediaries, who can package even the most remote, unexplored or dangerous destination and attract the tourists. Success of any industry strongly depends on the experienced and quality manpower staying in the same organization for longer period of time. Being a service industry experienced and skilled employees are the main asset of the tourism and travel trade organizations, whether enterprises are large, medium or small. Only competent and motivated employees deliver high-quality service and achieve competitive advantage for their firms and tourist destinations (Szivas & Riley, 1999). Effective deployment and management of people as critical resources within tourism organization does not happen without considering planning, development and support at the level of the enterprise, the destination and the country (Baum & Szivas, 2003).

Employee retention refers to the capability of the organization to retain its employees for a year or a set period of time. It is measured in terms of rate of retention. If an organization retains its 70% of the employees in next year; the employee retention rate of the organization is considered as 70%. Employees leave organizations for a number of reasons that may vary from individual to individual. Many of the employees quit involuntarily as a result of dismissal, retirement, inefficiency in work assigned, getting better opportunity in terms of position, salary and other intrinsic benefits, employment security etc. in other competitive organization or sometimes even in other industry. Tourism & travel trade industry is continuously growing since last 4-5 decades especially in developing countries. But due to poor human resource management practices in small and medium sized travel trade enterprises, employee turnover is very high. It is highly challenging for the sustainable existence of these enterprises.

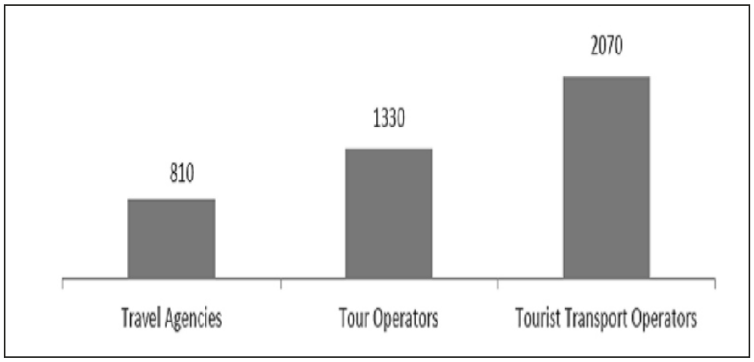
Retaining the employees for a longer period is significant for the success of any organization. In order to keep employees associated with the same organization for a longer period, it becomes essential to first understand the reasons behind the turnover of employees. Cost of losing a trained and experienced employee is many times larger than recruiting a new and inexperienced employee. Turnover may be voluntary or forced turnover. The issue has become crucial to the tourism and travel industry. The industry faces high levels of labor turnover and low levels of employee retention (Pankaj, 2015).

Employment in Tourism and Travel Trade

According to Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, more than 1,25,000 people were employed in the year 2012 in the tourism and travel trade units in India. Each travel agency, on an average, employed 9 people. The employment intensity of tour operators and tourist transport operators were 14 and 21 respectively.

Figure: 1

Number of Employee in per 100 Travel Trade Entities



Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

As per the combined study of Market Plus and Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2010), more than 8,000 tourism & travel trade entities were there in India, spreading across the four geographic regions. Travel agencies and tour operators accounted for 38% and 43% of them. North and South accounted for almost two-thirds of all tourism and travel and tour entities in India.

Table- 1

Employment in Travel Trade Units in India

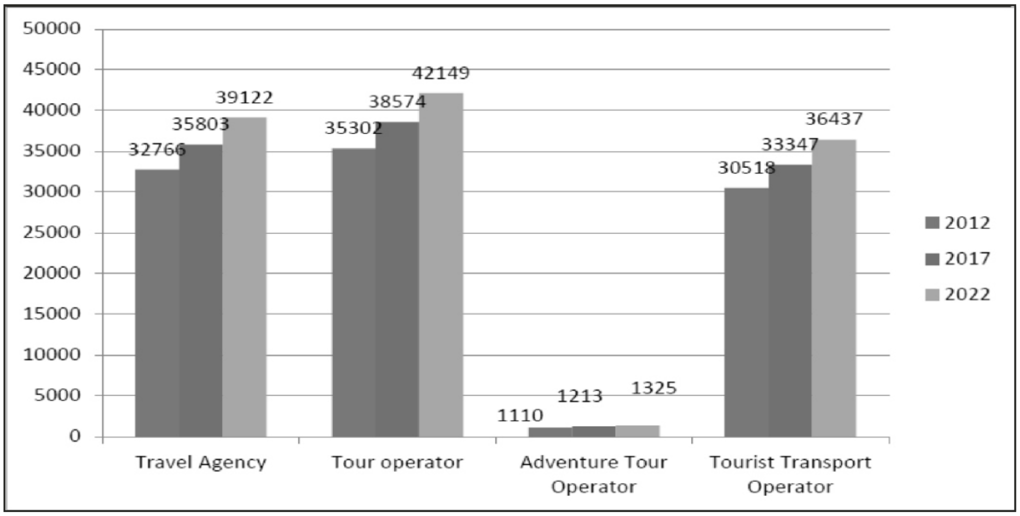
	East	North	South	West	N East	All India
Number of Travel & Tour Firms in 2010	983	2799	2611	1556	129	8078
Average Growth Total Employment	8054	31597	35792	20370	410	2 96223
Average Employment Intensity Annual Demand for Manpower in 2010	10.5 -	12.6 402	14.0 5989	14.0 7817	2.0 -	12 14213
Trained Manpower Output (students who graduated in 2009-2010)	-	-	-	-	-	17473

Source: National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

On the basis of growth in the number of tourism and travel trade enterprises registered by the Ministry of Tourism statistics, the total employment in this sector has been forecasted to touch 250,000 in 2017 and 450,000 by the year 2022.

FIGURE: 2

Employment Forecast in Travel Trade



Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

According to the study of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, rate of employee turnover in travel trade is high at 50%, particularly among tour operators. Sales and marketing function in travel agencies and facilitation in tour operators witness the highest attrition rates.

TABLE: 2

Employee Turnover Percentage in Travel Trade in India

Functional Domain	Travel Agency	Tour Operator	Tourist Transport Operator
Administration/ Operations	31	35	28
Ticketing	23	54	30
Foreign Exchange	29	62	-
Tours	30	46	3
Sales & Marketing	53	53	-
Accounts	48	49	17
Facilitation	8	61	-
Total	32	50	17

Source - Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

Literature Review

Employees also called as human resources are the source of competitive advantage and Human Resource (HR) practices should therefore be central to the strategy in any organisation (Laursen & Foss, 2003). Khandekar & Sharma (2005) in their study highlight the significance of recognition, development and utilization of the capabilities embedded in the collective knowledge of the firm's employees. The literature on the contribution of human resource practices to competitive advantage emphasizes generic practices such as empowerment, incentives and flexibility (Habir & Larasati, 1999). These practices are aimed to reduce labor turnover. Kang et al. (2007) point out that once employees are valued, it becomes a way of conceiving how the organization actually works, creating differentials and structure, which lead to enhance competitiveness of the organization.

Employee retention, one of the important human resource management practices (HRMP) is a series of integrated decisions that form the employment relationship (Milkovich, 1997). The human resource (HR) mix includes the activities viz. staffing, training and development, compensation, employee relations, and work structure (Goldsmith & Nikson, 1997). Providing effective incentive , training and opportunity of career development would make employees, feel involved, as well as valued (Jerris, 1999). Hinkin & Tracey (2010) identified six categories of innovative human resource (HR) practices used by hospitality and service companies such as : a culture of caring for employees and open communication; flexible scheduling to meet the needs of a changing workforce; innovative methods to attract, select, retain a loyal and competent workforce; training programs viewed as investment in people emphasizing career tracks and promotion from within; performance management systems aligned with organizational objectives; and compensation programs reflecting the organizational values and linking pay to performance.

Employee retention refers to sustaining the employees in an organization for the achievements of further proposed goals for longer periods. It is inversely proportional with the employee turnover in the organization or industry which means, if the employee retention rate is high, the employee turnover will be low and vice-versa. But it is directly proportional to the sustainability of the success of organization or industry. If the employee retention rate is high the sustainability of the organization or industry success will be high. It is for this reason, every organization, practices number of supportive employee's policies and continuous assessment for employee retention.

Tourism and hospitality industry has often struggled with negative perceptions about high employment turnover and low employee retention practices. Keep and Mayhew (1999) in their review of the skills issue in the tourism and hospitality industry suggest that industry has a number of personnel related problems like; low wages, unsocial hours and shift patterns. Recognizing this reality of poor HRM practices, Riley et al., (2000) argue that economics is the key determining factor for HRM policies and practices in tourism and hospitality industry.

Employee retention rate also depends on job satisfaction and is indicated as a feeling, both positive and negative like loyalty and absenteeism (Spector, 1997). If people are satisfied, they will be highly motivated to stay in the same organisation and ultimately performance will improve (Sweney & McFarlin, 2005; Armstrong, 2006; and Christen, Iyer & Soberman, 2006). Job satisfaction helps the employees to achieve recognition, income and promotion (Kaliski, 2007) and they remain in the same organization for longer period.

The study region Haridwar- Rishikesh- Dehradun in Uttarakhand is the center of tourism business. The tourism and travel trade enterprises here are providing large number of employment in travel agencies, tour operator companies, rafting companies and others organizations and are contributing in promotion and development of domestic, inbound and outbound tourism in the state Uttarakhand. But, with respect to the human resource management practices in general and employee retention in particular tourism and travel trade organisation in study area have poor reputation. So, this study is focused particularly on the employee retention status in specially medium and small sized tourism and travel trade enterprises existing in Haridwar-Rishikesh-Dehradun region of the Himalayan state, Uttarakhand in India.

Objective

- To study the tourism and travel trade enterprises status in the study area Haridwar-Rishikesh- Dehradun in Uttarakhand, India.
- To study the employees and employment status in tourism and travel trade enterprises.
- To find out employee retention rate and reasons for leaving and changing jobs.

Research Methodology

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data were collected from Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB), other reports and review of literatures. Primary data were collected through scheduled and structured questionnaires from 210 respondents which include 70 employers/ managers and 140 employees from travel trade enterprises of the study area i.e. Haridwar- Rishikesh- Dehradun in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. Out of available total number of tourism and travel trade enterprises of the study area forty employees from twenty enterprises of Haridwar, sixty employees from thirty enterprises of Rishikesh and forty employees from twenty enterprises of Dehradun were selected as sample for this study. Stratified random sampling technique was used for this. Recognizing the importance of human resource management in general and specially the employee retention rate and the reasons for leaving and changing the jobs in tourism and travel trade enterprises in particular the recorded data were analyzed using SPSS 17. Statistical techniques like Frequency, Percentage, mean, S.D and ANOVA have been used for the analysis. The feedback of the respondents were assessed using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 5= strongly agree to 1= strongly disagree.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

More than 200 travel trade enterprises exist in the study area, including travel agencies, tour operators, transporters, rafting and trekking agencies etc. The study reveals that the majority of the travel trade enterprises located in the study area is partnership companies followed by the sole proprietorship whereas mere 7.1% are Private Ltd. Companies. Most of the travel trade enterprises in Haridwar are sole proprietorships while most of those in Rishikesh are partnership. Only 20% of the enterprises have other branches. The travel trade enterprises have been classified as Travel Agent, Tour Operators, Transporters and Rafting Operators on the basis of their function, products and services provided by them. Further, majority of these enterprises are small in size having number of employees ranging between 1 to 6 and an average annual turnover between Rs. 20-30 Lakh. As far as the source of finance used to establish the enterprises, self-finance followed by loan from banks were the sources of finance, However, a small number of these enterprises have used these two sources together and a few have also taken assistance from the government financial schemes. The study has statistically proved that the sources of finance used by these travel trade enterprises vary along their type of business entity. Most of the travel agent opted self-finance as their source of finance while loan from the banks was the popular source of finance among the rafting operators.

TABLE : 3

Place-wise Distribution of the Employees

Place of Interview	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Haridwar	40	28.6	28.6
Rishikesh	60	42.9	71.4
Dehradun	40	28.6	100.0
Total	140	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

A brief profile of the employees surveyed is displayed in the Table: 4. Out of the total 140 employees surveyed, 114 (81.4%) were male, while the remaining 26 (18.6%) were female. The majority of the employees 88 (62.9%) belonged to the age group of 21 to 30 years, followed by 40 (28.6%) from 31 to 40 years, 10 (7.1%) from age group more than 40 years and 2 (1.4%) from the age group below 20. In case of the educational level, 67 (47.9%) employees were intermediate (10+2), 60 (42.9%) were graduate whereas a mere 11 (7.99%) were post-graduate and 2 (1.4%) were matriculated. Further, half (70, 50%) of the employees associated with these travel trade enterprises was having diploma/ professional education in tourism. In case of the designation of the employees surveyed 10 (7.1%) were managers, 54(38.6%) were tour executives, 24 (17.1%) were marketing executives, 35 (25%) were supervisors and 17 (12.1%) were helpers.

TABLE : 4

Profile of the Employees

Factor	Frequency	Percentage	Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Gender			**Diploma in Tourism**		
Male	114	81.4	Yes	70	50.0
Female	26	18.6	No	70	50.0
Age in Years			**Designation of Employee**		
Less than 20	2	1.4	Manager	10	7.1
21-30	88	62.9	Tour Executive	54	38.6
31-40	40	28.6	M. Executive	24	17.1
More than 40	10	7.1	Supervisor	35	25.0
Education			Helpers	17	12.1
10th	2	1.4	**Diploma in Tourism**		
10+2	67	47.9	Yes	70	50.0
Graduate	60	42.9	No	70	50.0
Post Graduate	11	7.9	**Designation of Employee**		
			Manager	10	7.1

Source: Primary Data

TABLE : 5

Distribution of Employees in terms of Working Experience

Working Experience	Less than 2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years	More than 10 years
Total Job Experience	32 (22.9)	30 (21.4)	50 (35.7)	28 (20.0)
Experience at present company	59 (42.1)	34 (24.3)	39 (27.9)	8 (5.7)

Source: Primary Data. Figures in the brackets are the percentage of total sample (N=140)

Data from the Table- 5, reveal that out of total 140 employees surveyed, 32(22.9%) were having a total working experience of less than 2 years, 30 (21.4%) of 2-5 years, 50 (35.7%) of 5-10 years and 28 (20%) having total job experience of more than ten years. In case of the working experience of the employees at present company majority of the employees (59, 42.1%) were working at their present enterprise for less than 2 years followed by 39(27.9%) who were working at their present enterprise for five to ten years, 34 (24.3%) were for two to five years while merely 8(5.7%) were working at their present enterprise for more than ten years.

The reasons behind voluntary turnover play an important role in human resource management. In order to find out the important reasons for the employee turnover in the travel trade organizations in the study area, the employers were asked to express their agreement on the 7 factors related to the employee turnover based on a 5 point Likert scale and the responses are tabulated in the Table: 6

TABLE : 6

Reasons for Employee Turnover

Reasons	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S. D.
Low salary	7 (10.0)	8 (11.4)	8 (11.4)	33 (47.1)	14 (20.0)	3.55	1.22
Poor growth	2 (2.9)	8 (11.4)	13 (18.6)	34 (48.6)	13 (18.6)	3.68	1.00
Inappropriate division of work	3 (4.3)	2 (2.9)	12 (17.1)	40 (57.1)	13 (18.6)	3.82	0.91
Seasonal job	7 (10.0)	6 (8.6)	8 (11.4)	27 (38.6)	22 (31.4)	3.72	1.27
Under productivity	3 (4.3)	26 (37.1)	20 (28.6)	14 (20.0)	7 (10.0)	2.94	1.07
Conflict with management	7 (10.0)	34 (48.6)	16 (22.9)	7 (10.0)	6 (8.6)	2.58	1.08
Personal factor	6 (8.6)	15 (21.4)	8 (11.4)	34 (48.6)	7 (10.0)	3.30	1.17

Source: Primary data. Figures in the brackets are the percentage of row total

The analysis in the Table: 6 reveals the reason for high level of employee turnover are seasonality of job (57.1%), inappropriate division of work (48.6%), low salary (47.1%) and poor growth (48.6%) .

On the other hand, in Table: 7 the F-value obtained from the 'difference in employee turnover' mean is statistically significant in the three areas in the place of distribution such as poor growth, In appropriate division of work and seasonality of the job.

TABLE : 7

Reasons for Employee Turnover at different Locations

Reason for Employee Turnover	Haridwar (N=20)	Rishikesh (N=30)	Dehradun (N=20)	F Value
Low salary	3.35 (1.13)	3.63 (1.18)	3.65 (1.38)	0.39^{NS}
Poor growth	3.75 (1.11)	3.93 (0.69)	3.25 (1.16)	3.02**
Inappropriate division of work	4.40 (0.68)	3.73 (0.69)	3.40 (1.14)	7.39***
Seasonal job	4.30 (1.26)	3.80 (1.34)	3.05 (0.82)	5.54**
Under productivity	3.25 (0.78)	2.93 (1.20)	2.65 (1.08)	1.58^{NS}
Conflict with management	2.80 (1.05)	2.46 (1.13)	2.55 (1.05)	0.57^{NS}
Personal factor	3.55 (1.27)	3.16 (1.17)	3.25 (1.06)	0.66^{NS}

Source: Primary data. Figures in brackets are standard deviations. NS=insignificant.**-significant @p<.05, ***-significant @p<.01

Conclusion

Haridwar, Rishikesh and Dehradun are the base point cities for travelers and tourists to make the necessary arrangements for their journeys to higher reaches of Garhwal Himalaya. Therefore large numbers of travel trade enterprises are being mushrooming in the cities of Haridwar-Rishikesh-Dehradun and providing employment to large number of people from community of the state and around. Evolution of travel trade has been a chronic phenomenon for these base towns from an informal and unorganized sector of pre 1980s to formal and well organized travel intermediaries of present time. Along with branches of many leading travel agencies and tour operator companies, most of the tourism and travel trade enterprises here play as ground handling agencies for inbound tourists on one hand while working as a full-fledged tourism organizers for white water river rafting, trekking and pilgrimage to holy abodes on the other hand. Their role also varies widely according to the motivations of tourists and facilities they deal with. Most of these are medium and small sized tourism and travel enterprises.

With the growing opportunities of employment for tourism and hospitality professionals, retaining experienced human resources for longer period has become a challenge for these organizations in this region as well. As the demand of these professionals are arising in other sectors viz. hotels, airlines, event management companies, visa & passport facilitators, etc. there is a need for development of the employees and retaining the employees for a longer period. It has been observed from the study that there is high employee turnover in medium and small sized tourism and travel trade enterprises in the region. Seven factors viz. low salary, poor growth, inappropriate division of work, seasonality of job, under productivity of employees, conflict with management and personal factors were identified for leaving or changing the jobs by these professionals. The statistical analysis of data reveals that a high level of employee turnover in this region is due to seasonality of job followed by inappropriate division of work, low salary and poor career growth. Even after having the high employment potential in tourism and travel trade enterprises in this study region, the employee retention rate is very low. Employees move to other company even for a minor financial gain in terms of salary or incentives and for self assessed job satisfaction and security or move to nearby metro cities in Delhi, Guru Gram or others. Hence retaining the experienced employees here in these enterprises is a challenge. The research reveals that employee retention is low in the region in tourism and travel trade enterprises which leads to the high employee turnover. Hence employee retention factors should be scrutinized regularly in order to overcome the low employee retention rate. These medium and small sized tourism and travel trade enterprises lacks in sound human resource management (HRM) practices. The industry also needs to emphasize to make the employment more lucrative to attract the best manpower. The division of work among the employees should also be given proper attention and salary structure must be competitive with other industries. The appraisal policy should be transparent and strengthened by the travel trade organizations. Recognition and reward must be given to the employees performing better jobs in order to utilize their optimum potential.

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SIF

ISSN - 2348-2397
APPROVED UGC CARE

SHODH SARITA
Vol. 7, Issue 27, July-September, 2020
Page Nos. 229-233

AN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

ASSESSMENT OF SOFT SKILLS OF SERVICE PROVIDERS WITH REFERENCE TO TOURISTS SATISFACTION IN FOOD AND BEVERAGES OUTLETS

Mr. Vivek Singh Aswal*
Dr. Rakesh Kumar Dhodi**
Dr. Rashmi Dhodi***

ABSTRACT

The food and beverage outlets are the important component of tourists' satisfaction in tourism and hospitality industry as it is fulfill one the fundamental need of visitors. Over the period time food and beverages outlets are so niche and specialized as per the requirement of visitors. Therefore, there is need to have well qualified, knowledgeable and groomed service personnel in view to cater all kind of requirements and needs of visitors. Along with hard skills, soft skills are also equal important for food and beverages staffs in order to ensure the comprehensive and complete visitors satisfaction. (Kumar & Agarwal, 2020) worked on soft skills and how these skills help while providing services and dealing with customers. As these skills are based on intrinsic and extrinsic factors in the restaurants and hotels and can be developed and improved too through training and supervisor. The present research paper assesses and measure soft skills of service personnel working in restaurants in Rishikesh region of Uttarakhand towards perception and satisfaction of visitors. The study is both quantitative and qualitative in nature and conducted through focus group interview and based self-administered questionnaires. The collected data has been analyzed statistically via descriptive (Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations) and inferential (one sample t-test) statistics. On the basis of results and findings appropriate recommendations were also suggested.

Keywords: Perception, Satisfaction, hard and soft skills, Food and Beverage Outlets.

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INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure complete, comprehensive and highest level of perception and satisfaction to visitors towards food and beverage services in restaurants, soft skills of service personnel play a significant and collective role. As these skills would reflect technical and non-technical qualities of working personnel related to tourism and

SAJTH, January 2018, Vol. 11, No. 1

Impacts of Nature Tourism in a Destination: A case Study of Bhilangana Valley in Garhwal Himalaya

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research paper is to identify and appraise the factors determining impacts of nature tourism in a tourist destination. The villages of Bhilangana Valley in Garhwal Himalayas have been selected for this study. The paper enumerates the physical, economic and social-cultural impacts and their implications on the destination. The region is blessed with natural environs and a unique endemic culture suitable for nature tourism promotion and development. The natural tourism resources at the destinations are the unique selling point and are the key indicators that'll decide the growth of tourism. It is imperative to involve the local folks to enable them to become a tourism stakeholder and assist in holistic development of the rural region. The study makes an effort to propose suitable lifestyle and encourage the stakeholders to work in collaboration to mitigate the adverse impacts of tourism and utilize tourism to their advantage to for their economic and social upliftment.

KEYWORDS: *Tourism Impacts, Tourism Promotion, Unique Selling Point, Tourism Stakeholders*

Introduction

Nature Tourism can be defined as a form of tourism that depends on nature and natural settings (Hall & Boyd, 2005). A natural area is an area of unique ecological, scenic, historic or geologic value usually protected to maintain its natural condition and character (Dudley, 2008). It takes under its ambit all those forms of tourism that are directly dependant on the use of natural resources in a reasonably undeveloped state regarding topography, scenery, wildlife, vegetation and water resources of the particular nature destination. Nature tourism accounts for a large proportion of global tourism industry and is growing faster than the overall tourism sector. Over the past two decades, both nature and adventure tourism have developed to be part of the fastest growing segments within the tourism industry. With an annual growth rate of 10-30%, nature tourism seems to be the fastest growing sector. Its share in the world travel market is currently about 20% (Christ et al, 2003; UNWTO, 2005).

Exploring possibilities and potential of rural tourism in Bundelkhand region for poverty alleviation

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ABSTRACT
Rural tourism has emerged as a development tool aimed at combating poverty, minimising regional inequality and modernising rural, remote areas in which ethnic minorities live. Bundelkhand despite being one of the poorest and backward parts of India is a vast treasure of heritage, tradition and culture. The study glance into the various tangible and intangible heritage cumulated in the rural communities which are core component for the development of the rural tourism,to provide the supplementary income and new employment opportunity to the impoverished people living in the region.The study also aims to make a recommendation on the development of rural tourism that would help in the development of rural tourism and thus result in poverty alleviation in Bundelkhand region.

Keywords: Tourism, Rural Tourism, Rural Tourism Development, Poverty Alleviation, Pro Poor Tourism, Bundelkhand

INTRODUCTION
The Bundelkhand region in India is one of the most backward parts of India with low industrialization and urbanization with most of the population living in the rural areas, various problems like mass-scale poverty, bonded labour, low economic productivity etc., are some of the problems prevailing in Bundelkhand region. Around 60 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture, as cultivators and laborer with very low household income, therefore, there is a need of an alternative source of income, which will improve the standard of living and improve the per capita income of the people in the region. Tourism around the world is seen as the means of alleviating poverty and have economic significance in developing country (UNWTO & UNCTAD 2001).ST-EP programme (Sustainable Tourism for Eliminating Poverty) was established by United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 2003
aimed to promote sustainable socio-economic and environmental tourism for development and poverty alleviation in underdeveloped and developing countries(Zhao & Ritchie, 2008).

Rural area's culture, tradition and geographic region uniqueness attract tourist which creates new job opportunity and bring vitality to the poor economy. Rural tourism, well-developed and centered, can become a new source of income and employment, eliminating social isolation and become an important factor in the resettlement of the region(Dimitrovski et al., 2012).
The entire region of Bundelkhand has several tourism worthy destinations yet to be discovered. Despite being rich in culture, heritage and flora and fauna the potential of tourism has not been well recognized.

OBJECTIVES
The broad aim of the study is to identify the resources that are essential for the development of rural tourism and to propose an elementary modelfor the development of rural tourism for alleviating poverty in the Bundelkhand region.

Kanpur Philosophers
ISSN 2348-8301
International Journal of humanities, Law and Social Sciences
Published biannually by New Archaeological & Genological Society
Kanpur India

Vol. VIII, Issue X : 2021

MARKETING PLAN FOR YAMUNA VALLEY OF GARHWAL HIMALAYA AND ITS VALUE CHAIN SYSTEM

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Abstract
Tourism alone can bring prosperity to the region for which there is no dearth of resources (Uttarakhand) and can become a major boon for the local community. The researchaims to develop promotional and marketing strategies for tourism promotion and developmentin not so popular and underdeveloped regions of Uttarakhand (Yamuna Valley). This wouldcover market/products, issues and opportunities and forward and backward linkages with travel agencies. If efforts are materialized and channelized towards effective marketing of resource attraction in Yamuna valley, a broad framework of tourism planning and development shall pave way for the healthy and holistic tourism development in the study area where people will travel with the utmost sense of respect to the sanctity of the sacred Yamuna valley.
Keywords: Yamuna Valley, Destination Marketing, Tourism Marketing, Promotion, Value chain

Introduction
Uttarakhand is known for its celestial abode of religious, natural and cultural attractions across the world. Among the major popular destinations, the sacred haunts of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, Yamunotri have gained rich attention and admiration among the visitors. Too much of government and professional attention to these destinations have led to the underestimation of the other natural and cultural tourist attractions of the state which have enough potential to be profiled in the map of rich tourist destinations. The ignorance shown to such attractions has led to their underdevelopment to such an extent that they are on the verge of losing their cultural appeal. The major reason for this is the lack of an integrated tourism development policy framework for the overall tourism development in the state and the ineffective marketing of such destinations. The present study area that includes Dehradun, Tehri and Uttarkashi district of the state has been overlooked even after having huge potential form becoming major tourist destinations. The rich cultural heritage is exhibited by the presence of traditional ethnic groups like *Rawains*, the *Jaunpuria* and the *Jaunsaris*. The region further possesses rich historical evidence and cultural trace marks which shows their richness in the traditional wealth. The absence of scope of industrial development and the extreme geographic conditions of the study area have further led to the underdevelopment of not only these areas but also of the inhabitants living over there since the very beginning and the resources of these regions.

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ISSN - 2229-3620
APPROVED UGC CARE

SHODH SANCHAR BULLETIN
Vol. 10, Issue 39 (I) July-Sept. 2020
Page Nos. 158-162

AN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

MEASUREMENT OF VISITORS' SATISFACTION ALONG GANGOTRI AND YAMUNOTRI ROUTE

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Dr. Rakesh Kumar Dhodi**
Dr. Rashmi Dhodi***

ABSTRACT

The hospitality industry is one the core component for tourism growth and development along with other components such as destination attractiveness, accessibility, amenities and tourism activities over the destinations. However, accommodation sector keep growing with greater pace even at extent tourism places and catering needs and wants of visitors significantly. All kinds of tourist whether it could be adventurous, religious, explorer, and drifter etc. use to travel with specific travel and hospitality demands from the service providers. Therefore, it is much needed and most important to ensure fullest satisfaction to visitors' through better service and product quality. (Arora, Wadhwa, & Kumar, 2020) studied the visitors' satisfaction and suggested that in order to develop responsible and sustainable tourism at any destination, visitors' feedback and satisfaction play a significant role towards to make sure repeat visit, enhance travel propensity and economic, social, cultural and comprehensive development of destination and local communities. Therefore, this research paper has assessed and measured satisfaction of visitors along famous pilgrimage sites Gangotri and Yamunotri route in Uttarakhand state of India. Sample of 500 domestic tourists were collected through self-administered questionnaires and analyzed through descriptive (Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations) and inferential statistics.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Pilgrimage, Service quality and Tourism Development.

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INTRODUCTION:

Tourist satisfaction is conceived as the resultant outcome of tourist motivations, their activities, expectation and perceptions of various product elements available/consumed by the tourist during their journey to a destination area. The responses of tourist about their satisfaction regarding various destination attributes were recorded with

Asian Journal of Conservation Biology, July 2021. Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 99-114 AJCB: FP0158/63588
ISSN 2278-7666 ©TCRP Foundation 2021

Research Article

Wildlife diversity along the altitudinal gradients in the Garhwal Himalaya

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(Received: July 27, 2020; Revised: January 27, 2021; Accepted: January 29, 2021)

ABSTRACT

Rich biodiversity is of fundamental significance for the foundation and adaptability of the precipitous biological system. In any case, this huge biodiversity begins vanishing at a quick rate because of human interference and over -exploitation of timberland and other common assets. The status of wildlife in Uttarakhand at Himalaya is much better than in other regions of India. But it becomes slowly disappearing due to the human encroachment and over-exploitation of forest and other natural resources. Musk Deer along the higher spans and Sambar, Yelping Deer, and so forth underneath the tree line are significant warm-blooded creatures. The present investigation was done in the Garhwal Himalayan region of Uttarakhand to uncover the effect of height and microclimatic conditions on wildlife. It is extremely vital and very fundamental for the individuals of the present era to go profoundly through the world of wildlife.

Key words: Altitudinal-gradient, birds, climate, wild animals, Uttarakhand.

INTRODUCTION

Physical attributes like temperature and altitudinal gradient impact the wide diversity and density of wildlife in the Uttarakhand state of India (Gairola *et al.*, 2011). Rich biodiversity is of paramount importance for the foundation and adaptability of the mountain ecosystem (Korner, 2004). The faunal diversity is very unique in Uttarakhand, as it is a Himalayan state (Kumari and Tewari, 2009). The Himalayan pheasant, Monal is the state bird of Uttarakhand that is one of the most wonderful feathered creatures found in the state. The Shivalik Slopes (a progression of scopes of external lower regions of Himalaya) is very rich in the number of inhabitants in Asiatic elephants. Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) the most charming and biggest cat in the world, has been reported from Dugadda, a little city in Pauri Garhwal located in the province of Uttarakhand (Jhala *et al.*, 2011). Human has been extremely excited about biodiversity since the beginning of human civilization. They chased the wildlife for their utilization, attire, fun, sports, enhancement and other monetary qualities. In India, the possibility of conservation and preservation of biodiversity (widely varied vegetation) has been a basic factor of religion and culture since antiquated history. The term and the idea of biodiversity have been remarkable events in recent culture evolution (NRCPB, 1992). The word "Biodiversity" did not exist twenty years ago but, today it is one of the most commonly used expressions in biological science.

The term biodiversity alludes to the presence of a wide variety of flora and fauna (Clark *et al.*, 2014). The assortment of micro-climatic conditions accessible in the lower regions of Uttarakhand reflected in a wide assortment of common vegetation including different sorts of grasses, bushes and various types of wild creatures (Negi *et al.*, 2019). Diversity of surface relief resulting in sharp variations in temperature and rainfall mainly controls the conditions of growth, distribution and density of forest cover in the entire region (Nautiyal and Thapliyal, 2011, Adepoju *et al.*, 2019). Temperature, which is regulated or modified by the altitudinal variations particularly in the outer Himalayan ranges of the region, is primarily responsible for determining the pattern and spatial distribution of vegetation and habitat type throughout the area (Saikia *et al.*, 2017; Kharakwal *et al.*, 2005). As one move up from the low-lying Tarai belt to the Bhabar tract and a similar range in the north, different types of vegetation and numerous types of wildlife are generally found (Nautiyal, 2013). The natural life status in the Himalayan state is much better than in some other Himalayan states. But, this immense biodiversity begins vanishing at a quick rate because of the human encroachment and over-exploitation of forests and other natural resources (Hunter, 2007).

Numerous significant endeavors have been made so far to investigate the floral or plant diversity

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SIC

ISSN - 2229-3620
APPROVED UGC CARE

SHODH SANCHAR BULLETIN
Vol. 10, Issue 39 (I) July-Sept. 2020
Page Nos. 154-157

AN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

MEASUREMENT OF PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF VISITORS' TOWARDS AMBIENCE OF RESTAURANT UNITS IN RISHIKESH UTTARAKHAND

Mr. Vivek Singh Aswal*
Dr. Rakesh Kumar Dhodi**
Dr. Rashmi Dodhi***

ABSTRACT

Over the years, visitors have been changing their needs, wants and desires along with development of new tourism trends, destinations and varieties of tourism products and sources. Food and culinary tourism are in Centre of focus and developing with faster pace over the period of time which lead to enhanced both gross and net travel propensity towards food tourism destinations. However, visitors are also so peculiar in view their food and services quality experiences with reference to ambience over the destinations and so much so they are very specific and particular in order to selection, experiences and satisfaction towards food and beverages in the hotels and restaurants. Uttarakhand is one of well-known and most popular state of India in context of adventure, religious, wellness and culinary tourism. (Kumar, 2019) studied the role played by these components such as visitors perception and satisfaction in overall development of responsible and sustainable tourism at any destination. Therefore, this research paper would measure the perception and satisfaction of visitors towards food and beverage services in Rishikesh region of the Uttarakhand. The sample of 350 visitors which includes both domestic and International was collected and analyzed statistically with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Keywords: Ambience, Perception, Satisfaction, Food and Culinary Tourism

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Introduction

The ambience of restaurants and food service outlets play a significant role in overall tourism perception and satisfaction. Therefore, it is great sense of concerns for policy makers, tourism planners, Destination development organizations (DMOs), Destination Management companies (DMCs), and hotel & restaurants stakeholders need to focus on ambience of food service outlets. In view of measurement of perception and satisfaction of visitors towards ambience of restaurants in the Rishikesh region of Garhwal

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ISSN - 2348-2397
APPROVED UGC CARE

SHODH SARITA
Vol. 7, Issue 27, July-September, 2020
Page Nos. 221-228

AN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

ANALYSIS OF TRAVEL PROFILES OF TOURISTS VISITING YAMUNOTRI AND GANGOTRI PILGRIMAGE SITES

Dr. Avinash Chamoli*
Dr. Rakesh Kumar Dhodi**
Dr. Rashmi Dhodi***

ABSTRACT

The dependence of tourism on the accommodation industry has already been cleared and specified earlier and hence it is true that the hotel industry is responsible to a great extent, for growth, development, strength and weakness of the tourism industry. This research paper is a sincere attempt to bring out the exact position of Gangotri and Yamunotri Pilgrimage Yatra route through analyzing travel profiles of visitors. To do so, primary and secondary data of 500 domestic tourists were collected and analyzed statistically in order to draw meaningful conclusions and achieve the framed objectives of the study. The travel profile of visitors includes demographic profile, purpose of travel, duration of stay, expenditure, source of information, travel group composition and travel arrangement etc. It is a quantitative as well as qualitative analytical study based on survey research design of study area. The appropriate proportion of total population has been collected in the form of data through self-administered questionnaires from 500 domestic. After making all the changes collected data has been analyzed with the help of descriptive (Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations) and inferential statistics. Furthermore, based the findings, appropriate recommendations were also made for the tourism planners, policy makers and stakeholders.

Keywords: Travel Profile, Tourism Development, Visitors satisfaction, Pilgrimage Tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Tourists are the moral and legitimate stakeholders for growth and development of tourism at any destination through their active participation and support, we cannot even think about tourism and hotel industry without them. Therefore, it is necessary to measure their travel profiles, requirements, demands and supply on a serious note. There are thousands of tourists visiting the Gangotri and Yamunotri pilgrim sites every year

Journal of The Gujarat Research Society
ISSN: 0374-8588
Volume 21 Issue 15, December 2019

Socio Economic Impact of MGNREGA on Sustainable Development of Rural Areas: A Study of Uttarakhand

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Abstract—
The interconnection between development of any Nation and socio economic growth of people who lives in rural areas is very significant concept of sustainable development. Uttarakhand has seen numerous ups and down since establishment and it is difficult to develop any state without economic betterment of people lives in rural areas, for which the Government need to form strong economic policies and better strategy. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a 100 days guaranteed employment provided to families who are living in rural areas to help them those economically.The Act (MGNREGA) was enacted in India with various objectives of addressing rural poverty by providing employment in a conceptual framework, checking migration, creation of assets and development of rural infrastructure. The sustainable development of any state or Nation is collection of 17 global goals set by the "United Nations General Assembly" in 2015. In this paper we studied the role and impact of MGNREGA to accomplishment of 17 Global Goal of sustainable development in rural areas of Uttarakhand. Also provide some important suggestion have been proposed to prolific implementation of this scheme in rural areas.

***Keywords**: Employment, Sustainable Development, Poverty, Global goals, assets creation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a major role of agriculture sector in the process of socio economic development of rural India. Besides providing food products, agriculture contribute to market of industrial good, provides employment and earns foreign exchange[1]. In India today more than 60 percent of workforce is depend on agriculture for their livelihood. In Uttarakhand also mostly rural poor are directly depend on agriculture for their livelihood because Agriculture sector has a paramount importance in Uttarakhand economy but gradually the interest of rural people in farming is continuously decreasing due to various factor such as vulnerable to climate change, scattered landholding, scarcity of water and antediluvian technology method etc[2]. The Government of India has introduced many policies and schemes for the development of agriculture sector. MGNREGA is one of the major flagship initiative program which enhance the employment opportunity at rural areas by providing 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every family whose adult member volunteer to try and do unskilled manual work[3]. Ministry has notified works below MGNREGA majority of that area unit associated with agriculture and allied activities, beside the works can facilitate rural sanitation project in major manner. The act (MGNREGA) have important role in work for promoting agriculture productivity by creating durable infrastructure required for bio fertilize[4].The concept of sustainable development of any rural areas include with the maintenance and sustainable utilization of the function (goods & services) provided by natural ecosystem and biosphere process[5]. The 17 United Nation sustainable development goals give us a global plan for a sustainable future both economically, environmentally and socially [6].

THE GLOBLE GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and well-being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
10. Reducing Inequality
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life on Land
16. Peace, justice, and Strong Institutions
17. Partnership For the Goal

II.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researchers across the globe have attempted to study the aspects related Impact of MGNREGA on sustainable development of rural areas. Somasekhar (2014) regarded In all these programs MGNREGA as the most ambitious social security program which play significant role in generate employment and eliminate poverty. It has achieved terrific results in providing stable income household apart from creation of assets in rural areas. Kumar (2014) Eliminating of poverty and providing an employment opportunity remain one of the

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

A STUDY ON REVERSE MIGRATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES: A STUDY OF UTTARAKHAND STATE

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SeemaParveen*, DrPradeepMamgain*: A Study On Reverse Migration Of Human Resources: A Study Of Uttarakhand State-- Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 17(7). ISSN 1567-214x
Keywords: Reverse Migration, Lockdown, Rural Economy, Human Resources, Agriculture, Out Migration

ABSTRACT
The idea of national lock-down and home quarantine is the key to fighting against the Covid-19 pandemic is gaining currency among global political leaders. National lock-down has required dramatic changes in the India of work – a shift of workplaces into virtual mode, or working from home those workforce who are based on monthly based salary and have sufficient resources in home but apart from this there is a question of daily wage bases informal human resources . The corona virus pandemic has a mountain problem to the world but to some extent it's had positive impact on reverse migration in Himalayan state of Uttarakhand. Due to the Covid-19 nation-wide lock-down has resulted people who employed with the private and informal sector returned to their native villages in the state in the past few days during the lockdown. In this paper we study the beneficial and detrimental impact of reverse migration during national lockdown on rural areas of Uttarakhand. Also provide some important suggestion have been proposed toretain its youth permanently through the effective implementation of government plan and policies.

Introduction

Uttarakhand has seen numerous ups and downs since establishment. It is difficult for any state to develop without sustainable development of its human resource. The real development of any state deals with the economic amelioration of people who live in rural and hills areas of Garhwal division, and migration of human resource is major problem for the development of any state. Human resource being the live, dynamic & the only resource that gets appreciated over a period of time play a vital role in the economic development of any state or a country. Migration of human resource is a process of movement of an individual from one region to another to search the employment.

A STUDY ON THE CUSTOMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS HOUSING FINANCE SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

Based on their own conclusions, consumer experience refers to how consumers view a particular product. For a home loan client, the loan is a long-term investment that provides the owner of the house with immediate buying power. Different housing loan finance companies can concentrate on the customer by understanding the customer experience and assessment, and recognize their service intensity and limitations as seen by the customer. The housing finance industry can establish appropriate service-oriented performance metrics and increase the quality of the service delivered to society to levels that are compatible with customer expectations. The research paper studies the role of various parameters for customer perception like Purpose of Loan, Eligibility for Loan, DocumentationProcessing Fees, Interest Rates, Administrative and Commitment Fees, Security of Loan, Insurance, Penalty for Pre-payment, Margin Money, Repayment Mode, Loan to Project Cost, Maximum Loan Amount, Minimum Loan Amount, Maximum Period of Loan, Minimum Period of Loan, Sanctioning Period and Disbursement Period. The research aims to study the perception of customers on HDFC Limited's home loans, the variables that affect customers when selecting a housing loan finance agency. The thesis is based on descriptive analysis and follows sampling with a sample size of 200 for convenience. In the analysis, which is obtained through a standardized questionnaire, primary data is used. The clients believe, for the most part, that the operation, products and processes of people are effective. The housing loan providers may improve further by updating the prepayment services and conveying information about RBI guidelines regarding real estates to customers. These companies may create awareness about the home loan products through various social media platforms using Digital marketing tools.

Keywords—Housing finance, Loan, Customer, Perception

INTRODUCTION

India's housing industry is one of the few sectors which, despite the economic slowdown, has developed at a healthy pace of 28-30 percent. This rise was motivated by a number of factors, including favorable government policies, increased business investment, and, above all, a growing customer base. Many industry-friendly policies were announced by the government; moreover, real estate prices had also dropped across the nation during the same time. Many other associated industries, such as the cement, engineering, paint and steel industries,

Kanpur Philosophers
ISSN 2348-8301
International Journal of humanities, Law and Social Sciences
Published biannually by New Archaeological & Genological Society
Kanpur India

NAAGS KANPUR

Vol. VIII, Issue I : 2021

ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH AND MEDIATING ROLE OF ICT ALTERING THE CUSTOMER HOSPITALITY SERVICES DECISION MAKING: A CONCEPTUAL INVESTIGATION

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Abstract:

The study aims to explore the theoretical context of eWOM and how ICT mediates in the customer decision-making process. Moreover, the study objective is to govern the importance of eWOM in the process of customer decision-making of purchase of hospitality services. This study is based on a systematic view of a theoretical and empirical research article to justify the relationship of eWOM and changing the decision making of the customer. Furthermore, the study embedded a Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985) and social cognition factors in decision making. Particularly research articles accessed by sources like Pro-Quest, Google Scholar, Emerald insight, ResearchGate, ScienceDirect and some other online databases. This research article conceptually examines the mediating role of social networking community i.e. social electronic word of mouth (SeWOM) and increasing literature in the field of consumer behaviour. Later part of this study concluded insight of the electronic form of communication eWOM and consumer purchase decision-making, with special reference to hospitality services and futuristic methods of communication for research and discusses managerial implication, limitations, and the rational suggestion for future researchers.

Paper type: Conceptual research paper

Keywords: Consumer Decision Marking, Electronic word-of-mouth communication, Information and Communication Technology, Social Networking, Hospitality Services.

Introduction

The hospitality service industry is highly volatile; it's changing very fast with the simultaneous changes in customer expectation. The recent collaborative service economies provided new possibilities for the tourism and hospitality sector; new possibilities always face challenges. Hence, new technologies are the only solution to avoid or rectify the problems and result from oriented service operations (Belk, 2014; Ert & Hebrew, 2015; Michael A. Cusumano, Steven J. Kahl, 2014; Zervas et al., 2017). Information and communication technology (ICT) shaped the synergic platform for customer information sharing and allowing to create new market communication process (Watanabe et al., 2016). The historical background of the word of mouth communication (WOM) is the most influential source of information transmission method (De Keyzer et al., 2019; Fine et al., 2017). Therefore, the importance of eWOM continuously increasing, because traditional WOM have limitation it performs only within community network (Bhatnagar & Ghose, 2004), but the eWOM more emphasis since last decade, due to explosive growth of internet and e-commerce

Sambodhi Indological Research Journal of L.D.I.I
(UGC Care Journal)
ISSN: 2249-6661
Vol-45 No.-01(V) : 2022

COVID 19 AND HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

Service sectors specially tourism industries paid reduced pay to the employees and even suspend jobs of many workforces. Employees who looked after the whole family expenditure confront livelihood difficulties. Human Resource Management had to maintain sustainability in the minds of both employers and employees by framing effective Human Resource Strategy. While framing Human Resource Strategy, Human Resource Managers should keep in mind health issued of the employees who faced long Covid symptoms. Challenges are faced by the employees and difficulties confront by the Human Resource Management of the organization are being studied in the present paper. Further, details of long Covid symptoms are also highlighted.

Key Words: Workforce, Human Resource Management, difficulties & long Covid symptoms.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic Covid-19 affected the human resource of the organizations to a great extent. Human Resource Management had to confront with less number of staff due to lockdown as well as health issues of the pandemic. It became compulsory for all employees of the companies to work from home during the pandemic lockdown; but some works had also to be done through face to face interactions. It was very tough situation of a Human Resource Manager to manage the workforce in order to maintain the production capacity of the organization. The global pandemic lead unpredictable situations in both workplace and the society; Human Resource Management of the company is playing a major role in helping employees to face these difficulties. Employees could not concentrate on their jobs as before due to fear of losing jobs in the mind of the employees due to recession. Employees of the organization had to motivate to increase their digital skills in the midst of poor health condition. Human Resource Managers conducted online Human Resource training and processes to develop digital skills of the employees. It was a difficult situation to train the employees to make them able for work from home.

Difficult situations faced by the employees during the pandemic may comprise of:

- Health issues of themselves and family members
- Stress of fear of losing jobs
- Looking after family's expenditure with reduced salary
- Work at the risk of the virus
- Pressure to sustain in the virtual mode
- Mixture of official and private work in work from home
- Unemployed employees confront lower purchasing power
- Lack of knowledge of digital tools
- Attending online Human Resource processes and training in order to make themselves as competitive ones for the present situation.
- Work cooperatively in this stress time.
- Retain in the organization with unpaid leaves.
- Work with team spirit and cooperation during the pandemic.

Many employees continued working to look after themselves and their families during the peak time of the pandemic. But they have a fear in their mind; if they infected with the virus then huge investment may be required and also tension of spreading the virus with other family members. Companies belonging to Service sector mainly tourism could hardly get customers due the pandemic. Employees worked in these companies lost their jobs or many got reduced pay. Challenges were faced by the employees and Human Resource Managers. Human Resource Managers also framed Human Resource strategies to deliver digital skills to the employees so that employees continued working as well as availing interrupted products and services during the pandemic lockdown. Human

ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

Human Force and Management of Financial Status of M/S Thangjam Agro Industries Private Limited & Imphal Hospital And Research Centre Private Limited Situated in Manipur

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ABSTRACT

Financial status of a firm indicates its profitability. The firms are located in the north eastern part of India. Due to bandh, blockade and other unwanted circumstances the state is very poor in the growth of industries; the state's industries rely its raw material from other parts of the country. Supply of raw materials is a big problem in the state due to the above mentioned reason. Above all the problems the firm can become one of the growing firms in the state. It is very interesting and important to study the financial status of the particular firms and to provide suggestions for the overall improvement of the firms. The accountants are selected purely on the basis of practical knowledge. Under the tough situations of the state, the human forces who are handling financial works of the firm are keys to achieve its survival and profitability. In all situations funds are basic to run, survive and success of the firm.

The present study will analyze some points related to Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account of the firms. The strong components and to be improved components of the financial matters to suggest to the manpower who are looking after the financial matters will be the main area of the study. Data had been collected from the Managing Directorsand the Accountantsof the firms.

Key words: financial matters, growing and Balance Sheet.

INTRODUCTION

Financial status of a firm shows the profitability and growth& the firms have to motivate the human force who are handling it. Success of a firm in Manipur state is a great challenge due to frequent bandh, blockade and other undesirable state of affairs. Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account for the year ended 31st March 2017 and for the year ended 31st March 2018 were being studied. Thangjam Agro Industries is a Small Scale Food Processing Unit located in Imphal, Manipur with over 2 decades of successful operation since its origination in 1991. Some crucial components of the financial statement of two years would be discussed. Imphal Hospital and Research Centre is located at Imphal West, Manipur, India. It is situated near Regional Institute of Medical Science (RIMS). It was

THINK INDIA JOURNAL

ISSN:0971-1260

Vol-22-Issue-10-November-2019

Laiharaoba- A Sacred Festival Of Manipur

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ABSTRACT

Laiharaoba reflects the old history and culture of Meitei population of Manipur state. The dress code for this festival isthe traditional dress for Meitei community. Complicated and lengthy rituals, traditional dances and songs are performed in front of Umanglai (God of Forest) in Laiharaoba festival. People pray various Umanglaias per their communities; different community (leikais) is having different Umanglai. Celebration of Laiharaoba belonging to different leikais is conducted in different months. This festival must perform once in a year for every Umanglai in their shrine. Individuals involved in the association for conducting the festival collect donations from each and every family of that particular community.This festival is normally performed for 1 or 3 or 5 or 7 days.

The present paper highlights about few rituals of Laiharaoba festival. Different months for the celebration of Laiharaoba regarding to various Umanglai are shown.

Keywords: Laiharaoba, Umanglai, culture and community.

INTRODUCTION

Laiharaoba is comprised of two words “Lai” and “Haraoba”. Lai means God and Goddess &Haraoba means merrymaking. Laiharaoba is very prestigious and sanctified socio-religious festival of Manipur. This festival exists since two thousand years before. It is the way of worship and celebration by the Meiteis living in the valley of Manipur.People perform the festival to please the God, local language is Umanglai. Umanglai can be termed as God of Forest. During the festival Maiba, Maibi, Pena Khongba and the local population perform complicated rituals, songs, dances and prayers. Large number of difficult steps is mandatory in this festival and executed by Maiba, Maibi and Pena Khongba. Such ancient culture of Meitei is still remembered through carrying out Laiharaoba festival.

RITUALS, GODS AND GODESSES OF LAIHARAOBA

RITUALS OF LAIHARAOBA

In Laiharaoba festivalMaiba, Maibi and Pena Khongba call up the spirits from the rivers or ponds and placed to the deities of the shrine at Lai Loukhatpa function which happen at the first day of the festival.It can be performed from Mera (October) to Inga (June) in a year. It is compulsion to celebrate the festival for Umanglai once in a year. It can last for

Received 21 May 2020
Revised 24 August 2020
9 November 2020
20 December 2020
Accepted 31 December 2020

Arresting fake news sharing on social media: a theory of planned behavior approach

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to examine the collective impact of awareness and knowledge about fake news, attitudes toward news verification, perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, fear of missing out (FoMO) and sadism on social media users' intention to verify news before sharing on social media.

Design/methodology/approach – The current study's conceptual framework is developed by a comprehensive literature review on social networking and the theory of planned behavior. The data for samples were collected from 400 respondents in India to test the conceptual framework using the partial least square–structural equation modeling technique.

Findings – The results show that awareness and knowledge, perceived behavioral control, attitudes toward news verification and FoMO are significant predictors of intention to verify news before sharing.

Research limitations/implications – The present study concludes implications for managers of social media companies and policy actors that want to take steps toward arresting the spread of fake news via social media.

Originality/value – Academic investigation on fake news sharing on social media has recently gained traction. The current work is unique because it uses the theory of planned behavior as a basis for predicting social media user's intention to verify news before sharing on social media.

Keywords Social networking, Theory of planned behavior, General management, Perceived behavioral control, Fake news, Fear of missing out, Sadism

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Social media has radically redefined how information is shared and assimilated by the masses (Talwar *et al.*, 2019). Social media has provided consumers with an outlet to prospect brands, announce their preferences and act as representatives (Hollenbeck and Kaikati, 2012). Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) have reported that word of mouth on social media significantly impacts consumer brand attitude and purchase intention. Social media permit users to interact with their peers by producing and sharing content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Mills *et al.*, 2019). Online platforms allow their users to engage in journalistic activities of creating and sharing information online (Robinson, 2011). Social media has given consumers the power to build or kill a brand (kohli *et al.*, 2015). Brands respond to users by

Management Research Review
Vol. 44 No. 8, 2021
pp. 1108-1138

2040-8269
DOI 10.1108/MRR-05-2020-0286

paying attention to the users' feedback; however, in the context of fake news spreading on social media, they are feeling helpless to handle this situation (Flostrand *et al.*, 2019; Talwar *et al.*, 2019). "Truthiness" (validity of how it feels) and post-fact (ignoring facts and relying on emotions) are dominating our society, and this has created a complicated scenario (Berthon and Pitt, 2018).

Social networking companies have responded by taking steps against fake news by suspending bots/suspicious accounts, reporting fake news and hiring personnel to deal with this problem (Akpan, 2016; Fowler, 2018; Talwar *et al.*, 2019). The Indian Government has also worked with WhatsApp to control fake news sharing (Balkrishna and Shrivastava, 2018).

There is a surge of recent cases where fake news has significantly affected popular brands (such as Starbucks, Pepsi and New Balance) and damaged their reputation (Mills and Robson, 2019; Tschiatschek *et al.*, 2018; Chen and Cheng, 2019). Social media platforms such as Facebook have also come under criticism because of fake news (Wells and Winkler, 2017). Also, regulations to control fake news that may lead to the removal of user anonymity on these platforms pose a severe problem for data security and privacy (Economic Times, 2020). Therefore, it is imperative to examine the problem of fake news from a managerial point of view as fake news hurts brands and harms the image and business model of social media companies.

Gap identification

However, despite social media companies and policy actors' efforts to combat fake news, our understanding of fake news sharing behavior is still minimal. Newhoff (2018) reported that to understand the phenomenon of fake news sharing, a psychological and sociological inquiry is urgently required. Recent studies such as the one by Karnowski *et al.* (2017) use the theory of reasoned action (TRA) to analyze fake news sharing behavior. Koohikamali and Sidorova (2017) have considered the user's attitude and perception toward taking risks, belief on the information quality and attitude toward social network platforms as predictors of sharing information on social networking sites. Talwar *et al.* (2019) have examined social media fatigue, social comparison and fear of missing out (FoMO) as predictors of fake news sharing behaviors.

Fake news has negative implications for politics (Freeze *et al.*, 2020), finance (Kogan *et al.*, 2019), public health such as in the case of COVID-19 (Pennycook *et al.*, 2020), nutrition information (Rowe and Alexander, 2018) as well as the negative implication for the social media industry in general. It has been argued that rather than only exploring technological factors such as suspicious bots, algorithms, text analysis and partisan strength (e.g. Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017; Potthast *et al.*, 2017; Khan and Alhazmi, 2020), it is essential to enquire about psychological and cultural factors behind sharing of fake news (Newhoff, 2018).

Negative behaviors in the context of social networking, namely, FoMO (Przybylski *et al.*, 2013; Blackwell *et al.*, 2017) and sadism (Ferenczi *et al.*, 2017), have already been explored. The theory of planned behavior (TPB) and TRA have limited social media research (Osch and Coursaris; 2015). The most prominent social media research topics using these theories are self- presentation, privacy/security, consumerism/branding, relationships and cyberbullying/harassment (Osch and Coursaris, 2015). Therefore, the current work is one of the first to apply the TPB framework to study fake news sharing behaviors on social media. Also, most of the recent studies on fake news sharing are conducted in the USA (Choi, 2016), Pakistan (Talwar *et al.*, 2019), Germany (Karnowski *et al.*, 2017) and Singapore (Lee and Ma, 2012). Therefore, an Indian perspective is missing. The current study's result will provide useful insights for social media companies and policy actors to combat fake news.

The current paper is organized as follows:

- First, the introduction and gap identification sections highlight the need and importance of the current study.
- Second, the literature review section defines the paper's key terms, such as fake news, planned behavior theory and behavioral intentions.
- Third, the conceptual framework section highlights hypothesis development.
- Fourth, the methodology and analysis section sheds light on the measures used, the study participants and the partial least square–structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis to validate the measures and test the hypothesis.
- Fifth, the general discussion section discusses the results of hypothesis testing.
- Six, the implications section highlights the theoretical and managerial implications of the current study.
- Finally, the limitations and further research section highlight the limitations of the current work and the scope for further research on the topic of fake news.

Literature review

Fake news

The term "fake news" became popular during the Presidential election of 2016 held in the USA and captivated researcher and public attention (Tandoc *et al.*, 2017; Lazer *et al.*, 2018). Articles that could mislead readers by producing intentionally and verifiably untrue information are defined as fake news (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017). Further, it is essential to break fake news into discrete categories such as disinformation (deliberately sharing false information to mislead) discussed by Mills *et al.* (2019) and misinformation (false or inaccurate information sharing accidentally or unintentionally) (Karlova and Fisher, 2013). Therefore, it is a challenge for online users to identify news's credibility on social media (Moravec *et al.*, 2019; Borges-Tiago *et al.*, 2020).

The scholarship has tried to provide a foundation for future research by introducing the conceptual characterization of fake news based on social and psychological theories and after that proposed approaches to detect fake news on social media (Burkhardt, 2017; Shu *et al.*, 2017; Sun *et al.*, 2013; Jin *et al.*, 2016; Khan and Alhazmi, 2020). These studies have used different methods to detect different types of rumors empirically by analyzing measures such as link-based analysis, examining text using time-series, content accuracy measures and linguistic-based measures (e.g. Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017; Ciampaglia *et al.*, 2015; Kumar *et al.*, 2016; Ruchansky *et al.*, 2017; Volkova *et al.*, 2017; Zhao *et al.*, 2012; Khan and Alhazmi, 2020). Precisely textual, temporal and network are the features that have been explored by the studies mentioned above to define and detect fake news. It has been argued that the efficiency of detecting fake news through text or content analysis is not satisfactory as fake news mimics as a legitimate source of information (Torres *et al.*, 2018). Many users also struggle to differentiate fake from real information on social media (Moravec *et al.*, 2019; Borges-Tiago *et al.*, 2020). Fake news is affecting the user's trust and perceptions (Balmas, 2012). Pennycook *et al.* (2018) revealed that repeatedly showing fake news on social media has been seen to increase in perceived accuracy. Another research states that users who spend more time on the internet do not verify online information before sharing (McGrew *et al.*, 2018).

As a result, it is essential to explore information verification behaviors on social media and develop a behavioral profile of most susceptible to fake news users.

Theory of planned behavior

TPB is a useful theoretical framework to understand and explain an individual's behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). According to TPB, intentions are predicted by attitudes (AT), which refer to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of executing a given behavior (Ajzen, 1991); subjective norms (SN) is defined as one's belief about people who are significant to them think that they should or should not perform a target behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). TRA was criticized for having entirely voluntarily perceived behavior (Liao *et al.*, 2007). Thus, another construct called perceived behavioral control (PBC) was added to TRA (to form TPB), which is termed as an individual's perception of control or confidence over executing a target behavior (Ajzen, 1991, 2002; Conner and Sparks, 2005; Bonera, 2011).

Previous studies have also used TPB to examine the discontinuance of harmful behaviors and adopt rational behavior such as discontinuance of social media addiction (Turel, 2016) and abusive relations (Byrne and Arias, 2004). Therefore, the current research applies the TPB framework to predict social media users' intention to verify news before sharing (INT).

Theory of planned behavior and behavioral intentions

The current study's dependent variable is the social media user's INT. INT is the TPB model's key component, which predicts volitional behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Conner and Armitage, 1998; Shih and Fang, 2004; George, 2002). TPB explains that motivation (intention) and self-efficiency (behavioral control) are the two critical behavioral attainment drivers. TPB differentiates human behavior into three kinds of beliefs, i.e. behavioral (attitude toward a behavior), normative (subjective norms) and control (PBC). Therefore, INT is assumed to be an immediate predictor of behavior (Silverman *et al.*, 2016; Cronce and Larimer, 2013). Previous empirical studies have extensively applied TPB in targeting intentions as a means to alter behaviors by designing interventions strategies to discontinue addictive behaviors (Pelling and White, 2009; Conner, 2015) in a variety of contexts such as smoking cessation (Ruslan *et al.*, 2018; Zhao *et al.*, 2018; Su *et al.*, 2015), risky sexual behaviors (Moeini *et al.*, 2016), excessive use of social network sites (Ho *et al.*, 2017), alcohol consumption (Haydon *et al.*, 2017), abusive relationships (Edwards *et al.*, 2017), cyberbullying (Heirman and Walrave, 2012), internet gambling (Flack and Morris, 2015), risky sexual behaviors (Moeini *et al.*, 2016) and the discontinuance of social media addiction (Luqman *et al.*, 2018).

Based on the studies mentioned above, the current research also applies the TPB framework to predict the INT on social media.

Conceptual framework

Awareness and knowledge

Information searching, sharing and critically verifying are the three vital competencies of the social media environment (Bawden, 2011; Koltay, 2011). Awareness about fake news can be defined as the recognition by the online user's part that fake news exists and may have been present in their network (Bulgurcu *et al.*, 2010). Past scholarship has reported continuously a significantly positive relationship between cognition and behavior (Chan, 2008). Shalaby and Soliman (2019) examined preventive strategies for harmful behaviors such as smoking and drug addiction. They reported that smoking and drug addiction were relatively less among those who possessed legitimate knowledge about the health hazards caused by these practices. Studies exploring preventive health behaviors (focusing on diseases such as HIV, cancer and diabetes) also report that awareness and knowledge (AK) plays a vital role in combating such diseases by educating people about preventive measures (Jeihooni and Rakhshani, 2019; Pharr *et al.*, 2017). Nath *et al.* (2017) have reported that AK about environmental issues have a significant positive relationship with engaging in pro-environmental behaviors. According to Shieber (2015), verifying information on the recipient part is a response to awareness. It has also been argued by Flanagin and Metzger (2007) that users adopt many techniques to validate the information in the context of social media sites. That is why, if online users are unaware of the existence of fake news and cannot spot inaccurate information, they are less likely to have an INT on social media. It is reported that online users verify online information's authenticity based on their knowledge, intuition and experience (Rosie Jahng *et al.*, 2020). Thus, users who are aware and have the knowledge to spot fake news are more likely to have an INT. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

H1. AK regarding fake news has a significant effect on INT.

Attitude toward behavior

AT is described as an extent to which an individual carries either favorable or unfavorable belief on performing any given behavior (Ajzen, 1991). To perform a given behavior, a person must possess the belief that the benefit of performing a behavior will counterbalance the disadvantages (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2010). The technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989) has shown that the use of technology (such as the use of social media) by an individual is also influenced by the AT, which is inveigled by the user's own pre-existing beliefs (Teo *et al.*, 2009; Weeks and Garrett, 2014). AT is a critical antecedent of intentions as it involves a person's "personal beliefs" about the outcome (Turcotte *et al.*, 2015). These beliefs are further associated with specific attributes of behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). As per TRA, AT is considered voluntary; however, studies have proved that behavior performed is not always voluntary (Khan and Idris, 2019). For this study, attitude toward news verification is defined as a user's overall estimation of the desirability of verifying information on social networking sites before sharing. Persada *et al.* (2020) reported that attitude is the strongest predictor of intentions to adopt hybrid electric vehicles (Wang *et al.*, 2016), the decision to buy non-counterfeit products (Zaharuddin and Wahab, 2014). Lewandowsky *et al.* (2012) reported that an attitude of verifying information on the internet stems from a sense of skepticism, which in turn is useful in identifying suspicious information and therefore mitigating the negative effect of spreading fake information. Chen and Cheng (2019) have reported that an increased questioning attitude among online users and intention to infer manipulative content would prevent fake news from affecting the subsequent image of the brand. Therefore, based on the above discussion, we hypothesize that attitudes toward news verification can predict INT.

H2. AT toward news verification has a significant effect on INT.

Subjective norms

SN refers to the belief that an important person or group will support or oppose a behavior, and SNs are determined by perceived social pressure to engage or not to engage in a behavior (Devine-Wright *et al.*, 2015). The perception of friends and family has a greater impact on SN than societal referents (Yanovitzky *et al.*, 2006). The scholarship has reported that there is a significant effect of SN on the intention to engage with a given behavior (Al-Debei *et al.*, 2013;

Crespo and Bosque, 2008; Heirman, and Walrave, 2012; Truong, 2009; Logan, 2014; Maurer, and Wiegmann, 2011). The scholarship has also reported that greater the peer's influence, the more an individual will engage in abusive or negative behaviors such as smoking, alcohol and drugs (Dempsey *et al.*, 2016; Svensson, 2000; Bryant, 2003; Helmer *et al.*, 2014; Pischke *et al.*, 2015). Hogan and Quan-Haase (2010) have reported that people prefer those news links, which are suggested by family and friends compared to the ones shared by news professionals. Recent studies such as the one by Goldberg *et al.* (2020) reported that social norms motivate preventive behaviors such as in the case of COVID-19. However, scholars demonstrated that social norms proved to be a weaker predictor of intentions than attitudes (Leonard *et al.*, 2004; Khan and Idris, 2019). Based on the above-referred studies, the current study examines the role of subjective norms on the INT on social media. Therefore, we can posit that:

H3. SNs have a significant effect on INT.

Perceived behavioral control

PBC is referred to as the perception of an individual's personal ability to perform a target behavior (Ajzen, 1991). To enhance the TRA, PBC was added to TRA to form the TPB (Khan and Idris, 2019). PBC emerges from self-efficacy and proposes that people who believe that they possess the competency to execute a behavior will likely have high self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Different PBC measures have been used by scholars, such as self-efficacy, ease of use, difficulty in using and basic knowledge required (Dhir *et al.*, 2018). Bandura's self-efficacy model has been adopted to examine user's online skills, the ability to search for any information online successfully (e.g. Flanagin and Metzger, 2014). Studies from various domains have claimed self-efficacy as an essential variable in initiating change in behavioral intention such as health-related behaviors (Zarski *et al.*, 2018), intention to adopt technology by teachers (Li *et al.*, 2016) and information disclosure (Sundar and Marathe, 2010; Keith *et al.*, 2015). For example, self-efficacy appeared to be a significant predictor of consuming a nutritive diet, controlling alcohol consumption, increasing physical exercise and using seat belts (Schwarzer *et al.*, 2007). PCE can also be conceptualized as an individual's estimate of the extent to which their activities contribute to the solution of a problem (Nath *et al.*, 2017). Studies conducted on pro-environmental behaviors have reported a strong association between PBC and intention to engage in pro-environmental behaviors (Nath *et al.*, 2017). Past studies have examined the effect of self-efficacy on persuasion knowledge and brand trust. However, Chen and Cheng (2019) report no direct link of self-efficacy to actual news verification behavior. Therefore, the current work extends the earlier work by studying PBC's effect on tangible outcomes, such as the intention to verify the information before sharing on social networking sites. An individual's self-efficacy to verify news before sharing on social media may relate to one's inner ability/knowledge to recognize misinformation and verify suspicious information (Metzger, 2007). Tying the evidence mentioned above together, we hypothesize that:

H4. PBC has a significant effect on INT.

Sadism

Sadism is one of the dark triad traits where an individual possesses a tendency to engage in antisocial behaviors where they attain pleasure in hurting others intentionally and enjoy the feeling of making them suffer (Pabian and Vandebosch, 2016). Individuals with sadistic behavior tendencies have a propensity toward alienated online behaviors (Sest and March, 2017). Sadism has been recognized as an additional factor in dark Tetrad online behaviors

(Buckels *et al.*, 2014; Van Geel *et al.*, 2017). The scholarship has reported a significant relationship between undesirable online behaviors and dark tetrad traits (Craker and March, 2016; Buckels *et al.*, 2014; March *et al.*, 2017). It has been reported that sadistic tendencies motivate undesirable online behaviors, such as trolling (Buckels, 2018). Paulhus and Dutton (2016) have termed trolling as "everyday sadism." Online users troll to boost their egos, get a temporary feeling of power and show them look "cool." Trolls try to provoke people through comments that include insult or false information. They are ideologically aligned with any fake news they come across and intentionally support and advocate non-verified stories. Because the studies mentioned above have reported a significant relationship between sadism and undesirable internet behaviors, we argue that social media users with sadistic personality may deliberately share unverified news on social media. Hence, we hypothesize as follows:

H5. Sadism has a significant effect on INT.

Fear of missing out

FoMO is a form of social apprehension by an individual of not being in contact with their peer and social group (Baumeister and Tice, 1990). FoMO is the feeling of being left out. A psychological reaction such as anxiety can be seen in the form of FoMO, where an individual feels excluded or ignored from their peer/community/group (Baumeister and Tice, 1990). Three main features characterize FoMO: seeking consideration, seeking acceptance and a sense of belongingness (Beyens *et al.*, 2016). Previous studies have linked FoMO with emotional states such as weariness, desolation, and pessimistic or depressed mood (Browne *et al.*, 2018; Burke *et al.*, 2010; Wortham, 2011). Social media users tend to keep a constant check on news and status updates on social media pages in the anxiety of being not left out (Abel *et al.*, 2016). Satisfaction is the leading factor that establishes an association between FoMO and social media usage (Reyes *et al.*, 2018). FoMO is an inevitable terrifying feeling that others might be having more gratifying experiences than one who is not in touch (Przybylski *et al.*, 2013). Baumeister *et al.* (2005) also revealed that such behaviors might lead to a decline in self-supervision. Furthermore, the decrease in self-supervision or self-control may not motivate users to put any attempt to check the authenticity of the information (Talwar *et al.*, 2019). Hence, we hypothesize as follows:

H6. FoMO has a significant effect on INT.

Methodology and analysis

Measures

All items were anchored on a five-point Likert scale. The items, as well as their source from where they are adopted, are shown in Table 1 (see Appendix 2 for the questionnaire used). After finalizing the measures, the survey instrument was pretested with three subject experts (experts from marketing research, psychology and consumer behavior field from premier academic institutions such as Central Universities in India and Indian Institute of Technology) to ensure that measures used have content validity. The experts insisted on using short and simple sentences in the questionnaire. After implementing the experts' recommendations, the questionnaire was subjected to a pilot survey in which 50 responses were obtained. The scales used showed acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.7).

Table 1. Construct validity and reliability

Construct	Items adapted from	Items	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha
Attitude (AT)	Lee *et al.* (2016); Sanne and Wiese (2017)	Verifying, before believing news on social networking sites is a (1 = bad, 5 = excellent) idea	0.833	*0.720*	*0.885*	*0.805*
		I have a (1 = unfavorable, 5 = favorable) attitude toward verifying news before sharing information) on social networking sites	0.836			
		I think verification before sharing information on social networking sites is (1= not at all beneficial, 5= beneficial) to others	0.876			
Awareness and knowledge (AK)	Bulgurcu *et al.* (2010), Berthon and Pitt (2018); Lui (2017); Flanagin and Metzger (2007)	I am aware of the term "fake news"	0.962	*0.920*	*0.983*	*0.978*
		I am aware that we can check suspicious news through trusted sources (such as BBC, Govt. sites) before sharing	0.958			
		I am aware of tips to spot fake news	0.959			
		I know what the "blue" tick mark or "verified" tick on a news source means	0.961			
		I understand the consequences of sharing non-verified news	0.956	*0.882*	*0.938*	*0.868*
Subjective norms (SN)	Talwar *et al.* (2019)	Most people who are important to me think I should readily share news on social networking sites	0.928			
		Most people who are important to me are readily sharing news on social networking sites	0.951			
Perceived behavioral control (PBC)	Kim and Sin (2011); Venkatesh *et al.* (2003)	I believe I can contribute toward the fight against fake news	0.947	*0.886*	*0.959*	*0.936*
		I am confident that efforts (fact-checking and reporting suspicious posts) at my level contribute a lot to solving the problem of fake news on social media	0.926			
		My efforts have no impact on the problem of fake news (R)	0.950			

(*continued*)

Table 1.

Construct	Items adapted from	Items	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha
Sadism	Jones and Paulhus (2014); Plouffe *et al.* (2017)	I use social media sites to amuse myself	0.930	*0.800*	*0.926*	*0.880*
		I feel awful when I encounter something bad on social networking sites (R)	0.866			
		I share posts/comments just to have fun with others	0.886			
FoMO	Talwar *et al.* (2019)	I fear if my friends are enjoying more rewarding experiences in sharing news on social networking sites than me	0.944	*0.900*	*0.948*	*0.890*
		I fear others getting much more gratifying experiences (likes, comments, subscribers) using social media than me	0.954			
Intentions (INT)	Torres *et al.* (2018)	In the future, I intend to check news through fact-checking sites before sharing on social networking sites	0.883	*0.791*	*0.919*	*0.868*
		In the future, I intend to follow all tips to spot and report fake news on social networking sites	0.913			
		I do not intend to browse external links to confirm news before sharing (R)	0.872			

Note: (R): reverse-coded items

Participants

India has a large consumer base of smartphone users, with 500 million active users as of January 2020 (News18, 2020). Such large numbers are attributed to the availability of affordable smartphones costing less than US$100 as well as cheap 4G data plans costing approx. US$3 for one month of high-speed internet usage. Data for the current study were collected from a self-administered survey. The survey was carried out in New Delhi, India. New Delhi was chosen as it has a diverse population. It is a center for trade, commerce, education, essential government departments and tourism. The mall intercept technique used by Mostafa (2006) was used where people were approached at busy marketplaces to participate in the survey. The respondents were given a brief explanation of the survey's aim. They were told that participation is voluntary, and they can withdraw from the survey at any time they like. Respondents were assured that the data will be kept confidential and were also instructed not to mention any identifiable details in the survey. Smartphone users above the age of 18 years and users fluent in English were only asked to participate in the survey with the condition that they must have owned a smartphone for at least a month before the survey. Such criterion for respondent selection has also been used by earlier studies such as the one by Chung *et al.* (2019), who investigated social media addiction among smartphone users. The survey period lasted from the first week of August 2019 to the mid of September 2019. After data tabulation and cleaning, 400 valid responses were obtained. The sample of 400 respondents consisted of 227 males and 173 females, and most of the respondents had a "graduate" level of education ($n = 247$). Most of the respondents ($n = 242$) belonged to the 18–30 years age group. The dominant income group is the 200,000 INR–500,000 INR ($n = 277$) group; the dominant occupation of the respondents was "job/service professional" ($n = 305$).

Analysis

The current work uses PLS-SEM to carry out the analysis of the primary data. PLS-SEM is a recommended methodology for prediction and theory building (Han *et al.*, 2017; Raza *et al.*, 2020), as the primary goal of the current work is to estimate how the independent variables predict the dependent variable. A two-step analysis was carried out as recommended by Hair *et al.* (2013), where first, the outer model (measurement model) was analyzed to ascertain the validity and reliability of the scales used and the inner model (structural model) was analyzed to test the hypothesis. The current study deploys the "plspm" (Sanchez, 2013) package in the R Statistical Language for the analysis (see Appendix for the R script used). The significance of the parameter estimates was tested using the bootstrapping method by drawing 5,000 subsamples from the main data (Hair *et al.*, 2013; Han *et al.*, 2017).

Table 1 shows the factor loadings of each construct, their average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha. All constructs exhibit convergent validity as AVE for all constructs is greater than 0.50, and CR is greater than 0.70; Cronbach's alpha for all the constructs is greater than 0.70, indicating a sound reliability (Hair *et al.*, 2017). All factor loadings were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) in the bootstrapping run.

The Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion was used to assess the discriminant validity; all measures exhibited discriminant validity as per this criterion (Table 2).

Table 3 summarizes the results of the analysis of the structural model. Fig. 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study with path estimates.

Additionally, stepwise regression models were analyzed to control for the effects of demographics variables. In the first step, all the demographic variables were added. The R^2

of the regression model was 0.01261, with $F(12, 387) = 0.4119$, $p > 0.05$. None of the demographic variables were significantly related to INT. In the next step, the remaining variables were added. The R^2 of the second regression is 0.1706, with $F(18, 381) = 4.355$, $p < 0.05$. In the second model, gender (0.278191, $p < 0.05$), AK (0.149500, $p < 0.05$), attitude (0.131261, $p < 0.05$), PBC (0.104678, $p < 0.05$) and FoMO (−0.165687, $p < 0.05$) are significant predictors of INT. The R^2 change is significant with $F = 12.099$, $p < 0.05$. Apart from gender, the rest of the predictors' direction and magnitude is approximately the same as that of the PLS-SEM analysis.

However, considering the significant impact of gender on INT, a multi-group PLS-SEM analysis was performed to separately see the impact of gender on the relationship of INT and independent variables for both males and females. Table 4 summarizes the results of the multi-group analysis.

General discussion

The present study has empirically examined the relationship between the constructs of TPB, AK, sadism and FoMO on social media user's INT. The latest studies and reports on fake news on social media and psychology literature were reviewed to arrive at the current study's hypothesis. The current study proposed six hypotheses, taking TPB (AT, PBC, SN), AK, sadism and FoMO as independent variables, and users' INT as a dependent variable. The results of the hypothesis testing are discussed as follows.

The results (Table 3) suggest that AK (*H1*) has a significant positive impact on INT (estimate: 0.1761, $p < 0.05$). This result is in line with earlier studies such as the one by Shalaby and Soliman (2019), who reported that the presence of harmful habits such as smoking and drug addiction was relatively less among those who possess legitimate

Table 2.
Discriminant validity

	Attitude	Awareness and knowledge	Subjective norms	Perceived behavioral control	Sadism	FoMO	Intentions
Attitude	*0.848*						
Awareness and knowledge	0.2377	*0.959*					
Subjective norms	0.1452	0.2537	*0.939*				
Perceived behavioral control	0.1945	0.1903	0.2429	*0.941*			
Sadism	0.0676	0.0972	0.0725	0.0734	*0.894*		
FoMO	−0.1650	−0.1954	−0.1076	−0.1331	0.0322	*0.948*	
Intentions	0.2317	0.2711	0.1262	0.2158	0.0978	−0.2098	*0.889*

Table 3.
Summary of structural model analysis and hypothesis testing

Independent variables	Estimate	Std. error*	z	Sig.**	Hypothesis	Result
Awareness and knowledge	0.1761	0.0551	3.196	*0.001*	*H1*	*Accepted*
Attitude	0.1398	0.0514	2.719	*0.006*	*H2*	*Accepted*
Subjective norms	0.0127	0.0495	0.256	0.797	*H3*	Rejected
Perceived behavioral control	0.1285	0.0513	2.504	*0.012*	*H4*	*Accepted*
Sadism	0.0683	0.0522	1.308	0.190	*H5*	Rejected
FoMO	−0.1364	0.0463	−2.946	*0.003*	*H6*	*Accepted*

Notes: *Std. error generated by bootstrapping 5,000 samples from the data; **at 5% significance level

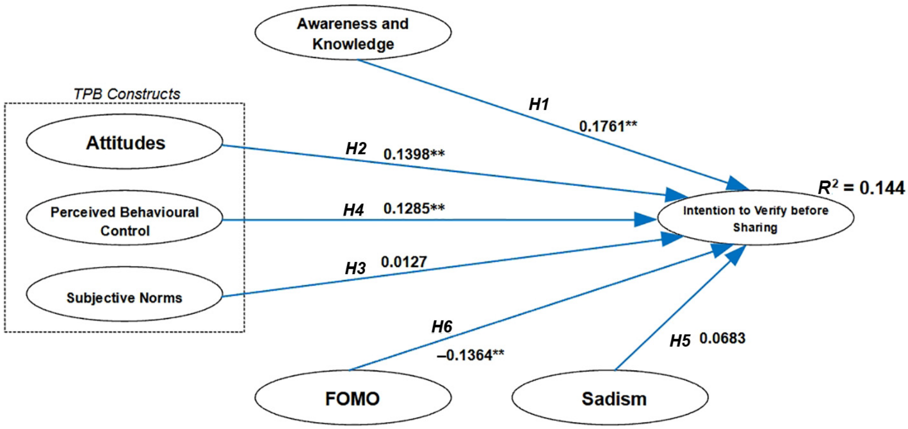

Figure 1.
Conceptual model with path estimates

Independent variables	Global estimate	Global p-value	Female Group estimate	Male Group estimate	Difference	p-value of difference
Awareness and knowledge	0.1761	*0.001*	0.1764	0.0953	0.0811	0.2163
Attitude	0.1398	*0.006*	*0.3266*	*−0.0059*	*0.3325*	*0.0044*
Subjective norms	0.0127	0.797	*0.2296*	*−0.1299*	*0.3594*	*0.0001*
Perceived behavioral control	0.1285	*0.012*	0.1425	0.0527	0.0899	0.2013
Sadism	0.0683	0.190	*−0.0378*	*0.1114*	*0.1492*	*0.0470*
FOMO	−0.1364	*0.003*	−0.1301	−0.1140	0.0161	0.4568

Table 4.
Multi-group analysis for gender

knowledge about the health hazards caused by these practices. AK about the presence of fake news and how to cross-check the information through other sources before sharing are the first steps in handling the spread of fake news (Khan and Idris, 2019; Bode and Vraga, 2017; Rosie Jahng *et al.*, 2020; Bawden, 2011). Our results support Parrott's (2018) hypothesis that online users who are aware of things such as the source of information and location are less likely to share unverified information on social media. Khan and Idris (2019) also pointed out that informed and aware users who can unravel the real information from the false can serve as a bastion in reducing the spread of fake news on social media. Therefore, *H1* is accepted.

Concerning the TPB constructs, our results show that AT (estimate: 0.1398, $p < 0.05$) and PBC (estimate: 0.1285, $p < 0.05$) are significant predictors, whereas SN (0.0127, $p > 0.05$) is not a significant predictor of INT. Concerning attitudes, our findings are in line with those reported by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), as it is evident from our results that a favorable belief of the respondents about verifying news is positively impacting INT. Therefore, *H2* is accepted. Regarding the effect of SN on INT, no significant relationship was observed. The scholarship has also reported a weak impact of SN on intentions (Kumar, 2012). Thus, *H3* is rejected. The result confirmed the findings of the previous studies where subjective norm is proved to be insignificant in the context of adopting preventive strategies to combat addictive behaviors; for example, Ioannou *et al.* (2013) found that subjective norms turned out to be statistically insignificant with regard to recycling intentions. Another study by

Jiang and Beaudoin (2016) also reported a weaker effect of subjective norms on the intention to prevent smoking. The reason could be, first, the dense and strong ties with others might not be obtained because of the lack of collective self, i.e. common or some sort of symbolic testimony within a group (Sedikides and Skowronski, 1993; Trafimow and Finlay, 1996; Cialdini and Trost, 1998). Second, as social networks are diverse and heterogeneous, the opinion of far-end netizens compared to the people share in-person social contacts may exert an insignificant impact on the engagement of online audiences (Stoup, 2008; Jiang and Beaudoin, 2016). Third, the result is in accordance with the point stated by Prud'homme and Raymond (2013) that young individuals have their own rational opinions. Therefore, in this context, their behavioral intentions largely depend on their own deliberate thinking.

PBC is significantly affecting INT, which is persistent with the findings of Hocevar *et al.* (2014) and Khan and Idris (2019). This suggests that individuals who possess higher perceived self-efficacy, i.e. individuals who think their efforts can help in fighting fake news, are more likely to develop verification intention. Thus, *H4* is accepted.

Concerning sadism, no significant effect was observed on INT (estimate: 0.0683, $p > 0.05$). Thus, *H5* is rejected. The result supports the previous studies' findings where sadism is a non-supported/insignificant predictor in the context of adaptive performance intent (e.g. learning new technologies, procedures and tasks; solving problems in a creative manner) (Ramos-Villagrasa *et al.*, 2020). Buckels *et al.* (2014) also revealed that sadism is unrelated to other online activities such as debating and chatting. Ramos-Villagrasa *et al.* (2020) also reported that sadism has no influence in predicting the intention to adapt performance and suggests that the dark triad model (psychopathy, narcissism and Machiavellianism) is sufficient to predict adaptive behaviors. Therefore, we can comment that sadistic personality traits have no influence in predicting intentions to self-regulate or adopt preventive behaviors such as verifying information on social media. Therefore, sadistic internet behaviors such as trolling have no significant impact on intentions to verify news before sharing.

FoMO has a negative significant relationship with INT (estimate: -0.1364, $p < 0.05$). Our findings are opposite to those of Talwar *et al.* (2019), who reported that FoMO has no significant relationship with verifying news. Previous studies have linked FoMO with various psychological insecurities such as the anxiety of being excluded from the network/group, sense of belongingness and seeking popularity in the context of social media (Baumeister *et al.*, 2005; Blackwell *et al.*, 2017). It is reported that FoMO pushes people toward reckless behaviors on social media, as FoMO generates a sense of perpetual suspicion and anxiety in people about being excluded from their social groups (Nottingham Trent University, 2016). Therefore, users share news readily without verification to move in the general direction of their social group to gain acceptance in the group. Thus, *H6* is accepted.

Regarding the multi-group analysis, the results indicated that females show a more positive attitude toward verifying information before sharing than males (Table 4). The result is in line with previous findings of studies such as Halmdienst *et al.* (2019), where it was reported that female shows more positive attitude in adopting health-care mobile applications in comparison to men. Concerning subjective norms, for males, SN is negatively related to INT. The results are consistent with the majority of previous similar studies such as computer-technology adoption, health application usage and sustainable consumption where males' subjective norms were a negative antecedent of intention to adopt technology as males do not rely on people's opinion (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003). Minton *et al.* (1971) reported that men are apt to rebel against others' orders or request whereas women are likely to get more compliant. Another study done by Minton and Schneider (1980) also claimed that men are likely to be self-confident and more independent in their actions or decisions. In contrast, women are more people/group oriented. Similar studies (Williams and Best, 1990; Parsons and Bales, 1956; Garai and Scheinfeld, 1968) have also confirmed the findings of the present study where they suggest that men tend to attend stimuli such as visual patterns or objects. In contrast, women are apt to be more attentive to social/subjective intimation. Therefore, from the above arguments, we can conclude that men in comparison to women are aimed toward individualistic goals and tasks (Stein and Bailey, 1973; Gill *et al.*, 1987; Carlson, 1971). Gender difference came out to be significant in the case of sadism and INT. This shows that male's sadism is significantly positive in relation to INT. The reason for the significant result could be attributed to the fact that one of the measures of everyday sadism where men score much higher than women for negative, harmful traits such as watching people getting into conflicting discussion excites sadistic personalities (Letzter, 2016). However, this needs further exploration.

Implications

Theoretical implications

The current research tried to examine how TPB constructs, AK, sadism and FoMO impact INT.

The present research hypothesizes that AK about fake news impact users' INT. The current study's significant theoretical implication is that it provided a theoretical framework (using TPB as a basis) to examine the behavioral antecedents of users' INT as the scholarship has also advocated that apart from examining technological factors such as suspicious bots, algorithms, text analysis and partisan strength (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017; Potthast *et al.*, 2017; Khan and Alhazmi, 2020), it is essential to enquire about psychological factors behind sharing of fake news (Newhoff, 2018).

The hypothesis testing results (Table 3) show a significant positive relationship between AK and INT. This result supports the past findings (such as one by Chan, 2008) that there is a significant positive relationship between cognition and behavior. In the context of the current study, this implies that cognition regarding fake news is the first step toward building a mindset in users to verify news before sharing. These results also confirm the prior findings of Shalaby and Soliman (2019), Jeihooni and Rakhshani (2019) and Pharr *et al.* (2017) that building awareness about problems (in our case, the problem of fake news) is the first step toward making people adopt preventive strategies. Thus, the implication for theory is that AK about fake news is a significant predictor of INT.

Regarding TPB constructs, our results also highlight that AT has a significant impact on INT. The result conveys that respondents' personal beliefs regarding the benefits of news verification have a significant bearing on their INT. This finding echoes the previous conclusion of Ajzen (1991), Davis (1989) and Turcotte *et al.* (2015) that AT is an essential predictor of intentions, which in our case implies that inculcating a positive attitude toward news verification before sharing is critical for pushing users to verify news before sharing. PBC is also another construct of TPB that has shown a significant positive relationship with INT. PBC is an individual's perception about their ability to perform a target behavior (Ajzen, 1991); our findings lend support to the conclusions of Ajzen (1991), and our results show that a user's belief that efforts at their level may help in combating the problem of fake news has a significant bearing on INT. However, the last construct of TPB, i.e. subjective norms, was not a significant predictor of INT. This is opposite to what we hypothesized based on the earlier findings of Al-Debei *et al.* (2013), Crespo and Bosque (2008), Heirman and Walrave (2012), Truong (2009), Logan (2014) and Maurer and Wiegmann (2011). Thus, our results show that perceived social pressure has no bearing on INT from a theory-building perspective. Hence, subjective norms are not a significant predictor of the user's INT. FoMO has a significant negative relationship with INT (Table 3). Our results cement the conclusion of Talwar *et al.* (2019) that the feeling of being left out or excluded may result in a decreased self-supervision and self-control, leading to less stringent verification of news before sharing. Hence, FoMO is a significant predictor of the user's intention to share news before sharing. Besides, we hypothesized that sadism is a significant predictor of INT based on the earlier findings of Sest and March (2017), Buckels *et al.* (2014), Van Geel *et al.* (2017) and Buckels (2018). However, our results show that sadism has no impact on INT. Thus, it is not a significant predictor of user's intention to share news before sharing. Finally, the current work developed measures to gauge respondents' AK about fake news, their attitudes toward news verification, perceived behavior control regarding news verification, attitudes toward news verification and intentions to verify news before sharing. These measures showed satisfactory validity (convergent and discriminant validity) and reliability. However, the present work uses PLS-SEM, which is suited for exploration and theory building (Han *et al.*, 2017; Raza *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, future research should use confirmatory tools such as CB-SEM to further validate and refine these measures by taking more diverse samples from other parts of the world.

Managerial implications

The results of the current study can provide insights into social media companies and policy actors. First, AK has come out to be a critical variable. Social networking platforms need to organize awareness programs to spread awareness about fake news and educate their users. For example, double-checking the information by the available fact-check tools and consider signals introduced by social networking sites (e.g. blue tick on Twitter) (Rosie Jahng *et al.*, 2020). Indian Government can also incorporate fake news awareness in cyber literacy campaigns under the Digital India scheme. Schools and educational institutions can also include similar topics in their computer literacy programs. Second, social networking sites can use the measures developed in the current study to conduct user surveys to understand users' behavioral profiles in terms of fake news spotting, verifying and sharing on their platforms. Because the current study results highlight that AK about fake news are positively related to INT, a user with a low awareness score can be served with targeted fake news awareness campaigns. Brand managers can maintain a history of fake news about their brands and how they rebuttal such stories (Peterson, 2019).

Similarly, users with high FoMO scores can also be targeted. Such a practice of targeted campaigns has also been carried out in the case of HIV/AIDS awareness programs (Noar *et al.*, 2009). Taking cues from such campaigns, social media users should be persuaded to show restraint and self-control while sharing on social media, as the current study shows that FoMO has a negative relationship with the INT. However, such efforts should be evaluated regularly to measure its effectiveness because gender differences are significant for attitudes, where it was found that females have more positive attitudes toward news verification than males. Therefore, social media companies can run targeted ads toward male users to develop a positive attitude toward news verification before sharing.

Limitations and further research

There are some limitations that should be considered when adhering to the current study's findings and implications. The current study drew its sample from New Delhi, India, which is a Tier 1 Indian city. To generalize the findings to other geographical areas of India or the world, replication studies should be done. Another limitation is that the current study has used a cross-sectional survey-based method that cannot be used to analyze behavior change over time. Therefore, future research can explore this issue with a longitudinal design. Future research can also include demographics and cultural differences as moderator variables in their models to understand fake news sharing behavior better. The R^2 value for the current model is 0.144; such values are acceptable in general and consumer behavior models (Hair *et al.*, 2017). However, we also endorse Talwar *et al.*'s (2019) recommendations that future research on fake news sharing behavior should also examine asymmetrical relationships by considering other methods such as fuzzy set qualitative analysis. Apart from this, certain future research efforts can further enrich our understanding of fake news sharing behavior. First, the current results indicate that AK is positively related to INT. Future studies can introduce confirmation bias as a moderator in this relationship. Jonas *et al.* (2001) have pointed out that information received is strongly influenced by "confirmation bias" (Moravec *et al.*, 2019). In social media users, this bias can stem from their loyalty to a group, political party, persons or brands. This can further be explored in detail by using the dissonance theory of selective exposure to information (Festinger, 1957; Frey, 1986), as scholarship has reported that an increased commitment to a position leads to higher confirmation bias (Jonas *et al.*, 2001). Second, Vafeiadis *et al.* (2019) reported that social networking companies are taking steps to curb fake news on their platforms by applying different responsive strategies. Future studies can examine the impact of the efforts of social media platforms to curb fake news on user satisfaction and user retention, as 40% of users have started to delete their social media accounts in 2017 as they have lost trust because of the presence of fake news on these platforms (Ries *et al.*, 2018). Third, social media fatigue can be added to this model to expand its explanatory power further. It has been reported by Talwar *et al.* (2019) that social media fatigue is negatively related to authenticating news before sharing online. Finally, the role of the dark tetrad variables needs to be investigated further with regard to fake news sharing on social media. Variables such as social media addiction, psychopathy, narcissism and Machiavellianism, as studied by Chung *et al.* (2019), can also be added to our model in future research endeavors.

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Appendix 1. R script used

```
library(plspm)

#load the datafile
mydata<-read.csv(file.choose(), header = T)

#descrptive statistics for each item and group
summary(mydata)

# rows of the path matrix
attitude = c(0,0,0,0,0,0,0)
awareness.knowledge = c(0,0,0,0,0,0,0)
subjective.norms = c(0,0,0,0,0,0,0)
pcb = c(0,0,0,0,0,0,0)
sadism = c(0,0,0,0,0,0,0)
fomo = c(0,0,0,0,0,0,0)
intentions = c(1,1,1,1,1,1,0)

barrier = rbind(attitude,awareness.knowledge, subjective.norms,pcb, sadism, fomo, intentions)


# add column names
barrier
colnames(barrier) <- c("attitude","awareness.knowledge","subjective.norms","pcb","sadism","fomo", "intenti
ons")
blocks = list(1:3, 4:8, 9:10, 11:13, 14:16, 17:18, 19:21)
modes = c("A", "A", "A", "A", "A", "A", "A")

#analyze PLS model
modelpls =  plspm(mydata, barrier, blocks, modes = modes)
summary(modelpls)

#bootstrap validation
modelpls1 = plspm(mydata, barrier, blocks, modes = modes, boot.val = TRUE, br = 5000)
summary(modelpls1,  what = "loadings")

#stepwise regression for controlling for demophic variables
demomodel<-lm(mydata$INT~ factor(mydata$gender1)+ factor(mydata$age)+ factor(mydata$education)+ factor(myd
ata$occupation)+factor(mydata$income))
summary(demomodel)


model2<-lm(mydata$INT~ factor(mydata$gender1)+ factor(mydata$age)+ factor(mydata$education)+ factor(mydata
$occupation)+factor(mydata$income)+ mydata$AT+mydata$AW+mydata$SN+mydata$PBC+mydata$SAD+mydata$FOMO)
summary(model2)


anova(demomodel,model2)

#multigroup analysis for gender variable
plspm.groups(modelpls, mydata$gender1, Y = NULL, method = "bootstrap",reps = 5000)
```

Appendix 2. Survey questionnaire

Dear Sir/ Madam, **S.No:**

My name is Vartica Pundir. I am a research scholar from Department of Business Management, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University, Srinagar, India under . Dr. Elangbam Binodini Devi. I seek your cooperation in connection with my research work, which in turn will help fight fake news. Your frank and sincere reply will help us in understanding the topic in detail. **Participation is voluntary and individual anonymity is completely guaranteed**, no one other than me (researcher) will ever see any of your individual responses. If you need any more information about this research, please send an email to the addresses given below.

Thanking you in anticipation!
Contact for further details at: vartikagaur86@gmail.com

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

- All questions are of multiple-choice type.
- Sections A, B,C,D contain rating questions. Please rate these statements according to your level of disagreement or agreement with them. The rating is done as 1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE, 2 = DISAGREE, 3 = UNDECIDED, 4 = AGREE, 5 = STRONGLY AGREE.
- Section E requires you to provide your demographic details such as gender, age etc. Please choose an appropriate category mentioned under the heads.
- Please fill out the survey questionnaire completely. Do not leave any question unanswered.
- Do not mention your contact details (name, phone number, email) anywhere in the questionnaire.
- Avoid cutting or over writing when choosing an appropriate response.

Section A

1. I am aware of the term 'fake news'.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I am aware that we can check suspicious news through trusted sources (like BBC, Govt. Sites) before sharing.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I am aware of tips to spot fake news.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. I know what the "blue" tick mark or "verified" tick on a news source means.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. I understand the consequences of sharing non-verified news.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

(*continued*)

Section B

1. Verifying, before believing news on social networking sites is a (1=bad, 5=excellent) idea.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I have a (1=unfavorable, 5= favorable) attitude towards verifying news before sharing information) on social networking sites.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I think verification before sharing information on social networking sites is (1= not at all beneficial, 5= beneficial) to others.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. Most people who are important to me think I should readily share news on social networking sites.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. Most people who are important to me are readily sharing news on social networking sites.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. I believe I can contribute towards the fight against fake news.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

7. I am confident that efforts (fact-checking and reporting suspicious posts) at my level contribute a lot to solving the problem of fake news on social media.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. My efforts have no impact on the problem of fake news.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Section C

1. I use social media sites to amuse myself.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I feel awful when I encounter something bad on social networking sites.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I share posts/ comments just to have fun with others.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

(*continued*)

4. I fear if my friends are enjoying more rewarding experiences in sharing news on social networking sites than me.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. I fear others getting much more gratifying experiences (likes, comments, subscribers) using social media than me.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Section D

1. In the future, I intend to check news through fact-checking sites before sharing on social networking sites.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. In the future, I intend to follow all tips to spot and report fake news on social networking sites.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I do not intend to browse external links to confirm news before sharing.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Section E

- Your gender: **Male** ☐ **Female** ☐
- Age group you belong to (Please tick)

18-30 years	
31-40	
41-50	
51-60	
60 and above	

- Your Educational Qualifications (Please tick)

Intermediate (10+2)	
Graduate	
Post Graduate	
Doctorate	

- Your annual family income (Please tick)

Below Rs. 200000	
200000-500000	
500000-1000000	
1000000 and above	

- Your occupational sector (Please tick)

Job/ Service Professional	
Self Employed	
Student	
Any other (please specify)	

----------------------Thank you for your kind cooperation----------------------

SHIV SHAKTI

International Journal in Multidisciplinary and Academic Research (SSIJMAR)

Vol. 6, No. 5, October 2017 (ISSN 2278 – 5973)

EXIM Policy 2015-2020: India New Foreign Trade Policy

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Abstract

India's Export and Import Policy is also termed as Foreign Trade Policy. This policy of Government of India intentionally directed to upgrade export potential, encouraging export oriented business & converting BOP into facilitated position. The foreign trade policy of nation is framed and introduced by the Central Government to strengthen the volume of foreign trade, specifically the export portion of global trade. Projects such as Make in India and Digital India will incorporate the new Export and Import Policy.

The present paper highlights the emphasized initiatives and schemes for making India a great participant in global trade by the year 2020. The new EXIM policy export obligations by 25 percent. Criteria to recognize status holder for the operation of export are also focused.

Key words: 2020, EXIM policy, Indian Government & export potential.

OPPORTUNITIES OF TOURISM SECTOR IN MANIPUR

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ABSTRACT

Tourism sector can become a major source for creation of employment opportunities and the development of remote areas. It will be a great aid in the uplift of economy of the state. Tourism sector of Manipur can turn into a strong point of the state through joint efforts of the government and private sector. The major tourist destinations need major concentration. Above this the capital city of Manipur must be well constructed and maintained. Roads are not comfortable for tourists, but with sincere efforts the state can enhance the tourism sector. The state can turn into a famous tourist spot as many places of the state are needed to be developed which will be quite demandable for the view. History is the evidence that Manipur can be one of the tourist spots of the country. Whenever Japanese come in Manipur they obviously visit Maibamlokpaching, Nambol, Bishnupur District in remembrance of their ancestors who lost their lives during Second World War. The state has the market which is run only by mothers i.e. Ima Market located at Imphal city, Manipur.

The present study deals about the future opportunities in tourism sector of Manipur. Tourism spots of the state are also mentioned along with its significance. Sincere efforts are the means for economic development of the state through the growth of tourism sector.

Key words: Manipur, tourist, concentrate and destinations.

INTRODUCTION

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru named Manipur as 'the Jewel of India'. The valley is surrounded by nine hills with abundant flora and fauna. Population of the state enjoyed large number of vegetables found in the hills; it is not bored to have vegetables in whole week. The state is having significant number of flowers, hills, vegetables, animals, birds and many more. Lady St.Clair Grimwood who wrote 'My Three Years in Manipur' depicted the state as 'A pretty place more beautiful than many snow places of the world'. Adventure tourism aided in the economic development of local people living in rural and remote communities located in India. Economic development can be noticed in Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim, North East India etc. It brought sustainable development, socio-economic and cultural development in the region.

MANIPUR AS THE SPOT OF TOURISM

Manipur can become a great spot of tourists with her rich cultural and religious heritage and also large number of forest, flowers, hills and moderate climate. Tourism sector can bring well maintained environment, development of remote areas, women and other disadvantaged groups & also generation of employment opportunities. The sector aids and will be a great assister in the economy of the state. The tourism sector of Manipur was given an industry status in January 1987. After this the state government is taking keen interest in the development of tourism spots in the state. The state government could find the advantages from tourism sector for long period of time. 67% of the geographical area of Manipur are hills with full of green forests. About 500 families of orchids are raised in Manipur; 472 varieties have been

Shodhaytan - Rabindranath Tagore University Journal Vol. V/Issue X December 2018 ISSN : 2349-4190

India's Experience with Carbon Financing: Issues and Concerns

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ABSTRACT

India is one of the highly affected economies by the climate changes in the recent past. Continuously rising temperatures, deteriorating weather conditions, unexpected floods, storms and other unfavourable environmental situations are result of changing climatic atmosphere. Carbon emission is among the most important reasons for the climate change. Thus low carbon emitting activities have become the dire need of the day. Although RBI mandated the banks to devote some loans for financing green or eco- friendly projects as priority lending, banks normally take a back step taking much interest in these projects due to the credit risk, reputational risk and legal risks associated with these projects. On the other hand there has been a lukewarm response towards the low carbon infrastructure, as there are limited options available to finance the projects leading to low carbon emission. In this context, the present study is an attempt to discuss the issue of climate change and the role of Indian Financial Institutions in carbon financing. The study also discusses the barriers in financing the low carbon emitting projects. The study also suggests the need for more carbon linked financial products are needed to float in the existing financial system so as to create more investible opportunities for the investors. It concludes by calling for a separate regulatory framework to finance green projects and the need for the existing financial institutions must be moulded in such a way, so as to create a separate department relating to climate change and related developments, in the existing structure. These efforts could go a long way in developing a low carbon emission economic model to take the planet and in general and India in particular towards the sustainable and eco -friendly economy.

Keywords: Carbon Financing, LCI, LCE, GHGs, LCT.

I INTRODUCTION

Finance is defined as the provision of money as and when required and financing is defined as to find out the sources of finance. In case of business organizations, one needs to find sources of finance and explore ways to invest it in profitable ventures. In the similar fashion, one needs to explore the means of funding the environmental friendly projects in order to promote sustainable and eco- friendly growth. It is in this context the widely debated and discussed term, "carbon financing" comes to the fore front. It is branch of environmental finance which says that we all are living in a carbon constrained world where the greenhouse gases carry a price. In other words, we need to pay for the emission of greenhouse gases in general and carbon dioxide in particular. As a result of more than 150 years of industrial activities, the globe is becoming warmer and there is an alarmingly high level of GHGs (Green House Gases) in the environment. This had caused a drastic change in the climate and threatened to disrupt the weakest economies as they lack the resources to cope up with the climate change. Not only the developing countries but also the developed nations will be hit by the disaster if the situation of climate change persists. It will lead to the low productivity, loss of endangered species, occurrence of incurable diseases, displacement of millions of people in low lying areas etc. Moreover it also rises the sea level by one meter by the next century which may cause the displacement of the land area near sea and the existence of small islands are also under threat. Thus climate change is a serious and urgent issue that need attention and thus calls for environmentally supportive businesses that directly promote the environmental responsibility. This in turn requires the huge funding and some tax reduction in the similar projects.

An eco friendly economy can be developed through investment in renewable energy projects like non-polluting transport facility; waste reduction programme; Natural resource management, projects including recycling waste etc. For investing in LCI[1](Low Carbon Infrastructure) would require a huge amount of funds but the funding agencies are not properly regularized and public and private sector contribution is not encouraging on this front. Hence the financing requirement of Green Projects should be done by issuing green bonds and charging green cess (Purkyayastha, Gulati and Subramanian). The State Bank of India has created a Green Bond Framework in which the green bonds are issued and the proceeds from such bonds are invested in green projects only. An incremental capital of about 600-750 billion euro would be needed as accost on emerging technologies for investing in energy efficient technology projects between 2010-2030 (McKinsey & Company Report 2009). The state government of Maharashtra in collaboration with The Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) has financially promoted the bagasse based co-generation power projects. The fund is providing support in the form of project development, project management and power distribution (Maharashtra Energy Development Agency 2010). Karnataka State has started levying Green Energy Cess on commercial and industrial consumers. The part of which will be spent on financing renewable energy projects and rest will be utilized for creating Energy Conservation Fund (Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Ltd. 2010). A green project financing development system is needed in China. China is

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– Mahendra Babu Kuruva*
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PIMT Journal of Research
Volume-13, No.-1, (B) (October-December) 2020
PP: 112-115

UGC Care Listed Journal
ISSN No: 2278-7925

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BRAND PERSONALITY AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS ON FORD BRAND IN INDIA

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Vol. XIV & Issue No.01 January - 2021
INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING JOURNAL

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Abstract

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***Keywords:* Brand personality, Aaker, Brand personality scale, Ford, India.**

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last two and a half decades, the Indian economy witnessed a phenomenal shift in the nature and functioning of markets in India, thanks to the neo-liberal economic policies that India adapted during the late 90s. As a result, monopolistic markets gave way to competition, eventually leaving the customers with plenty of choices. In this process, a trend has gained momentum, where products and brands were humanized and given characteristics and qualities of human beings. As a result of this process, consumers developed a relationship with their brands over a period of time. In fact, the relationship between the consumer's personality and personality of a brand is very much important. Brand personality has a distinctive position in the field of consumer behavior. A Consumer makes purchase for a variety of reasons, ranging from fulfilling basic needs to fulfilling his/her desire for luxury, depending upon their respective ability and willingness to buy. At times they purchase products to maintain or enhance their image and sometimes they do it to fill the gap between ideal self and actual self. Given the diverse nature of reasons for purchase, brands

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2. REVIEW OF STUDIES

There is a vast literature available in the area of brand personality. This section attempts to review some of the important studies related to brand personality, which in turn provides deeper insights and eventually helps to understand

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION: RABINDRABHARATI UNIVERSITY
ISSN : 0972-7175

FINANCIAL INCLUSION: A STUDY WITH RESPECT TO INDIA AFTER DEMONETIZATION

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Dr. Monika Kashyap, Asstt. Professor, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Central University, Srinagar, Uttarakhand.

ABSTRACT:

Financial Inclusion is associate degree organized effort to supply essential monetary services to all or any and particularly to poor folks. The origins of this approach to financial inclusion are often acted to the world organization initiatives, that loosely delineated the most goals of financial inclusion as admittance to a spread of economic services together with savings, money transfer, loan, insurance, remittent and different banking / payment facilities to all or any 'bankable' family and enterprises at a practical value. There is immense scope for expansion of livelihood in rural areas, so it is very important to finance them for livelihood, with this, the economy will also expand, so it becomes very necessary to have quality monetary services for rural areas. This idea has been strapped up by Government of India and run as a result, even when numerous years of independence high population of India remained unbanked. The most reason is majority of population lived in rural areas and that they aren't literate enough to grasp the benefits of economic services. The paper relies on various aspects run by Government and RB as well as its effects on financial inclusion under Demonetization.

KEYWORDS: Demonetization, Financial Inclusion, Initiatives, Impacts.

INTRODUCTION:

The term Financial Inclusion refers to providing financial services to the backward and lower income groups of the society, such as loans, savings, financial transactions, insurance, credit facilities etc. Access to a dealing account may be a start towards broader financial inclusion since it permits folks to save cash, and receive and send money. A dealing account also can function an entry to different monetary services, that is why making certain folks worldwide will have access to a dealing account is that the focus of the globe Bank Group's Universal monetary Access 2020 initiative. As accountholders, folks square measure a lot of probably to use different monetary services, like insurance and credit, to start and enlarge businesses, education or health, manage risk which may improve the general quality of their lifestyle.

A. Objectives:

1. To understand the objectives and need of financial inclusion in India.
2. To highlight the efforts made by the Indian Government that promote financial inclusion.

Indian Journal of Natural Sciences *www.tnsroindia.org.in ©IJONS*

Vol.13 / Issue 73 / August / 2022 *International Bimonthly (Print)* *ISSN: 0976 – 0997*

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Poverty in India: Policy Discourse, Challenges and the Way Ahead

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Received: 04 June 2022 Revised: 22 June 2022 Accepted: 23 July 2022

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ABSTRACT

While India is making new strides in addressing the issues related to poverty and bringing down the poverty figures significantly, it is pertinent to look at another side of the coin. India consists of 30.3 per cent of extremely poor children living across the world, and it is second only to sub-Saharan Africa in how many poor children live in the country, states a joint report released by UNICEF and International Labour Organization (ILO). Moreover despite a huge fall, still there is considerable level of population in India in poor conditions. This indicates the existence of poverty in a different format and reminds us of the stark reality that the challenges still remain on the front of fighting poverty and what is more worrisome is that they are becoming chronic as the time passes. It is in this context it is pertinent to understand the policy discourse on poverty, in order to look forward by looking back. This gives a deeper understanding into the challenges that are confronting the policy makers in tackling poverty and helps find solutions to them. It is in this backdrop, the present study attempts to realize the modest

Asian Research Consortium

Asian Journal of Research in Banking and Finance

Asian Journal of Research in Banking and Finance
Vol. 7, No. 9, September 2017, pp. 133-149.

ISSN 2249-7323
A Journal Indexed in Indian Citation Index
DOI NUMBER: *10.5958/2249-7323.2017.00111.0*
UGC APPROVED JOURNAL

www.aijsh.com

Determinants of Banking Sector Development in India: ARDL Bound Testing Approach

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Abstract

This study explores a wide range of macroeconomic policy variables in order to evaluate their relevance as determinants of banking sector development in India during 1980-2013. Two econometric techniques- Principal Component Analysis to construct financial liberalization index and ARDL bound testing approach to evaluate the determinants of banking development have been applied. The empirical results of the study indicate that except the GDP growth rate, all other explanatory variables including inflation, real interest rate, financial liberalization and trade

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PIMT Journal of Research
Volume-13, No.-1, (B) (October-December) 2020
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EconomiA 18 (2017) 380–391

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Revisiting the causal nexus between savings and economic growth in India: An empirical analysis

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Received 3 August 2014; accepted 11 May 2017
Available online 20 May 2017

Abstract

This paper attempts to analyze the long run association between savings and growth; and investigates the causality issue in Indian context for the period 1950–51 to 2011–12. Firstly, the study identifies the structural break in the year 1980 by employing Bi-Perron test with unknown time. Further, it examines the association and the direction of causality between savings and real economic activity. The empirical evidence of the study suggests that savings boost the real activity both in the pre and post break period in the long run, while economic growth causes saving in the short run in the pre break period. Thus, the present study brings evidence in favour of the neoclassical exogenous and the post-neoclassical endogenous growth models and suggest that both the incentive-based measures and the productivity-based measures would be useful to generate higher savings and reinforce the acceleration of income and growth.

JEL classification: E21; O4; C22

Keywords: Savings; Economic growth; Structural break

Palavras-chave: Poupança; Ggrowth econômico; Ruptura estrutural

1. Introduction

How to Cite:
Mehra, K., Dogga, S., & Kuruva, M. B. (2022). The state of human capital for Indian states: An empirical evidence from health and education performance. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S7), 2210–2223. https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS7.11843

The state of human capital for Indian states: An empirical evidence from health and education performance

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Abstract---Using composite index method, the present study attempts to construct Human Capital Index (HCI) for Indian states by multiplying the contributions of three major components- survival, health, and education. The study reveals that Kerala, Goa, and Chandigarh occupy the top three ranks. In contrast, the other states, like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh occupied the bottom three positions. The study has key policy implications and calls for a Human Capital centric approach towards economic growth, which will help India build the edifice of its growth story, on the strong foundations of productive human capital.

Keywords---Human Capital Index, Using composite index, Chandigarh occupy.

Introduction

It is believed that a country rich in natural resources grows at a faster rate than a country with scarcity in such resources (Anthes, 2018; OECD, 2011; Wood, 1999). Yet, the empirical evidence indicates that the presence of natural resources is neither necessary nor sufficient condition to achieve a higher and steady economic growth (Gylfason, 2001; Gylfason, Herbertsson, & Zoega, 1999;

Vol. XIV & Issue No. 06 June - 2021

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING JOURNAL

CHALLENGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN RAJASTHAN: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurs have been facing several enduring problems which mostly constitute of Socio-cultural, economic, technical, managerial, and financial difficulties. Women entrepreneurship development can be identified by the motivation amongst women, knowledge and awareness, skill enhancement and training, Decision making and Risk taking abilities.A pilot study is conducted to underline the most crucial variables impacting women entrepreneurs. The objective of the paper is to identify the major challenges and cultural and economic barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in rajasthan that creates a hinderence in the growth and development of Women entrepreneurship. This study identifies that the level of literacy among Rajasthan women entrepreneurs is very low. The study also reveals that a large number of women entrepreneurs lack of awareness of technological upgradation and development and fail to forecast the potential changes in the market trends of their businesses. They are also not much aware of the taxation policies and changes affecting their businesses. The study also found that proper selection of their business location is also one of the major challenges for the women entrepreneurs of Rajasthan.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Education, cultural, Women Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

Employment has been an obvious marvel in the development of new women entrepreneurs. Men or women are equally endowed with psychological and physical abilities along with managerial abilities that are essential for being a successful entrepreneur. Women are certainly not inferior as many of them are ready to undertake the various type of work if opportunities are provided (Singh N. P., 1985). Many reasons prevail for women to work as an entrepreneur. Some tend to get in to earn money while others start their own business for attaining respect and dignity in the society. Business creativities require individuals who are earnest & are constant business visionary. Quality of Business skills and ability is very important for women entrepreneurship through which an entrepreneur improves her reputation.

Women entrepreneurs are facing different difficulties including technical change, socio-culture, monetary, financial, and managerial difficulties. Women entrepreneurship development has gained movement by fitting mindfulness preparing environment and bolster support. It has improved the social-economic status, which could be a prerequisite for women empowerment and growth. In the recent years, women entrepreneurs have started many new businesses and have also been responsible for significantly contributing to employment creation and income generation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Recent studies show that the determinants add up to male & female entrepreneurial development is comparable moderately than distinctive. However, evidences show that women are mostly involved in home-related businesses or women-dominated traditional innate businesses, (Stevenson & Lois, 1986). Women are not as likely as compared to men to run businesses in the high-technology fragment (Logcock & Robinson, 1991; Anna et al., 1999).

The economic construction of previous communalist (or transition) countries varies from nonrendition countries. Economies entrepreneurial activities were limited when they were formulated centrally, where the major emphasis was on economies of scale and novelty and entrepreneurship were not supported by the business culture (Roman, 1990; Mugler, 2000).

In emerging countries, a low rate of a good education is usually known as a big barrier to the entrance into the formal labor market. This urges women to build their businesses as a way farther from unemployment (Minniti and Naudé,2010).Female entrepreneurship is frequently higher in creating a nation than created once (Kelley et al 2013). It is essential to encourage research besides practicing networks across transnational borders (Yadav, V. & Unni, J., 2016). We could infer that the determinants of female entrepreneurship are a very complex structure across countries and these factors very much influence the 'Push' and 'Pull' issues of female entrepreneurship. From the perspective of different cultural frameworks, the findings suggest that the cultural factors and societal perception of female entrepreneurs create a positive environment for female entrepreneurs. Its next process to be the most important factor in enhancing female entrepreneurship across countries. Promoting and extending the part-time or correspondence education for women, work outside the home in addition to family responsibilities, focusing on improving women's capabilities by guiding college and university girls for education in the related fields based on society needs (S,Kumar, 2017).

J. Mountain Res. P-ISSN: 0974-3030, E-ISSN: 2582-5011
Vol. 16(1), (2021), 259-265 DOI: https://doi.org/10.51220/jmr.v16i1.27

Measurement of Marketing Challenges Being Faced By Traditional Textile Manufacturers of Garhwal Region of Uttarakhand

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Received: 02.04.2021; Revised: 19.05.2021; Accepted: 20.06.2021

Abstract: Handloom division under material industry is the second-biggest work producing segment for a significant provincial populace in India after agribusiness. It gives direct work to a significant populace occupied with weaving and partnered exercises. Extraordinary plans and artfulness is the claim to fame of Indian handloom industry alongside the masterfulness of weavers, it additionally exhibits the wealth and assorted variety of the country. Handlooms contribute a significant part in sends out too. The area has a bit of leeway of being less capital escalated, insignificant utilization of intensity which makes it eco-accommodating, adaptability of little production, receptiveness to advancements and versatility to showcase necessities. Some significant handloom export Indian centres are Varanasi, Panipat and Kannur some more places which involved in the handloom items like Bed clothing material, Table material, Linen, Kitchen material, Flooring material, weaved materials, curtains and so forth are delivered for export markets. Present research paper has measured the marketing challenges which are faced by the traditional textile manufacturers of Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. On the basis of research findings various suggestions and recommendations are made to manufacturers, state Government and other associated stakeholders.

Keyword: Textile Industry • Tribal Community • Marketing Challenges • Garhwal Region

Introduction

It is a characteristic creative resource and convention at cottage level, which has supported and developed by move of ability from one age to other. Inferable from the sloppy idea of the part there are a few issues that the weavers face which have aggravated in the ongoing occasions. This has prompted conclusion of numerous handloom units and hence has brought about gigantic joblessness. In this current scenario, the organizations are facing various challenges. All these issues are challenged by local vendors, national and international marketers (Bhagwati & Jagdish, 2004). The major challenges are generation of solid leads which is considered pivotal for marketing success (Kotler, 2003). Another challenge is Information overload. Subsequently inadequate use of tools and technology is also a challenge for all (Singh et al., 2018). Other significant challenge are overwhelming flow of data from various external sources (Meredith & Robyn, 2007) and securing Enough Resources. The progressions positively influencing (or harassing) the both assistance and assembling industry are no mystery. The business faces broad-based globalization of its business, deregulation of ventures and markets, privatization of state-claimed resources, and progressive mechanical advances (as depicted in the former article). Those progressions are influencing the business in manners that are just currently getting evident. In the upcoming decade, marketing is confronted with some irresistible complications, changes are all over the place (Dharmaraju, 2006). New categories are evolving and settling at a speedy rate. Communication is progressively divided and heavily influenced by the crowd instead of the brand. In this swift

Sambodhi
(UGC Care Journal)

ISSN: 2249-6661
Vol-44 No.-01(III) : 2021

PREFERENCE AND BEHAVIOURAL ASPECTS OF MUTUAL FUND INVESTORS

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ABSTRACT

This research contributes to the literature by examining the several factors, which influence on stockholders to invest in mutual funds& it also contributes in investigating the mediating role of investors' perception. To meet the objectives of the study, both secondary and primary data were extensively used the mutual fund sector is unable to convert the household savings into investments by attracting them towards the investment in mutual funds. On the other hand, it is also found that female investors ratio is very less in the state, which need to redressed. On the other hand, it is found that a maximum percentage of investors have faith only government-based funds the study found that despite a large scope for mutual fund industry to flourish in Uttarakhand, there still exits barriers like lack of knowledge of capital market and equity on the part of investors

Key Words: Mutual Funds, Investor, Behavioural aspects, capital market

INTRODUCTION

In the current scenario 2020 mutual fund is fast growing and high return given to the investor. Mutual fund the Indian context had seen ups and downs and it I bouncing back ,after viewing wealth corrosion for nearly three years. The year 2019 has been a revival year for equity mutual fund investors of India. Mutual fund plays important role in mobilizing household savings. Small investors of Uttarakhand State in India are typically uncertain and unaware about timing and merits of capitalizing in mutual funds. Given this backdrop, there is a need to time to examine & re-examine the philosophy of the mutual fund industry in the context of the Uttarakhand, India.

Need of Study

This study insight also gives scope to work on investors of different age groups and their defiance toward mutual fund. It will help to get solutions of various problems likepreference, investment return and tax saving, which depress mutual fund investment. All these factors gave a lead to conduct the study to throw light on the mutual fund investment scenario.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Unit Trust of India (UTI) introduced the concept of mutual fund in the country. The first scheme launched by UTI was 1964 which was not even heard of till the early half of 1990s in the rural areas during the 1970 and 80s "mutual fund has been studied in great detail. Most of these studies have been concerned with measuring mutual fund performance with management ability of time the market." Treynor&Mazuy (1996), Jensen (1968).Kon& Jen (1979) Henriksson and Metron (1981), Chanf&Lewellen (1984), and Jagnnaththan&Korajczyk (1986), to name a Fabbozzi and Francis (1979).

Alexander and Stover (1980) and MilterGressis (1980) also have made attempts to find whether the portfolio managers might, however, achieve differential return performance by engaging in successful marketing- timing activities as well as careful, micro security selection effort. These studies have generally concluded that mutual fund managers cannot consistently time the market or select under-priced securities. This has led to the conclusion that ling -term individual mutual fund performance can best be described as random.

Mutual fund investment in India, Including management and working of different scheme has been reviewed by earlier writers like Khan(2001), JatanaBosire (2007) a host of writers in their books and articles published from time to time, however these studies have still to cover the changes which are taking place in the industry vis-is the potentiality of mutual fund investment in

Vol. XIV & Issue No.01 January - 2021
INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING JOURNAL

BRAND PERSONALITY OF FORD IN INDIA: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Brand personality is an important variable, whose understanding could be useful in gauging consumer behaviour towards a particular product. This, in turn, helps the marketers in chalking the marketing plans. However, little attention is paid on the issue of how different brand elements, attributes or factors play a role in shaping consumers' perception about a brand's personality. In this backdrop, the present study aims at identifying the brand personality of 'Ford' brand in India, using Jennifer Aaker's scale of brand personality. The study is divided into three sections, with the first section dealing with review of studies related to brand personality. While the second section lays down the objective and discusses the methodology of the study, the third section is devoted to data analysis and discussion on results, from which a logical conclusion would be drawn. The results of the study suggested that the brand personality of Ford in India is 'trustworthy' and 'explorer' and these are the two factors that are contributing to the purchase intention of ford customers in India. It is also found that traits like masculine, western, feminine and spirited are not applicable for this study in the Indian context.

Keywords: Brand personality, Aaker, Brand personality scale, Ford, India.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last two and a half decades, the Indian economy witnessed a phenomenal shift in the nature and functioning of markets in India, thanks to the neo-liberal economic policies that India adapted during the late 90s. As a result, monopolistic markets gave way to competition, eventually leaving the customers with plenty of choices. In this process, a trend has gained momentum, where products and brands were humanized and given characteristics and qualities of human beings. As a result of this process, consumers developed a relationship with their brands over a period of time. In fact, the relationship between the consumer's personality and personality of a brand is very much important. Brand personality has a distinctive position in the field of consumer behavior. A Consumer makes purchase for a variety of reasons, ranging from fulfilling basic needs to fulfilling his/her desire for luxury, depending upon their respective ability and willingness to buy. At times they purchase products to maintain or enhance their image and sometimes they do it to fill the gap between ideal self and actual self. Given the diverse nature of reasons for purchase, brands are not only trying to become different from their competitors but also are trying to become the medium for the differentiation to consumers. It is this differentiation that drives the consumers to choose a specific brand over another. Crucial to this decision to purchase, is the image of respective brand in consumer's mind i.e., the brand personality. Marketers cannot afford to neglect this fact while chalking out their marketing plans. In fact, brand personality has its own importance in marketing. It also ensures brand loyalty, forms favorable attitudes towards the brand and helps to enlarge brand equity. When brands offer specific or special benefits to customers, they will be consumed by them and they develop a special association with the brand. A person's personality plays a significant role while selecting a product for his/her personal use, which makes the study of brand personality very crucial.

However, very little attention is paid to the issues such as the role different brand elements, attributes or factors in shaping consumers' perception about a brand's personality. In this backdrop, the present study aims at identifying the brand personality of 'Ford' brand in India. It applies Jennifer Aaker's Brand Personality Scale. The study is divided into three sections, with the first section dealing with review of studies related to brand personality. While the second section lays down the objective and discusses the methodology of the study, the third section is devoted to data analysis and discussion on results, from which a logical conclusion would be drawn.

2. REVIEW OF STUDIES

There is a vast literature available in the area of brand personality. This section attempts to review some of the important studies related to brand personality, which in turn provides deeper insights and eventually helps to understand the nuances of the area. Larger emphasis has been laid upon to understand the Brand personality Scale and its applicability across the countries in various contexts. Narkhede (2017) offers a framework to assess the competitive priorities of business industry. This framework helps to identify order winners for the business industry, key decision areas and other practices for improvements. It is also helpful to measure the role and importance of implications of organizational knowledge in the manufacturing field.

Brand personality can be defined as the "set of human characteristics or traits that consumers attribute to or associate with a brand" (Aaker, 1997). Brands began having personalities when customers started getting attached to them. In general,

PIMT Journal of Research
Volume-13, No-3 (B) (April-June) 2021
PP: 11-15

UGC Care Listed Journal
ISSN No: 2278-7925

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON SUCCESSION PLANNING & PRACTICES IN FAMILY BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT

The present study is based both on primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through a sample survey of owners/founder of small business family-owned firms. Family owned or controlled businesses accounts for a large-scale employment and revenue generation the family business have dual qualities of ownership and policy making, both dominated by people of an emotional kinship group. The main purpose of this study is to throw light upon the process of business succession planning in small family firms. Consequently, this study addresses succession planning among small family-owned businesses. This study suggests that awareness regarding succession planning process and its importance/relevance must be increased in small family-owned firms so that the owners/founder can get the relevant information. This will help them to select the successor/new incumbent who will be suitable enough to run the business

Keywords: • Business System, Succession Planning, small family firms, Family business.

INTRODUCTION

Family business in other words can also be defined as- “any business in which a majority of an ownership or control lies within a family, and in which two or more family members are directly involved. It is a complex, dual system consisting of the family and the business; family members involved in the business are part of a task system and part of a family system (Nancy Bowman-Upton, 1991)”. In simple words, family firms include all enterprises that are owned, managed or influenced by a family or families.

Small family firms are bedrock of the Indian economy, the economy heavily depends on the success of these small family firms. Yet only a small proportion of these firms last into the second generation, in other words we can say that their survival rate is very poor. There are many issues involved in the family businesses which decide the family firm’s fate. One overlooked area in the study of Small Family Firms (SFF) is the continuity issue from one generation to the next in family owned business, i.e Succession Planning.

(Alesh.k &Ondrej .M12018**) “**Succession is one of the most discussed topics in family business research. However, despite the changing professional and family roles of women and the growing number of female CEOs worldwide”Be it the Ambanis of Reliance Industries, the Bajajs of Bajaj Auto, the Nandas of Escorts, or the Modis of Modi Rubber — each family has, in the recent past, faced succession and ownership issues and found them tough to resolve. The battle that was raging between the two Ambani brothers was because of the difference over two issues: ownership and management, of the Reliance group. And both these issues in turn were centered on another: succession.

Succession refers to the transfer of management or control of a business. Ownership succession focuses on who will own the business, when and how will that happen. Management succession focuses on who will run the business. Succession planning can be unsuccessful if these two processes (ownership succession and management succession) are not coordinated or at least both are addressed together.

Succession planning, for many family firms can certainly be a difficult process. Actually, most end up doing it poorly. But, when it is done well, with the right kind of support and planning, it can mean the difference between a comfortable retirement and a struggling retirement, between great family ties and strained family ties. Done very well, it can dramatically improve the finances and subsequent quality of life for all stakeholders in the process. Succession planning is taken to cover the identification of successors.

The major purpose of the research was to show how small family firms have recognized the inherent difficulties of succession planning and adapted it to be of practical value.

MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession refers to the transfer of the management and/or the control of a business. Succession can be: Ownership succession, Management succession. The former focuses on who will own the business, when and how will that happen, whereas the latter focuses on who will run the business, what changes will occur, when will they be accountable for results and how will results be realized.

PIMT Journal of Research
Volume-13, No-3 (B) (April-June) 2021 **UGC Care Listed Journal**
PP: 101-104 ISSN No: 2278-7925

MEASURE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROCESSING AND WORKING MARKETING CHALLENGES BEING FACED BY TRADITIONAL TEXTILE MANUFACTURERS OF GARHWAL REGION OF UTTARAKHAND

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ABSTRACT

The handicraft industry in India plays a very vibrant part in the economic progress of rural people. Moradabad, Jaipur, Garhwal, Jodhpur, Saharanpur, and Narsapur are the major handicraft places in India. Overall, this industry employed more than 1 million people in India. Exporters of Handicrafts from the India have a superiority over competitors' countries like Malaysia, Philippines, China, etc. who mostly occupied by machine, whereas handmade products/items of India are widespread all over the world, courtesy, their unique designs with the talented workmanship. When it comes to the Garhwal region, it has a legendary history in wool. Wool is considered as sacred and people's life revolves around wool. Every year in winter, on the day of closing the "Badrinath shrine kapat" Mana village maidens weave a shawl of woolen called "Beena" and "Kamal" on the same day. The shawl is absorbed in ghee and after wrapping around the Sri Badrinath, the idol. When Kapat has to be re-open after six months two maidens of the village will offer a carpet to Sri Badrinath. Bhotia tribe people practice woollen craft in the entire Chamoli district. Bhotiya people are traditionally a trading community. Present research paper aims to measure relationship between processing and marketing challenges which are faced by the textile manufacturers of Uttarakhand.

Keyword: Textile Industry, working challenges, processing challenges, marketing challenges

INTRODUCTION

The people of this region are dependent on woollen clothing to cope up with very cold climate. Bhotiya tribes started woollen trade with Tibet since ancient period and accepted the industry as an essential part of their livelihood in their villages. For many centuries women of the tribes have been moving the small "pithachan". The Ptdu, thulma, carpets, blanket, chutka, lava, shawl, asan, gudma, and pankhi etc. are crafted very artistically. The bond between the Bhotia and Tibetans were very close for centuries across the mountains. Every Bhotia of the community went through few ceremonies with their Tibetan counterpart enjoining exclusive and permanent trade on both ends, a pledge that they would be mittars (eternal friends) forever. (Chatopadhya-1953) "Gamya" is referred to as the trade agreement between two and was formalized at their ceremony called "search-mulchhu" (gold and silver). The Ceremony was directed by taking water from the Mansarower Lake with powdered gold and silver. Both of the parties drank this water and after taking an oath to be faithful to each other (Chawala, 1996). Bhotias had to travel through distant hills and valleys during trade with Tibet. After many months of travel on these paths, Bhotiyas would reach wholesale markets in Tibet. Probably, this difficult and long journey may be the reason behind Bhotiyas are courageous, hardworking and mountaineer merchant. Hard geographical conditions and limited transportation facilities helped them to maintain a monopoly in this trade, there was no competition in this trade. So they could bring gold, borax, salt, animal skin, wool, mules, sheep and goats from Tibet and India. They carried food grain, rice, cloth oil, jaggery, tobacco, iron, saffron, coarse shawls, pankhis (large woollen shawl), ponies, gudma and different types of jari-buties (medicinal plants) etc. Their trade was traditionally involved bartering system between sellers and buyers. They sold their goods through agents and their trade relation continued from generation to generation. In 1962 China attacked India and after that, the best quality wool has stopped coming from the region. That was a great setback to wool industry of Bhotiya.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Indian fabric producing industry, subsequently, has a substantial occurrence in the Indian economy just like the external global whole fabric producing industry. Its commitment to the Indian economy is showed in rapports of its involvement to the level of manufacturing fabrication, create occupation and increase foreign exchanges for the country (Mohan & Chatterjee 1993). Uchikawa said that India is currently a fast-developing business economy creeping to reach at a large portion of a billion of middle-

Jaiswl R., Medhavi S. (2018), "Human Capital: Is the Balance Sheet Missing Long Term Asset?", *Indian Accounting Review,* Vol 22, No.1, pp.57-66.

Indian Accounting Review
Vol. 22, No. 1, June 2018

Human Capital: Is the Balance Sheet Missing Long Term Asset?

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ABSTRACT

Twenty first century has brought about knowledge revolution in the industries. Human capital is undoubtedly considered as an economic resource, but still there is no consensus on the method of valuation of human capital and so there is a need to cogitate on this issue. An irony of this knowledge economy is that the importance of human capital is being realized, but it is not being reflected in the corporate valuation and balance sheet. In this light, the present paper focuses on multidisciplinary review of human capital and its valuation methods/ models and tries to bring out new theoretical insights and practical implications.

Key words: Human capital; human capital financial valuation, GAAP, financial measurement, HR metrics.

Jaiswal R., Medhavi S. (2020),"PRE & POST LAUNCH EFFECT OF NIFTY 100 ESG INDEX ON 'HUMAN CAPITAL' DISCLOSURES", Shodh Sanchar Bulletin, Vol 10, No. 40, pp.197-204.

ISSN - 2229-3620
APPROVED UGC CARE
SHODH SANCHAR BULLETIN
Vol. 10, Issue 40, October - December, 2020
Page Nos. 197-204
AN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

PRE & POST LAUNCH EFFECT OF NIFTY 100 ESG INDEX ON 'HUMAN CAPITAL' DISCLOSURES

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ABSTRACT

Global Pandemic, unprecedented market volatility and social equality trend like Black lives matter have flashed a light on the diameter of risks corporates are experiencing and this will result in accelerating ESG, socially responsible investing and making them committed to bring diversity & inclusion in their workforce to show euphoria around sustainable business practices.Those having better ESG scores and complaint are expected to capture consequential market share as compared to their non-complaint contestants as it strengthentrustworthiness, reliability and prominencemulti-fold to captivate socially conscious investor due to their sustainability.While India is embarked on the journey of integrating social issues in their ESG investing, time has come when India would witness NIFTY index based on Diversity & Inclusion (D&I)indicator in an attempt to put human capital in the heart ofInvesting. Our study reveals that this is an encouraging start to signify how Indian corporates have been putting tremendous efforts in showcasing their human capital disclosures via Sustainability reports with positive trend being shared on annual basis.

Keywords: *Environmental, social and governance (ESG) Investing;Human Capital (HC); Global Reporting Initiatives (GRI);*

Jaiswal R., Medhavi S. (2020),"LANDSCAPE OF HUMAN CAPITAL DISCLOSURES OF INDIAN CORPORATES THROUGH THE LENS OF SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS",SHODH SARITA, Vol. 7, No. 28, pp.141-148.

ISSN - 2348-2397
APPROVED UGC CARE

SHODH SARITA

SHODH SARITA
Vol. 7, Issue 28, October to December 2020
Page Nos. 141-148

AN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

LANDSCAPE OF HUMAN CAPITAL DISCLOSURES OF INDIAN CORPORATES THROUGH THE LENS OF SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS

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Sanjay Medhavi**

ABSTRACT

Companies have been realizing that their most profitable assets are their employees over technical equipment & technology and act as catalyst in inventing new products. Even, Investors informed decisions are not only getting influenced by multitudinous elements but more dependent on legion of variables broadly Environment, social & Governance (ESG). For investors, Human Capital is an additional lens through which they better understand the company and broad spectrum of risks and opportunities that they face. The objective of this study is to investigate human capital disclosure practices of NIFTY 100 companies based on published sustainability reports for the period of 2017 &2018 available till May 2020. Our longitudinal and cross sectorial study reveals that most of these companies have been increasing their Human Capital reporting in Sustainability reports(SR).

Keywords:*Sustainability reporting(SR); Human Capital(HC); NIFTY 100 index; Global Reporting Initiatives(GRI);*

Jaiswal R.(2021),"ADOPTION OF ALTERNATE LEARNING STRATEGIES IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY",Shodh Sanchar Bulletin, Vol 11, No. 41, pp.187-190.

ISSN - 2229-3620
UGC CARE LISTED JOURNAL
SIV

SHODH SANCHAR
Bulletin

January-March, 2021
Vol. 11, Issue 41
Page Nos. 187-190

AN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

ADOPTION OF ALTERNATE LEARNING STRATEGIES IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY

Rachana Jaiswal*

ABSTRACT

Erudition was one of the Covid-19's first casualties globally. The Indian Education system has not been untouched from the stagnation that world has experienced due to the effects of coronavirus. Although higher education institutions in developed countries have taken advantage of online media to advance their activities, this stagnation is evident in the fact that educational institutions in developing countries are increasingly dependent only on classroom-based teaching systems. As temple of learning's were closed overnight, learners and pedagogue were forced to adapt to online learning that gave a chance to academicians to rethink how changes can be done in traditional education system and make it effective to reach to more learners. Therefore, the current study is based on Department of Business Management, School of Management, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal (A Central) University to get a sense on how they equipped and adopted alternate learning strategies by expanding remote delivery & online learning, strategies for marking and graduation and providing additional support to future leaders.

Keywords: *Online learning, Student Satisfaction, Covid19, Opportunities and threats analysis*