Research Paper Tourism

# Residents' Perceptions on Tourism Impact in Yamuna Valley of Garhwal Himalayas

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**ABSTRACT**

The objective of this research paper is to study and analyse the local resident's perceptions on tourism impacts and their attitude towards sustainable tourism development. This paper takes Yamuna Valley region in Garhwal Himalaya as a case and uses questionnaire method to analyze residents' perceptions on tourism economic impacts, socio-cultural impacts and physical impacts. The findings revealed the intention of local residents in promoting tourism. There is a strong wave among the local custodians in supporting these initiatives. Further they are ready to extend possible support provided they are well supported and developed in all forms. In this context, the valley's situation is indicative of synchronised tourism development and planning across the different tourism circuits of the valley; it is imperative that residents be integrated and empowered through participation in planning and decision making processes in order for tourism investment to act as an effective agent of social and economic development.

**KEYWORDS** Residents' perceptions, sustainable tourism, tourism impacts, planning.

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism promotion in the fragile habitat leaves considerable impacts on environment and other dimensions. However, the well integrated tourism plan reduces the negative impacts and enhances the tourism promotion. Impacts do have footprints on all resources and it differs accordingly too. It is the stakeholders who have to balance an array of impacts, that may either improve or negatively affect the resources, community and residents. Different groups are often concerned about different impacts as discussed in the preceding lines with regards to the nature of tourism developments. While discussing about the impacts one has to understand that tourism development may result in many complex complex impacts that tourism industry, community residents and other stakeholders need to work effectively to avert. Planning can help to certain extent to create an expected situation that enhances destination image and community life.

Various tourism impacts could be studied in three dimensions including economic, environmental and socio-cultural. While analyzing the economic impacts, tourism increases employment opportunities, creating additional jobs, improves local economy, contributes to income and standard of living, improves investment, development and infrastructure spending, increases tax revenues, improves public utilities infrastructure, improves transport infrastructure, increases opportunities for shopping besides creating new business opportunities. This economic impacts is not free from negative repercussions including increase in prices of goods and services, increase in prices of land and housing, increase in cost of living, increase in potential for imported labour, seasonal tourism creates high risk, under or unemployment issues, competition for land, jobs may pay low wages and mainly profits may be exported by non-local owners. Tourism can also degrade an environment. Visitors generate waste and pollution (air, water, solid waste, noise and visual). Natural resource attractions can be jeopardized through improper use or overuse. Providing tourist services can alter the landscape's appearance. For instance, visual pollution may occur from billboard proliferation. As tourism develops, demand for land increases, especially for prime locations like beach fronts, special views and mountains. Without forethought, natural landscapes and open spaces can be lost. The destruction or loss of flora and fauna can happen when desirable plants and animals are collected for sale or the land is trampled. Tourists or businesses that cater to them often remove plants, animals, rocks, fossils, corals and historical and cultural artifacts from an area. Uncontrolled visitation or overuse by visitors can degrade landscapes, historic sites and monuments. Where water is scarce, tourists can overwhelm the available supply. Travelers can also inadvertently introduce non indigenous species, as can increases in the trade of animals and plants. A constant stream of visitors and domestic pets may disrupt wildlife by disturbing their breeding cycles and altering natural behaviours.

The social and cultural ramifications of tourism warrant careful consideration, as impacts can either become assets or detriments to communities. Influxes of tourists bring diverse values to the community and influence bahaviours and family life. Individuals and the collective community might try to please tourists or adopt tourists behaviour. Inceased tourism can push a community to adopt a different moral conduct such as improved understanding between sexes (positive) or illicit drug use (negative). Safety and health facilities and staffing tend to increase at the same time safety problems such as crimes and accidents increase.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many_researchers and scholars are finding evidence that tourism planning and development is concerned with the sustainable resource, land use patterns and impacts of tourism and its allied activities to host community together with systematic planning and implementation (Jafari, 1987; Inskeep, 1994; Gunn, 2002; Smith, 2000; Bagri et al., 2003; Batta, 2000; Backman et al., 2001; Parker, 2001; Bagri, 1994; Getz, 1987; Hall, 1999; WTO, 1994).

To quote Gunn and Var (2002) tourist expectation/satisfaction perspectives depend on visitor satisfaction, sustainable resource use and community integration depending upon various regional, destination and site. Tourism, environment and sustainable development is closely interlinked with the provision of infrastructure such as an expansion of transport facilities and better prospects for resource attraction in a particular region (Butler, 1991; Shaw and Williams, 2002; Kaul, 1985 a,b,c). Number of evidences demonstrates that the area of policy, planning and development generally centre around issues related to less developed countries (Britton, 1982; Jen-

kins, 1980; Jenkins and Henry, 1982; Latimer, 1985; Linton, 1987; Negi, 1997; Wells, 1982; Peters, 1980; Lee, 1987; Jenkins, 1991; Culpan, 1987; Winpenny, 1982; Bagri and Gupta, 2001; Reddy et al., 1998; Mathew, 1988) which differ somewhat from that in developed, western societies (Shafi, 1986).

Various tools and approaches appropriate for planning and development are relevant for marketing and promotional aspects of any destination/attraction (Kaczka and Schleusner, 1980; Ritchie, 1985; Sessa, 1998; Syely et al., 1980; Sharpley and Sharpley, 1997; Kruk et al., 2007; Middleton, 1996) at different level (Chow, 1980; Pearce, 1980; Smith, 1987; Godfrey and Clarke, 2000; Edgell, 1983; Heeley, 1981; Rudelius, Pennington and Ross, 1971; Stewart, 1984; Williams, 1982; Negi, 1998; Batta, 2000; Sain, 2004; Kaiser et al., 1978). It is important to note that despite the existence of a number of detailed texts concerned with tourism planning and development in general (Inskeep, 1987; Gunn, 2002; WTO, 1994), the specific issue of rural tourism management has until recently, been overlooked within the tourism literature.

Many tourism studies in the Himalaya have been conducted focusing either on tourism amd environment or on impact of tourism on natural components (Singh, 1989a, b; Singh, 1993; Ram and Kuniyal, 1994; Kuniyal et al., 1995; Batta, 2000; Jreat, 2004; Getz, 1987; Hall, 1999). Kuniyal et al., (2004) pointed out that any tourism activity, if not planned on the basis of adequate geo-ecological data and other scientific knowledge, may instead of contributing to the development of the area cause devastation. He further stated that in order to plan tourism in an environmentally friendly manner, an in-depth knowledge of the dynamics of tourism planning and development is required. Tourism literature also puts a holistic model of tourism development that can be linked with poverty reduction (Ashley and Roe, 2002; Ashley, Boyd and Goodwin, 2001).

Though many research and literature volumes are of immense help to have a clear understanding of impacts of tourism to the host community, there is plenty of room for further research work to be carried out in off-beat destinations of Uttarakhand such as Yamuna valley where more avenues can be created for holistic development and growth of tourism for self reliance of community stakeholders.

**STUDY AREA**

The study area for the study encompasses the different regions from three different districts of Uttarakhand state. The three different regions of the study are Yamuna valley, Har ki dun valley and Tons river valley. Administratively, the entire region of Yamuna valley comprises of three districts of Uttarkashi, Tehri and Dehradun in Uttarakhand Himalaya. This valley right from the high altitude region or the foot hills is inhabited by three distinct ethnic groups belonging to the area of *Ranwain* called *Ranwalta*, *Jaunsar-Bawar* called *Jaunsaris* and Jaunpur called *Jaunpuria* respectively. This is a fertile valley where many towns are located like Hnaumanchatti, Barkot, Naugaon, Kalsi, Dakpathar, Asan Barrage, Yamuna Bridge,Purola, Sankri, Taluka, Seema Gaon etc.

In Yamuna valley region the distribution of the different areas of three different districts are as follows:

1. Dehradun: Asan Barrage, Dakpathar and Kalsi.
2. Tehri Garhwal: Yamuna Bridge and Nainbagh.
3. Uttarkashi: Naugaon, Purola, Barkot, Mori, Naitwar, Sankri, Taluka and Seema Gaon.

The second region among the study area is Tons river valley which comes under Dehradun district. The study will be conducted in and around Tuini village falling under the Tons valley region. The third region comprises of Har ki dun valley that falls in Uttarkashi district.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Keeping in mind the dimensions of the problem covered in the area of the study, following were the objectives of the present study.

1. To assess the attitude and involvement of residents in tourism promotion and development.
2. To review and assess the impact and implications of tourism on local economy, community, culture and environment.

**HYPOTHESIS**

To meet the objectives, the study will further attempt to test the validity of the hypothesis before coming in certain assumptions which will support the framing of various tourism development policies and strategies.

The study was based on the hypothesis that perception of residents' is positive towards the development of the region, community and tourism resources.

**SAMPLING METHOD**

For conducting the study 20 areas were selected for the study from the three different regions, i.e, Yamuna valley region, Har ki dun valley region and Tons river valley region. From the Yamuna valley region, 11 areas were selected. While selecting the sample size from the entire Yamuna valley region , judgement sampling method was utilized. For the study it was kept in priority that major enroute areas that have enough potential in terms of further tourism promotion were selected for the study. In Har ki dun and Tons river valley region the villagers residing at Mori, Naitwar, Sankri, Taluka, Tuini, Hanol, Osla and Seema village were studied.

Among the target groups' stratified and random sampling method was applied to ensure that locals representing all the d.ifferent class, profession, age could be brought in the selected sample and could be studied accordingly.

**SAMPLE SIZE**

For conducting the present study, a total sample of 200 locals (110 from Yamuna valley and 90 from Har ki dun valley and Tons river valley) from the identified areas were selected randomly. The sample size was to an extent influenced by the time and economic constraints experienced by the researcher during the research period. But still it was kept in priority that the samplke selected should be the best representative of the population from which it has been extracted.

**DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

In order to purpose out the aims and objectives envisaged under the study, both primary and secondary data were collected . For collecting the primary data a set of three questionnaire was developed. Apart from primary data the study duly paid emphasis to secondary data and its collection for successful execution of present study. To collect the secondary data for the purpose of the study different sources like library, national and international government publications, research publications, journals, tourism surveys, economic surveys, population census, documentary sources, computerized bibliographies, annual government reports and inter-related websites were accessed and studied. While collecting the data from these sources it was kept into consideration that these sources from which the secondary data was extracted were relevant, reliable, updated and thoroughly authentic.

**DATA INTERPRETATION**

To interpret the data initially all the findings were orderly tabulated and classified for generalization of the study. To analyze the data mainly arithmetic averages were utilized and interpretations were made on the basis of them. To test the hypothesis various tools like t-test, z-test and other tests were utilized. For correct application of the hypothesis testing tools Statistical Package of Social Science Research (SPSS) was thoroughly utilized. Z-test and t-test were utilized especially for studying and correctly interpreting the feedback of the locals and tourist's regarding their perception and motivation levels related to various variables considered for the study. To study the relation between various variables

selected in the study, Chi-square test was utilized.

**Local Residence Perception Towards Tourism Growth and Development**

| | Table 1.1: Accessing the potentiality of the region for tourism development | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | | | No potential | Potential to some extent | Marginal Potential | Moderate Potential | High Potential | Total |
| | 18 to 35 years | Count | 25 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 0 | 65 |
| | | % of Total | 12.5% | 6.5% | 7.0% | 6.5% | 0% | 32.5% |
| | 36 to 50 years | Count | 20 | 39 | 37 | 12 | 0 | 108 |
| | | % of Total | 10.0% | 19.5% | 18.5% | 6.0% | 0% | 54% |
| | Above 50 years | Count | 14 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| | | % of Total | 7.0% | 0% | 6.5% | 0% | 0% | 13.5% |
| Total | | Count | 59 | 52 | 64 | 25 | 0 | 200 |
| % of Total | | | 29.5% | 26.0% | 32.0% | 12.5% | 0% | 100% |
| Chi-Square | | | 33.986 | | | | | |

Table 1.1 exhibits that among 200 respondents, 65 (32.5%) belong to 18-35 years age class. Among this age group, 25 (12.5%) respondents opine that the region has not been able to access the potentiality for sound tourism promotion, 13 (6.5%) respondents feel that the regions tourism potential can be tapped to some extent through better tourism promotion, 14 (7%) respondents excerpts that the potentiality of the region can be marginally accessed for tourism promotion, 13 (6.50%) feels that it can be moderately accessed while none of the respondents opines that the region tourism potential is highly accessed for tourism promotion. 108 (54%) respondents belong to 36-50 years age class and respondents say that there is no potential to access the potentiality of their region for ecotourism promotion. 27 (13.50%) respondents belong to above 50 years age class and among this age group respondents say that they are not potential to access the potentiality of their region for ecotourism promotion.

Here the calculated value of $\chi^2$ for degree of 6 is 33.896 and tabulated value of $\chi^2$ at 5% significance level for degree of freedom 6 is 12.59. Since $\chi^2$ cal is greater than $\chi^2$ tab , hence null hypothesis is rejected. It means two variables i.e. "Age" and "Way of accessing the potentiality of respondents region for ecotourism promotion by the respondents" are independent.

**Table 1.2: Benefits of Tourism Typologies as a tool of self-reliance for different Age Group**

| | | | Lodging and Catering | Guiding and Escorting | Transportation | Trekking/ Hiking | Souvenir selling | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 18 to 35 years | Count | 13 | 12 | 14 | 26 | 0 | 65 |
| | | % of Total | 6.5 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 13.0 | - | 32.5 |
| | 36 to 50 years | Count | 26 | 0 | 24 | 22 | 36 | 108 |
| | | % of Total | 13.0 | - | 12.0 | 11.0 | 18.0 | 54.0 |
| | Above 50 years | Count | 14 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| | | % of Total | 7.0 | - | 6.5 | - | - | 13.5 |
| Total | | Count | 53 | 12 | 51 | 48 | 36 | 200 |
| % of Total | | | 26.5 | 6.0 | 25.5 | 24.0 | 18.0 | 100.0 |
| Chi-square | | | 83.707 | | | | | |

According to the statistics revealed by the Table 1.2, 65 (32.5%) respondents belong to 18-35 years age class and among this age group 13 (7.50%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in lodging and catering sector of ecotourism, 12 (6.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in guiding and escorting sector of ecotourism, 14 (7.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in transportation sector of ecotourism, 26 (13.50%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in trekking and hiking sector of ecotourism and none of the respondents said that they would like to involve himself in self reliance souvenir selling sector of ecotourism. 108 (54.0%) respondents belong to 18-35 years age class and among this age group 26 (13.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in lodging and catering sector of ecotourism, none of the respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in guiding and escorting sector of ecotourism, 24 (12.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in transportation sector of ecotourism, 22 (11.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in trekking and hiking sector of ecotourism and 36 (18.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in souvenir selling sector of ecotourism. 27 (13.50%) respondents belong to above 50 years age class and among this age group 14 (7.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in lodging and catering sector of ecotourism, none of the respondent said that he would like to involve himself for self reliance in guiding and escorting sector of ecotourism, 13 (6.50%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in transportation sector of ecotourism, none of the respondent said that he would like to involve himself for self reliance in trekking and hiking sector of ecotourism and none of the respondent said that he would like to involve himself for self reliance in souvenir selling sector of ecotourism.

Here the calculated value of $\chi^2$ for degree of freedom 8 is 33.896 and tabulated value of $\chi^2$ at 5% significance level for degree of freedom 8 is 15.507. Since $\chi^2_{cal}$ is greater than $\chi^2_{tab}$, hence null hypothesis is rejected. It means the two variables i.e. "Age" and "Sector of ecotourism respondents would like to involve themselves for self reliance" are independent.

**Table 1.3: Benefits of Tourism Typologies as a tool of self-reliance for different Gender Group**

| | | | Lodging and Catering | Guiding and Escorting | Transportation | Trekking/ Hiking | Souvenir selling | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | Count | 26 | 12 | 51 | 48 | 36 | 173 |
| | | % of Total | 13.0 | 6.0 | 25.5 | 24.0 | 18.0 | 86.5 |
| | Female | Count | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| | | % of Total | 13.50 | - | - | - | - | 13.50 |
| | Total | Count | 53 | 12 | 51 | 48 | 36 | 200 |
| | | % of Total | 26.50 | 6.0 | 25.50 | 24.0 | 18.0 | 100.0 |
| Chi-square | 86.574 | | | | | | | |

In table 1.3, it is exhibited that among 200 respondents, 173 (86.5%) respondents are male, out of which 26 (13%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in lodging and catering sector of ecotourism, 12 (6.0%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in guiding and escorting sector of ecotourism, 51 (25.5%) male respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in transportation sector of ecotourism, 48 (24.0%) male respondents said that they would like to involve themselves self reliance in trekking and hiking sector of ecotourism and 36 (18.0%) male respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for

self reliance in souvenir selling sector of ecotourism. Among the identified sample size of 200, 27 (13.5%) respondents are female, out of which all 27 (13.50%) respondents said that they would like to involve themselves for self reliance in lodging and catering sector of ecotourism and none of the female respondent said that she would like to involve herself in guiding/escorting, transportation, trekking/hiking and souvenir selling sector of ecotourism for self reliance.

Here the calculated value of $\chi^2$ for degree of freedom 4 is 86.57 and tabulated value of $\chi^2$ at 5% significance level for degree of freedom 4 is 9.48. Since $\chi^2_{cal}$ is greater than $\chi^2_{tab}$, hence null hypothesis is rejected. It means the two variables i.e. "Gender" and "Sector of ecotourism respondents would like to involve themselves for self reliance" are independent.

**CONCLUSION**

Since tourism businesses depend upon constant promotion and a positive image of tourism, residents are reticent to mention negative or critical issues, since this may adversely impact the image of tourism. During survey it was found that very few critical or negative comments were offered with regards to any aspect of tourism by the local residents. Comments were offered with regard to any aspect of tourism by the local people. Residents need to be educated and trained in order to bridge the gap between perception and satisfaction. Furthermore, since the economic costs and benefits of tourism are distributed unevenly on account of cluster of destinations at one place within the region, some stakeholders are hesitant to expose potential hazards in this regard.

While analyzing the intention of local residents in promoting tourism, there is a strong wave among the local custodians in supporting these initiatives. Further they are ready to extend possible support provided they are well supported and developed in all forms. On further analyzing the situation in the valley, it is revealed that the region is a mixture of different culture which signifies as a base of signifying in tourism promotion and development. Going deeper into the Yamuna Valley, a blend of Himachali and Uttarakhandi culture and tradition could be an added attraction in educating tourists about the culture and tradition of the destination. It is also important, given the apparent value added to the development process in the valley, that the approach developed in the present study accompanies future investment and development initiatives as a way of encouraging multi-stakeholder participation and cooperation. In this context, the valley's situation is indicative of synchronised tourism development and planning across the different tourism circuits of the valley; it is imperative that residents be integrated and empowered through participation in planning and decision making processes in order for tourism investment to act as an effective agent of social and economic development.

In view of this it is evident that tourism alone can bring in prosperity to the region for which there is no dearth of resources and can become a major boom for local residents. Moreover, on account of its multi-beneficiary nature, tourism can ensure holistic development of the region in terms of modernization of infrastructure, increase in per capita income, improvement in health and hygiene conditions, better living standard, promotion of local art and craft, and support to protection and conservation of natural and cultural heritage, in addition to its higher income and employment multipliers. There are few things very essential for smooth and comfortable living of both host and guest. A vague, unclear policy acts as a major deterrent in the effective implementation of plans and the tourism board must avoid creating policies that are fuzzy and should define clear, crisp actionable in order to ahieve goals earmarked for tourism development. However, it is important that such development should benefit residents and that it should protect, rather than damage, the local and regional cultural and natural heritage.

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