



COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF TOURISM IMPACT: A CASE STUDY OF RURAL DESTINATION

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Abstract

Tourism in current situation has risen as an instrument of development with the capacity to drive comprehensive economical advancement. The significance of this industry has been acknowledged by the developing countries and numerous Governments have begun concentrating on the advancement of tourism base in their domains. Tourism is additionally known for its multiplier impact and UNWTO gauges that 1 among 11 occupations on the planet has been made by tourism and its associated commercial enterprises. The reason for this study is to recognize the perception of local community towards impacts of tourism in rural tourism destinations. It has been watched that level of effects modifies the level of improvement, socio-social conduct, environment of the neighborhood, perspectives and atmosphere of the traveler destination. A questionnaire designed in bilingual languages (Hindi & English) has been used to measure the tourism impacts. The Questionnaire is divided into four main parts, measuring economical, socio-cultural, environmental and other factors. Surinsar, the destination in the study is primarily famous for natural tourism resources like lake and other cultural festival of the area. Results of the study demonstrate that tourism impacts affects Surinsar destination, however some negative effects as far as contamination and over-crowdedness have likewise approached. The concentrate additionally recommends recovery or production of adjacent and new vacation spots to keep up appropriate parity of tourism effects on the destination. Local community ought to be given significance, with the goal that they can likewise contribute in the support of the destination.

Key Words: *Tourism Impacts, Rural Tourism, Community Participation, Local Residents.*

1.0 Introduction

Tourism is a standout amongst the most lucrative commercial ventures and on account of the numerous immediate and circuitous advantages of tourism; numerous legislatures are concentrating on the improvement of this industry in their locale. In the meantime one can't disregard its negative impacts on the local community. (Butler, 1980; Dietvorst, 1990). To minimize the negative impacts there is emergence of various forms of tourism such as sustainable, eco tourism, rural tourism and community based tourism. Community based tourism is getting more importance in today's world because of its contribution and emphasis on community development and community sustenance To minimize the negative effects there is rise of different types of tourism, for example, green, eco tourism, rustic tourism and community based tourism. Community based tourism is getting more significance in today's reality on account of its commitment and accentuation on group advancement and group sustenance. According to Responsible Tourism Website, community based tourism "is in which local residents (often rural, poor and economically marginalized) invite tourists to visit their communities with the provision of overnight accommodation." (Responsibletravel.com, 2013).

Community based tourism rose to interlink nearby groups and tourism administration to conquer the negative effects of tourism and expansion the positive effects by expanding group conveying limits. (Murphay, 1985). Local residents get influenced by the tourism advancement in various spaces like: social, monetary, social, and ecological both in positive and negative ways (Lee, 2013). For an effective tourism there ought to be win-win circumstance amongst traveller and host. To accomplish this neighbourhood community ought to be included from the wanting to arrangement making and to the improvement of tourism. Nearby group's association in tourism advancement will rely on how they see it. A number of studies have studied the perceived impacts of tourism development by the local community (Pizam,1978; Rothman, 1978; Thomason, Crompton, & Kamp, 1979; Liu and Var, 1986; Long et al., 1990;Perdue et al., 1990; Ap, 1992; Getz, 1994; Lankford, 1994;Lankford and Howard, 1994; McCool and Martin, 1994; Akis et al., 1996; Hernandez et al., 1996; Jurowski et al., 1997;Chen, 2000; Gursoy et al., 2002; McGehee and Andereck,2004; Andereck et al., 2005).

Numerous individuals see tourism decidedly as it aides in occupation creation, base advancement and enhanced personal satisfaction (Saveriades, 2000; Mitchell and Reid, 2001; Andriotis, 2002). Many people also perceives tourism in negative aspect such as environmental degradation, noise, traffic, loss of cultural authenticity, demonstrative effect (Cañizares, Tabales & Garcia, 2014; Liu et al., 1987; Perdue et al., 1990; Chen, 2000). The involvement of local people will depend upon how they weigh the impacts. If they perceive more benefits than cost they will support the development otherwise they will withdraw their support. (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Stylidis et.al, 2014; Lee, 2012; Abdollahzadeh & Sharifzadeh, 2012). This phenomenon is explained by different scholars by different theories like social representation, social identity, social exchange, reasoned action etc. In this paper we will consider social exchange theory as our basis of study. The purpose of this study is to investigate resident's perception on the impact of the tourism development on different domains like: socio-



cultural, economic, environmental, infrastructure and others. Though a lot of studies have been done to know the positive and negative impacts of tourism by evaluating the predetermined parameters that are based on the experts opinion but very few studies have evaluated resident's point of view (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005). The study is different from other studies in recent years as it is conducted in small village Surinsar (J&K) of developing country. This place has potential to become popular tourist destination because of its rich tourism resources.

2.0 Review of Literature

Verifiably or expressly, the dominating hypothetical base for some studies has been social exchange theory. As portrayed by Ap, this is "a general sociological hypothesis worried with comprehension the trading of assets amongst people and gatherings in a cooperation circumstance" (Bestard & Nadal, 2007; Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003; Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004). Individuals participate in a connection procedure where they look for something of worth, be it material, social, or mental. People take part in a trade once they have judged the prizes and the expenses of such a trade. Impression of the trade can be differential in that a person who sees a constructive result will assess the trade differently than a person who sees it adversely (Gursoy, Jurowski and Uysal 2002). If the perceived benefits (positive impacts of tourism) are more than cost (negative impacts of tourism) than only the exchange will occur (Dyer et al., 2007; Gursoy et al., 2010; Ko & Stewart, 2002; Lee, 2013). Recently, many studies based on social exchange theory have tried to establish a relationship between perceived cost by the community and their involvement in tourism development and perceived benefits and community's involvement in the tourism development.

The results have shown that if community perceives benefits in all the domains they will support tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Kaltenborn, Andersen, Nellemann, Bjerke, & Thrane, 2008; Nicholas et al., 2009) and if they perceives negative impacts they will not support tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2002; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Nicholas et al., 2009; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Exchange occurs in three domains: socio-cultural, Economic and environmental. There is also criticism of social exchange theory by many scholars who further gave the alternatives like social representation, social identity etc. (Ap, 1992; Jurowski et al., 1997; Lindberg and Johnson, 1997; Gursoy et al., 2002; McGehee and Andereck, 2004).

2.1 Tourism Impacts

Community outcomes rising up out of tourism advancement are regularly isolated into three classifications. To start with, monetary, including components, for example, charge income, expanded employments, extra salary, taxation rates, expansion, and nearby government obligation. Second, sociocultural, including components, for example, resurgence of conventional artworks and services, expanded intercultural correspondence and understanding, expanded wrongdoing rates, and changes in customary societies. Third, natural, including components, for example, security of parks and untamed life, swarming, air, water and commotion contamination, untamed life pulverization, vandalism, and litter (Andereck 1995). Tourism cannot be viewed as panacea to all the problems. There are mixed consequences of tourism development. It is generally divided into three categories: economic, socio-cultural and environmental. Work on perceived impacts was first studied in 1960's (Pizam, 1978). Then followed by different scholars in different domains both in positive and negative aspects.

2.2 Economic Impacts of Tourism Development

While many studies over the past several years have demonstrated the positive economic impacts of tourism on host communities, several deal with negative consequences. One of the prime thought processes of the greater part of the creating nations to advance tourism is monetary increases. In any case, as said nothing comes free of expense. So it is additionally trailed by negative effects on both host and vacationer. For the neighbourhood inhabitant the financial advantages are principally as pay era and occupation. It can be straightforwardly similar to lodgings, eateries, transports or by implication like supplying development material, work and so on. Tourism contributes to improve the economy of community (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990), it raises the income level of the local people (Liu & Var, 1986; Milman & Pizam, 1988), it creates the opportunity for new businesses opportunities (Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma, & Carter, 2007; Kwan & McCartney, 2005). Tourism industry has a multiplier effect. At the same time there are also negative impacts of tourism on economy as it may cause inflation, leads to leakage (Telfer & Wall, 2000; Torres, 2003; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008).

2.3 Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism Development

As tourism is a social phenomena, local communities cannot live in isolation. Tourist while travelling comes in contact with the local people and thus results in socio-cultural impacts both positive as well as negative. The social and cultural impacts of tourism are distinguishable, but are often considered together as the 'people' impacts which arise from interactions between residents and visitors. Tourism plays an important role to preserve cultural and social values, it improves pride (Andereck et al., 2005; Stronza & Gordillo, 2008). It also improves quality of life of the residents (Milman & Pizam, 1988; Perdue et al.,



1990), it creates new opportunities (Harrison, 1992), leads to women empowerment (Crompton & Sanderson, 1990), and improves safety and security of local people (Pizam, 1978). Many studies investigate the negative impacts of tourism development (Ap & Crompton, 1998; Pizam, 1978). Tourism leads to prostitution (Liu & Var, 1986; Liu et al., 1987), traffic congestion, crowding (Andereck et al., 2005; Dyer et al., 2007), leads to smuggling (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Milman & Pizam, 1988), increase crime (Andereck et al., 2005).

2.4 Environmental Impacts of Tourism Development

In spite of the fact that tourism is frequently viewed as a spotless industry, in actuality this is not generally the situation. It can bring about huge natural harm since it is regularly created in appealing however delicate situations. What's more, there is the likelihood that neighbourhood advancement strategy gets to be centred around addressing the necessities of sightseers, frequently without respect for the earth. This can be inconvenient to delicate ranges where tourism frequently flourishes. At last, the industry can possibly unwittingly undermine itself by being uncaring to the natural effects it is bringing on. Today individuals are more mindful of their nature and surroundings and they are more worried about ecological corruption. Numerous researchers have examined that occupants give higher inclination to ecological elements than financial variables (e.g. Liu and Var, 1986). Positive effects on environment resemble development of stores, parks, increment in level of mindfulness towards security of regular assets. While negative effects resemble development of more streets, lodgings on the expense of environment, increment in contamination, water, clamor, air which prompts natural corruption. Numerous studies have explored the effect of environment in neighborhood individuals' mentality towards tourism advancement (Carmichael, 2000; Sheldon and Abenoja, 2001; Ko and Stewart, 2002; Jurowski and Gursoy, 2004; Kuvan and Perran, 2005).

3.0 Study Area

Surinsar a rural tourist destination in J&K, India was selected for the purpose of the study. Situated at a separation of 42 km from Jammu city, Surinsar is known for its natural abundance and some legendary significance. Encompassed by thickly lush mountain extents and it is a mainstream excursion spot. The excellence and common wonder of Surinsar Lake can be contrasted and the eminence of Dal Lake and Nagin Lake of Srinagar. Surinsar Lake and Mansar Lake are thought to be twin lakes; Mansar is found 30 km far from it. The Surinsar Mansar Wildlife Sanctuary is settled amidst both the lakes and backings 3 mammalian species and 15 avifauna species including crane. As per Hindu fanciful legends, the beginning of the lake is nearly connected with the incredible warrior of Mahabharat, Arjun. It is said to trust that Arjun shot a bolt into the Mansar and a spring spouted of the earth and now it is known as Surinsar Lake. Being primary destination it is famous in Jammu and surroundings destinations like Mansar and Purmandal are also very popular among the local residents. This place is having a potential to become a popular tourist destination of J&K. The unique quality of this destination is its unique tourism product.

4.0 Research Methodology

In the first phase of the research, a focus group was conducted with the local residents including villagers, shopkeepers and small vendors of Surinsar and responses were recorded. Based on the findings of the focus group, a structured questionnaire was prepared and pilot tested on a sample of twenty local residents of Surinsar. Changes in the questionnaire were made according to the result of pilot study. Two hundred (n=200) in-depth interviews were conducted with different stakeholders including shopkeepers, artists, panchayat members, students, government employees and senior citizens. Snowball sampling method was used because of time and resource constraints. For all constructs measured in the study, a five point Likert scale was used. Questionnaire was prepared in both Hindi and English languages consisting of thirty six items: five for economic impacts, three for social impacts, four for social negative impacts, three for environmental negative impacts, six for infrastructural impacts and remaining for others impacts. The items selected for the current study were used from past studies.

5.0 Data Analysis and Findings

The purpose of this study was to identify the impacts of tourism in rural tourism destinations. It has been observed that level of impacts also alters the level of development, socio-cultural behaviour, environment of the local area, economical aspects and atmosphere of the tourist destination. The descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) related to each of the items measured is presented in Table 1. The findings suggest that expected for Social negative and environmental negative impacts of rural tourism, the mean scores of all the items are high.

Thus the findings of the study indicate that the tourism has more positive impact on Surinsar destination rather than having negative impact. Tourism has created a positive impact on the economic condition of local community by increasing their earnings and by creating new employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for local business. 68% of respondents show that property rates have been increased because of tourism, 61.6% of respondents show that tourism has created new job opportunities for local business and 53.4% of results show that the tourism has increased the income of the local village.



Local residents are getting employment opportunities at various Dhabas, Dharamshalas and Yatri Niwas that have come up at the destination for tourists.

Similarly tourism has created a positive social impact on the local residents. 78% of local residents of surinsar believe that tourism has enhanced the pride of local community.53% of respondents agree that it is because of tourism that their local heritage and monuments are being preserved. They believe that entertainment and recreational facilities in their area which has increased in last few years can be attributed to tourism development. Since a large number of tourists visit during various festivals at surinsar, the local residents feel that tourism leads to overcrowding which also disrupts their daily life. Especially the people who are not associated with tourism directly or indirectly feel this negative social impact.

Local residents believe that tourist do not act responsibly because of which extra garbage is created. They were of the view that adequate waste management and disposal facilities are not created by the administration which leads to dumping of garbage near the lake and the destination resulting in higher perceived negative environmental impact.

Finding also show that 59.4% of respondents agree that advent of tourism has led to improvement in the infrastructure of the area like creation of parks and leisure areas for the local residents and development of public toilets, water supply, primary hospitals and good connecting roads. 76.4% of Local residents view tourism as a great contributor in building quality road network to their area. Because of the tourism development in the region, the public services including water supply and medical facilities have also improved. 76.4% of respondents believe that accessibility of the destination has improved in the last few years as the frequency of public transport has increased. One of the major concern improvement area as perceived by the local residents was the creation of public toilets. 62.8% of them attribute the creation of this facility due to funding under the rural tourism scheme.

Table 1: Perceived Impacts of Rural Tourism

S. No	Construct/Item	Yes	No
1	Do you know that your village is a part of rural tourism development Project.	29.33%	70.67%
2	Do you think that your area is getting promoted by the government and tour operators?	6.66%	93.34%
3	Is there any Govt. approved tourist guide working in your area.	4%	96%
	ECONOMIC IMPACTS	Mean	Std Dev
4	Tourism has increased the income of villagers in our village.	2.67	1.18
5	Tourism has created new jobs in our village.	2.00	1.10
6	Tourism has created new opportunities for local business.	3.08	1.31
7	Tourism increases the prices of goods and services.	2	1.11
8	Property rates have been increased because of tourism.	3.4	1.17
	SOCIAL IMPACTS		
9	Tourism has raised the entertainment and recreational facilities for the villagers.	2.06	0.87
10	Tourism helps in preservation of the historical monuments of your area.	2.62	1.11
11	Tourism enhances pride in your community.	3.90	0.88
12	Tourism disrupts the life of local residents (congestion, traffic).	1.94	1.15
13	Tourism increases delinquent behaviour (crime, thefts, etc.)	1.56	1.07
14	Tourism leads to overcrowding in your destination.	2.70	1.30
15	Tourism has created disruption in local traditions.	1.53	0.86
	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS		
16	Tourism increased deforestation in our destination.	2.10	1.13
17	Tourism has increased environmental pollution and garbage in our area.	3.06	1.16
18	Tourism has raised encroachment in our destination.	1.54	1.05
	INFRASTRUCTURE		
19	Tourism encourages the creation of parks and leisure areas for local residents.	2.31	1.01
20	Tourism improves the public services (health, water supply, etc.).	2.97	1.12
21	You have good connecting roads because of tourism.	3.82	1.24
22	Dhabas, Dharamshala and Yatri Niwas has been created at your destination for tourists.	2.37	0.98
23	Tourism increases public transport in our destination.	3.67	1.07
24	Number of Public Toilets has been raised for tourists.	3.14	0.95
	OTHER IMPACTS		



25	Tourism has improved our standard of living.	2.77	1.13
26	Our area has been promoted due to tourism.	2.75	1.11
27	Is there any NGO is active in your area?	2.31	1.32
28	Tourism officials host meetings with the villagers.	1.74	0.88
29	Tourism officials are interested in hearing our opinions.	1.47	0.80
30	Tourism department provides training to the local residents of our village	1.22	0.45
31	Government officials provide financial incentives to local villagers to start their business in tourism.	1.27	0.45
32	Tourism officials provide opportunities for us to be represented in decision making bodies.	1.43	0.60
33	We are fully aware of the issues related to tourism development in our community	2.59	1.13
34	We know how we can participate in tourism development.	2.37	1.20
35	We know about the likely impacts of tourism.	2.63	1.21
36	Government had taken steps to preserve our traditional dances and art	3.13	1.13
Note: Items measured on 5 point Likert Scale			

The study suggests revival or creation of nearby and new tourist attractions to maintain proper balance of tourism impacts on the destination. Finding shows that 70.6% of local residents believes that they are not involved in the tourism development process and the tourism administration of the region does not listen to their views and opinions. 75.6% of them feel that the government is not providing enough training and resources which will enable the locals to be part of the tourism development process. During the focus group, it was revealed that many youth are keen to get engaged in the tourism sector, but are not receiving any guidance from the government agency.

6.0 Conclusion

Large portions of the consequences of this study fortify past discoveries on dispositions of occupants toward tourism, while others contrast. Unmistakably they welcome the way the business improves the group fabric, yet without reducing expanded negative qualities, for example, swarming, clog, activity, litter, and wrongdoing. Financially, tourism is viewed as positive, as per existing exploration. It is urging to see inhabitants are aware of the numerous ways it can socially, socially, and naturally advantage groups. The study revealed that rural residents were aware of the tourism impacts and understands how tourism can lead to economic, social, environmental and infrastructural impacts. Local people of the Surinsar area perceive tourism as a important factor for the development of the area. They positively favoured the economic impact, social cultural impact and infrastructure development impact of tourism in their area and consider these factors as most important for the overall development of the area. However negative impact of tourism on environment and the social negative impact of the tourism are least favoured by the local community. Despite their limited education and professional understanding of tourism, they were keen to participate in the tourism development process. They were of the view that they should be involved in the destination development planning and implementation. They wanted that their opinion should be considered for the development of the area. Also the youth should be provided adequate training so that they are able to reap the benefits of tourism.

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