

RURAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA

Thesis Submitted to the University of North Bengal for the Degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in Geography at Centre for Himalayan Studies

Submitted by

Sunny Rawat

Under the supervision of

Dr. Maitreyee Choudhury,

Professor, Centre for Himalayan Studies,

University of North Bengal,

February, 2022

CENTRE FOR HIMALAYAN STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

Accredited by NAAC with Grade A



ENLIGHTENMENT TO PERFECTION

P.O. NORTH BENGAL UNIVERSITY
RAJA RAMMOHUNPUR, DT. DARJEELING
WEST BENGAL, INDIA, PIN - 734 013
PHONE: (0353) 2776 360,
FAX: (0353) 2699001, 2581212
www.chsnbu.in

Professor

Ref. No.....

Dated 07.02.2022

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the dissertation entitled “RURAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA” submitted by Shri Sunny Rawat in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of North Bengal has not been published previously, nor submitted for any degree of this University or any other University. He has fulfilled all the requirements of Ph.D regulation of this university for the submission of this dissertation. The paper is a product of the candidate's own investigation. He has completed the work under my guidance and supervision.

Maitreyee Choudhury
07.02.2022

(Maitreyee Choudhury)

Supervisor

Centre for Himalayan Studies

North Bengal University

Professor

Centre for Himalayan Studies
University of North Bengal

Document Information

Analyzed document	Sunny Rawat_Centre for Himalayan Studies pdf (D126734754)
Submitted	2022-02-01T06:31:00.0000000
Submitted by	University of North Bengal
Submitter email	nbupig@nbu.ac.in
Similarity	0%
Analysis address	nbupig_nbu@analysis.arkund.com

Sources included in the report

W	URL: https://naldc.nal.usda.gov/download/7083829/PDF Fetched: 2021-08-01T00:51:37.7770000		2
W	URL: https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/11/2/410/html Fetched: 2019-10-06T23:28:53.3770000		2
W	URL: https://tourismcongress.files.wordpress.com/2019/06/tourism-innovations-vol-9-no-1.pdf Fetched: 2019-10-13T18:15:40.2700000		2
W	URL: http://literatur.thuenen.de/digbib_extern/dnD54583.pdf Fetched: 2020-12-18T06:31:57.8530000		1
W	URL: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342233874_Rural_Tourism_in_India_An_Industry_Assessment Fetched: 2020-07-31T12:03:42.7670000		1
W	URL: https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/24/13684/pdf Fetched: 2022-01-23T17:56:45.8230000		1

Sunny Rawat
07.02.2022

Manoj Kumar Choudhary
07.02.2022

Professor
Centre for Himalayan Studies
University of North Bengal

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled **RURAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA** has been prepared by me under the guidance of **Dr. Maitreyee Choudhury**, Professor of Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

Date:

Sunny Rawat
07.02.2022
Sunny Rawat

Centre for Himalayan Studies
University of North Bengal
Raja Rammohunpur
Dist: Darjeeling
Pin-734013

Forwarded
Maitreyee Choudhury
07.02.2022
Professor
Centre for Himalayan Studies
University of North Bengal

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The present research has been possible by the guidance, prayers and support of many people. I take the opportunity to offer my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of them.

Incipiently, I take the privilege to express my deep and profound sense of gratitude towards my esteemed guide and supervisor Prof. Maitreyee Choudhury, Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling, West Bengal under whose learned and scholarly guidance the present research work has been completed. Her extra ordinary insights and experience in the research space had been an absolute benefit. She has always been a constant source of inspiration and encouragement to me during every step of this research. I am indebted to her beyond words.

I owe a debt of gratitude to each and every member of the faculty of the Centre for Himalayan Studies, Prof. Swatasiddha Sarkar, Prof. Karubaki Dutta, Dr. Ujjwal Bhui, Dr. Binayak Sundas and Mr. Adwitya Thapa for their endeavour support, guidance, inspiration and invaluable contribution at every stage of present work.

I would like to thank Dr. Anuradha Rai, Principal, Southfield College, Darjeeling, for extending all facilities for the completion of the study and for offering good advice at critical points along the way.

No research is possible without the Library, the centre of learning resources. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the library staffs of University of North Bengal and Southfield College, Darjeeling.

I express my sincere gratitude towards Professor Ashish Sarkar, Mr. Bhaskar Chettri, Mr. Ashish Chettri, Mr. Nirmalendu Barman, and Mr. Deepen Pakhrin for their help, support, inspiration and guidance.

My sincere thanks to the Department of Tourism, GTA, Darjeeling, Municipal Office, Darjeeling for readily providing the requisite data and facts on various perspectives.

I would like to extend my special thanks to my parents, who always encouraged me to aim high in life and pursue a higher education, and without whose teachings, sacrifice and struggle, I would never have reached my current position. Without the love and support of my family, this would have been a very hard journey. My love for them is eternal.

All my thanks and appreciation goes out to everyone who helped and supported me and lastly, I would like to thank Almighty God for his blessings in completion of the thesis.

Sunny Rawat

Abstract

Tourism is defined as travel for primarily recreational or leisure purposes to broaden one's knowledge and wisdom. Tourism has become a huge social phenomenon in many countries throughout the world. It is motivated by every human being's intrinsic yearning for new experiences as well as the desire to be both informed and entertained. Tourism's usefulness as a tool for economic growth and job creation, particularly in distant and backward areas, has long been recognized in the global economy. In terms of gross revenue as well as foreign exchange earnings, it is a large service industry globally. Tourism has the potential to grow at a fast rate, resulting in the development of destination infrastructure. It can build on the country's performance in the service sector and provide long-term growth models.

Rural tourism, a growing trend in the tourism industry, has transformed into not only a significant potential opportunity but also a type of recreational activity for city dwellers, transporting them to a calm location away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Rural tourism is a type of nature-based tourism that explores rural life, culture, art, and heritage in rural areas, thereby benefiting socially and economically the local communities. Both 'Rural Development' and 'Sustainable Development' enhance rural tourism. It takes numerous forms because it brings individuals from different cultures, faiths, languages, and lifestyles together and gives them a larger perspective on life. It not only creates jobs for people, but also fosters social, cultural, and educational values, and it is one of the ways that rural communities hope to boost production and profitability.

Rural tourism in the Darjeeling Himalaya is expanding at a faster rate, owing to tourists' strong desire for tranquil and scenic rural settings. Darjeeling's rural tourism also offers natural beauty, a rich culture, and a plethora of biological diversity. The current study looked at how sustainable rural tourism has aided rural development and socio-economic

development in the Darjeeling Himalaya. The **objective** of the present research paper has been to understand the scenario of rural tourism in the Darjeeling Himalaya, to identify the nature and trend of growth of rural tourism in the study area, to investigate the geographical factors determining rural tourism and the resulting benefits in the study area, to investigate the rural tourism's potentials and opportunities in the study area, to analyze the impacts of rural tourism and tourist behaviour in the study area, to analyze the diverse challenges of rural tourism in the study area, and to identify concerns and prospects for future rural tourism study and development in the study area. The study too identified the available tourist attraction facilities, behavioral and functional aspects of tourists, challenges of owners at six rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya namely *Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong*. The methodologies adopted for the present study are analytical, descriptive, comparative, evaluative, and interpretive. Both Qualitative and Quantitative data have been used for the study. To achieve primary data structured interviews were conducted among the tourism experts, the tourists as well as the local stakeholders. Primary data from tourists too were collected through a Questionnaire (Schedule). For dissecting the impression of homestay owners a total of 40 respondents were selected randomly. For analyzing local people's perspectives, a total of 120 respondents were selected (20 samples from each destination), and to perceive the impression of tourists a total of 420 respondents were interviewed (70 samples from each destination). For the assessment of authorities who were legitimately or in a roundabout way engaged with ecotourism, 50 respondents were chosen randomly. The primary data were collected mainly through pre-tested questionnaires, personal interviews, and focus group discussions. For the collection of secondary data, previous studies in tourism, rural tourism, and ecotourism, various publications of the Tourism Department of India and Tourism Department of Darjeeling, newspapers, journals, magazines, management plans of various National Parks and Wildlife

Sanctuaries were studied. Specific Internet portals and websites were browsed to get additional information.

Rural tourism can be a means of conserving rural ecology sustainably. It minimizes the disparity between rural and urban areas thereby bringing the rural areas in the path of development.

Concerning **findings**, the paper has provided an overview of rural tourism at six different destinations leading towards economic and sustainable development. The major findings of the study show that the rural tourism destinations in Darjeeling Himalaya have been successful sources to generate reasonable employment opportunities and thereby income, not to a large extent, to the many of the local community who enjoy limited employment opportunities related to farm and non-farm activities in their local area. It has been able to help the rural areas develop their social and cultural exchange and protect the natural environment as well.

The study which has also analyzed the satisfaction level of the tourists has brought about that the service rendered by the homestay owners and the residents at all the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya is the most important factor affecting the satisfaction level of the tourists towards the destinations. Views of the local community and stakeholders have been studied and the need for sustainability has been emphasized with community participation. In brief, the present research study gives a useful analysis background for planning the rural tourism strategies for socio-economic and cultural development and the protection and conservation of the environment and thereby raising the standard of living of the local community who depends on rural tourism destinations for their subsistence living.

Chapter I discusses the different perspectives of the study of tourism, concept, and meaning of tourism, various definitions of tourism, different types of tourism, concept, and meaning of rural tourism and sustainable development, types of rural tourism, rural tourism in the world,

India and Darjeeling Himalaya in particular. There are a plethora of studies on rural tourism and sustainable development which focus on diverse aspects of rural tourism such as concept, management, marketing, and behavior of rural tourists, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of rural tourism. It has been found that rural tourism began in India in the 1980s but it started flourishing during and after the 1990s. After reviewing the published literature, reports, and documents it has been found that rural tourism is happening all over the world and has created its own space. As for rural tourism in India, it is on record that a good number of domestic and foreign tourists visit rural tourism destinations of India, particularly during the spring and autumn seasons to enjoy peace and nature. It is understood that rural tourism plays an important role in the sustainable development of any region. This chapter also presents the design of the research. It explains the research problem, objectives and hypotheses, importance and restrictions, and different methodologies of the study.

Chapter II deals with the information about the study area, specifically the geographical features like physiography, climate, natural vegetation, drainage, geology, and soil, the combination of which plays an important role in attracting tourists. It also deals with the history of Darjeeling during the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial phases. It presents the demographic profile of the people of Darjeeling, their economy, language, and culture which have great significance in tourism.

Chapter III presents the natural and anthropogenic potential of select rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. It has been found that most of the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya have great natural potential especially varied landscapes, scenic beauty, varied species of flora and fauna, views of sunrise and sunset from vantage points, gurgling streams, and pleasant climate as well as comprehensive anthropogenic potential such as ancient monasteries, bridges, orchard farming, organic farming, floriculture,

eco-park, trekking sites, bird watching areas, etc. which attract tourists from different corners of India as well as different parts of the world.

Chapter IV analyzes the role of rural tourism in sustainable development encompassing economy, society, culture, and environment. It has been found that due to the influx of domestic and foreign tourists, the economy has improved in all the rural tourism destinations in the Darjeeling Himalaya substantially. The socio-cultural exchange has taken place and protection and preservation of the environment have been given more emphasis by all the hosts, stakeholders, and tourists. The number of homestays, the number of rooms, and tourist accommodation have increased significantly in all the rural tourism destinations in the study area. Rural tourism in all the destinations have succeeded in creating jobs, income, cultural development, social benefits, environmental development, and awareness sustainably.

Chapter V presents the behavioral and functional aspects of tourists. Tourists' behavioral aspects such as origin, gender, marital status, education, occupational structure, the purpose of visit, frequencies, economic status, etc. have been studied to ascertain their specific impression upon rural tourism in the selected rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya, namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong. Rural tourism in the study area has been influenced by tourists' behavioral aspects. It has been found that most of the tourists from India and abroad visit Darjeeling mostly for nature observation and for peace.

The satisfaction levels of the tourists too were analyzed based on facilities such as accommodation and parking facility, food, service, infrastructure, transportation, the behavior of the local people, scenic view, peaceful environment, safety, cleanliness, availability of drinking water, hot water for the bath, timely tea and snacks, etc. It has been found that most of the tourists were satisfied with parking facilities in all the rural tourism destinations of the study area. Similarly, they were well satisfied with the safety, beauty of tourist places,

accommodation, and food. However, they were not satisfied with transportation and shopping facilities.

Chapter VI deals with the testing of considered hypotheses. It has been found that the considered hypotheses have been proved positive. As per the hypotheses, it has been found that - rural tourism has enhanced the growth of service sectors and opened up the door of employment opportunities, it is unique in the study area, the growth of rural tourism in the study area has been steady over the years, rural tourism has a great impact on the quality of life of the local people.

Chapter VII presents the challenges and opportunities in tourism. SWOT analysis was done to know the strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya. It has been found that despite certain weaknesses and threats Darjeeling Himalaya has a considerable amount of strength and opportunities for tourism development in near future.

CONTENTS

	Page No.
Chapter-I Introduction	1-37
Chapter-II Geographical Information about the Study Area	38-59
Chapter-III Rural Tourism Destinations and Their Potential for Tourism Development in Darjeeling Himalaya	60-80
Chapter-IV Economic Development and Sustainability of Rural Tourism	81-132
Chapter-V Behavioural and Functional Aspects of Tourists	133-155
Chapter-VI Data Analysis and Discussion	156-181
Chapter-VII Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya	182-194
Chapter-VIII Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations	195-221
Annexures	222-247

List of Tables

Table No.	Particulars of the table	Page No.
2.2.2.1	Climatic Data of Darjeeling, 2021	43
2.2.3	Altitudinal Zones of Darjeeling Himalayan Forests	45
2.3.1	Block-wise Distribution of Population in Darjeeling Hills, 2011	53
2.3.2	Population of Municipal Towns in Darjeeling Hills, 2011	53
3.3	Location and Locational Advantages of Different Rural Tourism Destinations	62
4.2	Approximate Earnings of the Homestay Owners ('000 Rs.)	83
4.3	Homestays in the Study Area	85
4.4.1	Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Takdah, December 2017	86
4.4.2	Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Lamahatta, December 2017	88
4.4.3	Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Mineral Spring, December 2017	89
4.4.4	Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Lepchajagat, December 2017	90
4.4.5	Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Chatakpur, December 2017	91
4.4.6	Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Sittong, December 2017	92
4.9.1	Distributions of Homestays in Rural Destinations of Study Area	115
4.9.2	Number and Percentage of Rooms in Homestays	117

4.9.3	Number and Percentage of Rooms in Accommodations in Homestays	118
4.9.4	Number and Percentage of Members Dependent on Homestays	120
4.10.1	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	122
4.10.2	Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SIA)	124
4.10.3	Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA)	127
5.2.1	Place of Origin of the Tourists	135
5.2.2	Gender of the Tourists	137
5.2.3	Occupational Structure of Tourists Visiting Select Destinations	139
5.2.4	Marital Status of the Tourists	142
5.2.5	Purpose of Visit	143
5.2.6	Economic Status	145
5.2.7	Frequencies of Visit by the Tourists	147
5.3.1.1	Factor-wise Level of Satisfaction	151
5.3.1.2	Satisfaction Index with Ranks	152
6.1	Rural Tourism: Growth of Service Sectors	157
6.2.1	Responses by Stakeholder (Homestay Owners)	158
6.2.2	Descriptive Statistics	159
6.3	z-Test: Two Sample for Means	160
6.4.1	Responses by Tourists	161
6.4.2	Responses by Tourists based on Total Score	163

6.5.1	Growth of Tourists since 2008	165
6.5.2	Growth of Homestays since 2008	166
6.5.3.1	Growth of Accommodations since 2008 (Number of Rooms)	168
6.5.3.1	Growth of Accommodations since 2008 (Number of Person)	168
6.6.1	Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Takdah	171
6.6.2	Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Lamahatta	173
6.6.3	Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Mineral Spring	175
6.6.4	Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Lepchajagat	176
6.6.1	Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Chatakpur	177
6.6.1	Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Sittong	178

List of Figures

Figure No.	Particulars of the Figure	Page No.
1.10	Research Design	29
2.1	Location Map of the Study Area	39
2.2.1	Relief Map of Darjeeling	41
2.2.2.1	Climate of Darjeeling, 2020	44
2.2.3	Natural Vegetation Map of Darjeeling	46
2.2.4	Drainage Map of Darjeeling	48
2.2.5	Geology of Darjeeling	50
2.2.6	Soil Map of Darjeeling	51
4.5.1	Landuse/ Landcover Map Showing the Development of Infrastructure and Homestays at Takdah from 2010 to 2010	93
4.5.2	Landuse/ Landcover Map Showing the Development of Infrastructure and Homestays at Lamahatta from 2010 to 2010	94
4.5.3	Landuse/ Landcover Map Showing the Development of Infrastructure and Homestays at Mineral Spring from 2010 to 2010	95
4.5.4	Landuse/ Landcover Map Showing the Development of Infrastructure and Homestays at Lepchajagat from 2010 to 2010	96
4.5.5	Landuse/ Landcover Map Showing the Development of Infrastructure and Homestays at Chatakpur from 2010 to 2010	97

4.5.6	Landuse/ Landcover Map Showing the Development of Infrastructure and Homestays at Sittong from 2010 to 2010	98
4.6	Stakeholders' Networking	100
4.7	Model Showing Rural Tourism for Sustainable Development	102
4.9.1	Distribution of Homestays in Rural Tourism Destinations	116
4.9.2	Rooms in Homestays	117
4.9.3	Accommodations in Homestays	119
4.9.4	Dependents on Homestays	120
5.2.1	Place of Origin of the Tourists	136
5.2.2	Gender of the Tourists	137
5.2.3	Occupational Structure	140
5.2.4	Marital Status	142
5.2.5	Purpose of Visit	144
5.2.6	Economic Status	146
5.2.7	Frequencies of Tourists	148
6.1	Rural Tourism: Growth of Service Sectors	157
6.4.1	Responses by Tourists based on Satisfaction	162
6.4.2	Responses by Tourists based on Total Score	163
6.5.1	Growth of Tourists since 2008	165
6.5.2	Growth of Homestays since 2008	167

6.5.3.1	Growth of Accommodations (Number of Rooms)	168
6.5.3.2	Growth of Accommodations (Number of Persons)	169

List of Plates

Plate No.	Particulars of the Plate	Page No.
3.5.1	Natural Landscape, Takdah	238
3.5.1	Structured Landscape (Floriculture), Takdah	238
3.5.2	Natural Landscape, Lamahatta	238
3.5.2	Structured Landscape (Eco-Park), Lamahatta	238
3.5.3	Natural Landscape, Mineral Spring	239
3.5.3	Structured Landscape, Mineral Spring	239
3.5.4	Natural Landscape, Lepchajagat	239
3.5.4	Structured Landscape (Sunrise View-Point), Lepchajagat	239
3.5.5	Natural Landscape, Chatakpur	240
3.5.5	Structured Landscape (View-Point), Chatakpur	240
3.5.6	Natural Landscape, Sittong	240
3.5.6	Structured Landscape (Ahal Dara), Sittong	240
6.4.1	Shiwani Homestay, Takdah	241
6.4.1	Abiraj Homestay, Takdah	241
6.8.1	Swimming Pool, Takdah	241
6.8.1	Traditional Kitchen (Chula)	241
6.8.1	Buddhiraj Rai (driver), Takdah	241

6.8.1	Bengali Tourists at Abiraj Homestay, Takdah	241
6.4.2	Druk Homestay, Lamahatta	242
6.4.2	Mount View Homestay, Lamahatta	242
6.4.2	Kanchanjunga View Homestay, Lamahatta	242
6.8.2	Menu Board at Kanchanjunga Homestay	242
6.8.2	Rooms at Kanchanjunga Homestay	242
6.8.2	Western toilet at Kanchanjunga Homestay	242
6.4.3	Tathagata farm, Mineral Spring	243
6.8.3	Tent Stay, Mineral Spring	243
6.8.3	Traditional Kitchen (Chula), Mineral Spring	243
6.8.3	Tea Garden, Mineral Spring	243
6.8.3	Plucked and dried Tea Leaves	244
6.8.3	Round Chilli (Dalley Khorsaani)	244
6.8.3	Tree tomato (Ruk tamaatar)	244
6.8.3	Cardamom (Elaichi)	244
6.8.3	Foreign tourists enjoying local food	244
6.4.4	Pakhrin Homestay, Lepchajagat	245
6.4.4	Kanchan Kanya Homestay, Lepchajagat	245
6.4.4	Lepchajagat Homestay, Lepchajagat	245
6.8.4	Subash Tamang, working as painter at Pakhrin Homestay, Lepchajagat	245

6.4.5	Government homestay at Chatakpur	246
6.8.5	Entry to Chatakpur	246
6.8.5	Cauliflower cultivation	246
6.8.5	Room and vehicle tariff	246
6.8.5	B.B. Thapa, Owner of Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay, Chatakpur	246
6.8.5	Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay, Chatakpur	246
6.8.6	Pujan Homestay, Sittong	247
6.8.6	Hankim Homestay, Sittong	247
6.8.6	Jogighat Bridge, Sittong	247
6.8.6	Bamboo Basket Dustbin	247

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Tourism is a transitory activity in which a person travels and resides in areas outside of his local environment for recreation and relaxation. It is the movement of the people to places beyond their domestic circuit for recreation and to fulfill their aspirations of varied kinds. McIntosh and Goeldner define tourism as “the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business suppliers, host governments and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors” (McIntosh and Goeldner, 1986 pp. 1).

Rural tourism, a tourism sector’s developing trend, not only has developed as a possible monetary opportunity but additionally a shape of activity for town dwellers, transferring them to a relaxed remote vicinity from the busy town life. Rural tourism is the practice of tourism, mostly nature-based, that explores livelihood, different traditions, social customs, beliefs in rural areas, allowing the local people for their socio-economic development. It is included in both the categories of development that is ‘Rural Development’ as well as ‘Sustainable Development. It manifests itself in many different ways because it provides cultural diversity and gives individuals a wider perception of life. It not only creates jobs for people, but also fosters different socio-cultural and academic values, and it is one of the ways that rural communities aspire to enhance profitability and efficiency.

The proposed research would look into the importance of rural tourism in the study area’s long-term sustainability, socio-economic development, rural development, as well as the significance of government policies and their impacts on rural tourism.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

1.2.1 Tourism

Tourism is the theory and practice of visiting and traveling for pleasure, according to the early dictionary. Tourism, according to Hunziker and Kraft (1942), involves tours and accommodations of strangers without settling down permanently and without engaging in any activity that would earn a payment.

The following elements of tourism are defined by A. K. Bhatia (1991) based on the preceding definitions, which claim that tourism is the participation of non-residents in travel, temporary stay in the location tour, and stay not involved with an activity that involves revenues. Tourism is thus a pleasurable and leisure activity cherished by a specific subgroup of visitors who are unfamiliar with the destinations they explore.

According to Richardson and Fluker (2004), tourism is a transient trip that is held from one destination to another, leaving their original location, with a strategy and intent of relaxing and enjoying leisure or outing, and to fulfilling a wide range of desires, rather than attempting to earn a living in the popular destinations.

1.2.2 Rural Tourism

Rural tourism can be traced back to the late-eighteenth-century romanticism movement. The typical world was where Romanticism began as a reaction to industrialism. The first novel visits in a long time were rurally based on the event concept, but current rural tourism began after World War II (Lane, 2009).

Rural tourism originated with the development of the world economy, offering a variety of services such as job creation, infrastructure development, conservation of rural culture and heritage, environmental protection, enrichment of rural life, and so on. Rural tourism benefits rural areas in

all aspects of development, be it social, economic and cultural. It enhances environmental growth as well. It does not just contribute to the growth of rural areas; it also contributes to the growth of the adjoining surroundings as well as the local inhabitants. As well as contributing to the rural area's growth, it also benefits nearby areas and locals living in the area.

The infrastructural facilities of rural tourism such as transport, trends of vehicles and ownership of a car, as well as technological advancements such as the worldwide internet, telephone services, and credit card use over cell phone networks, have facilitated travel to remote rural places. Rural tourism is also influenced by the resources of local administrations and community self-help companies (Lane, 2009). Rural tourism is one of the most efficient contemporary methods for rural development and growth (Dashper, 2014).

Briedenhann and Wickens (2004) however state that rural tourism provides a potential solution to a few of the difficulties loss of personal employment resources and a declining population that precede the rapid decline of agriculture. Many states and regional governments have adopted rural tourism as a way of bringing additional capital into rural areas, promoting growth and creating jobs, and thereby beginning to reverse the rural decline. Rural tourism is seen as a way to boost rural economies, create jobs, and thus reverse the rural deterioration in many regions and states (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004).

In addition to being an active sector today, rural tourism is also one that's growing and can grow further in the long run. As a feasible business strategy, it can be implemented with limited funds even without incurring considerable income loss while maintaining long-term growth and development.

Rural tourism is rapidly being monetized for sustainable economic development and growth to strengthen the regional economy of European societies especially since farm agriculture is unable

to create sufficient income for rural populations. It is usually replaced with field agriculture, but this is not necessarily an option for agriculture, rather, it is for the healthy development of both tourism and agriculture, which complement each other (Blaine, Mohamed, and Var, 1993).

Rural tourism includes a massive display of rural attractions and activities, infrastructures, accessibility, different marketing corporates and data models (Irshad, 2010).

Tourism in rural areas is typically self-sustaining (Frederick, 1992).

1.2.2.1 Rural tourism in the global context

Rural tourism had its initiation in the early 1970s and has since grown in popularity around the world. The concept, however, first appeared in the late eighteenth century and later flourished in the nineteenth century (Lane, 2009). It is certain that rural tourism began in Western Europe and gradually moved to North America, Australia, New Zealand, Asia (Japan), and Eastern Europe (Lane, 2009).

The United States' experience in Canada is highlighted in the history of rural tourism development in North America. Unplanned tourism, economic and financial realities in the United States, have resulted in the rise of tourism in the countryside. To attract tourists and improve marketing techniques, local characteristics were employed as the primary basis. Rural tourism has grown in importance as a tool to promote the economy in rural parts of the United States (Gartner, 2004)

Rural tourism is defined by Alberta's government as a national experience that covers a huge assortment of sights and pursuits that take place outside of metropolises (Irshad, 2010).

Rural tourism is a significant tool for economic growth in all European Union countries, and it is supported by its financial, social, ecological, and spatial capabilities. Unique ecological landscapes, agrarian economy, and traditional innovation add significantly to rural tourism and play an essential part in rural development. (Kutay and Mashid, 2016).

Serbia provides excellent circumstances concerning rural tourism management in Eastern Europe due to the presence of geographical features, varied landscapes suitable for different types of entertainment, enjoyment in food, historical narratives, vibrant social heritage, and so on. This form of tourism could substantially contribute to environmental protection while also enhancing the resilience and rejuvenation of life in rural places. The Republic of Serbia has huge common skills; however, they are not attaining excellence and conveyed to the general public, and as a result, they are not maximized (Dordevic, Susic and Janjic, 2019).

Rural tourism is a lucrative enterprise in Asia, with significant financial, ecological, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits. Although rural tourism in Nepal is still in its infancy, it faces a slew of challenges related to its viability and management. The rising environmental problem in urban regions, particularly Kathmandu and other major towns, is expanding the reach of rural tourism beyond those locations (Upadhyay, 2016).

Rural tourism is seen as a viable and effective means of achieving gross national happiness in small developing countries like Bhutan. Bhutan's government has worked hard to promote rural tourism and generate revenue from it, with well-defined policies and strategies. In Bhutan, the availability of rural tourism products has raised demand from both domestic and international visitors (Dorji and Kinley, 2017).

1.2.3 Types of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is frequently referred to as alternative tourism, as opposed to a mass tourist. It is a type of tourism growth that takes advantage of resources in rural areas while benefiting various socio-economic communities. Based on its many qualities, it is divided into four categories as follows:

- i) **Nature tourism:** It is primarily focused on environmentally friendly recreation. It is a sort of natural-area tourism that aims to protect the environment while also increasing the well-being of the local population. It is built on natural attractions such as the area's natural beauty, trekking, hiking, forest camping, bird-watching, and forest safari and so on. It encourages the preservation of natural resources and the enhancement of the natural regions' value. Communities have more incentives to maintain their remaining natural spaces for animals and wildlife enthusiasts as nature tourism becomes increasingly important to the local economy. Nature tourism has long been a vital component of the tourism sector (Spychala and Sylwia, 2013).
- ii) **Culture tourism:** It is focused on the local people's lifestyle and culture. It promotes both culture and tourism by showcasing the rich cultural legacy of the community. It is seasonal because it revolves around several cultural events which are held by diverse ethnicities. It refers to the expansion of tourism in areas such as cultural diffusion, aesthetics, inspiration, historic preservation and so on (Richards, 2018). In tourist destinations, cultural tourism entails the expression of cultural indices such as folklore, old heritage, and different art and so on. (Mousavi et al, 2016).
- iii) **Health tourism:** It is a well-known area of rural tourism focused on wealth and eminence pharmaceuticals, with a focus on wellness and sporting activities. Health tourism began as a result of people traveling to different countries in search of lower-cost clinical treatment or to avoid being bound by records in their home country (Stojanovic, Stojanovic and Randelovic, 2010).
- iv) **Ecotourism:** It is environment-friendly tourism, for safeguarding natural resources and maintaining the prosperity and social estimations of the local community. Eco-tourism is a

movement of a traveler to the delicate, perfect, and typically defensive territories that endeavor to be low effect and frequently have a little scale (Honey, 2008). It is a type of tourism enlivened essentially by the natural history of a region, including its native societies (Ziffer, 1989).

- v) **Homestay Tourism:** A homestay, as the phrase “home stay” implies, is a paid guest staying in someone’s home for a limited amount of time, with housing and amenities provided by particular communities and families to such guests. As a result, the Home-Stay Regulation recognizes it as being governed by a single person or a group of people (Timilsina, 2012). Homestay aims to attract tourists away from trendy and congested urban areas to the rural surroundings, where they can enjoy the beautiful scenery, by providing clean, pleasant, and reasonable lodging and meals. A homestay gives visitors a unique cultural experience while also allowing them to interact with the host family. It encourages individuals to travel to new and unexplored places. The local government will be encouraged to promote different types of tourism in different sites thereby allowing local inhabitants to earn their livelihood depending on tourism (Gangotia, 2013).

1.2.4 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has been categorized from a variety of perspectives, but the most commonly quoted definition comes from the Brundtland Report (1987), which defines it as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Report, 1987 pp. 41).

Robert Repetto in his book *The Global Possible* gives a significant definition of sustainable development. He states “Sustainable development is a continuous process that considers all-natural and human resources as a means to achieve certain goals or objectives. This development process

should not be contradictory to nature. Rather, it should be corollary with the natural production process” (Repetto, 1985 pp. 47). It is, and should always be, a process of reconciliation among the majority, and sometimes even between generations.

Sustainable development is a developmental criterion that eliminates poverty and improves the standard of living for everyone, including rural tourism stakeholders. Rural tourism has the potential to help protect and conserve the environment. As a result, all stakeholders and governments might be aware of the need to maintain the natural environment and strive toward long-term tourism growth. The quality of life in rural communities is frequently used to assess sustainable development (Kazana and Kazaklis, 2009).

Sustainable development is defined as growth that does not disrupt the earth’s biotic and abiotic systems. Sustainable rural tourism is defined as environmental preservation, cultural diffusion, as well as provision of specific services and facilities to tourists (Dragulanescu and Drutu, 2012). Sustainable tourism aims to preserve overall human and nature’s quality through periods (Reid, 1991).

Rural tourism contributes to long-term economic viability. Economic sustainability refers to a way of life that is both sustainable and economically viable. As a result, it should be noted that rural tourism contributes to environmental protection and preservation, as well as the long-term health, entertainment, and learning of individuals. It allows the provision of food and drinks, among other things (Kantara and Svrznjaka, 2017).

Rural tourism contributes to the sustainable socio-cultural viability of a community which includes the integrity of personal connections, devotion to rituals and ceremonies, as well as the material and emotional culture of life. It also covers the area’s uniqueness, cultural legacy, and customs,

which can be seen in food, hospitality, community events, vernacular skills, and religious diversity (Pizam and Milman, 1986).

The environmental aspect of rural tourism sustainability is focused on emphasizing the role of the environment and public perceptions toward it, encouraging environmental responsibility in enterprises and lowering tourists' environmental behaviour, measures to minimize, and different methods for saving energy. It is a means of raising environmental awareness which can be used to support the protection of natural regions while also increasing their economic value. (Sunlu, 2003)

1.2.5 Linkages between Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development

Development is necessary for rural tourism to contribute to sustainable economic growth, and conservation of the environment. Rural tourism is vital for expanding rural livelihoods and contributing to the sustainable development of the population's socio-economic situation (Nooripoor et. al., 2020). Rural tourism contributes to the local community's identities and harmony, as well as the long-term preservation of their quality of life and socio-cultural values. Rural tourism improves sales revenue for rural residents, resulting in the development of different farm products as well as the rural area's sustainable development (Okech et al., 2012).

Rural tourism's most important criterion is development. Rural tourism, on the other hand, focuses not just on development in terms of its altered architecture, but also on sustainable improvement in terms of the resources needed by both present and future generations. In the establishment of a new host region, rural tourism and sustainable development work hand in hand, contributing to scientific resources planning, commercial fulfillment, social and aesthetic gratification, and the promotion of traditional and biodiversity. They complement one another in satisfying the needs of tourism and the host region, as well as expanding future potential. As a result, sustainable development can be considered a long-term tourist strategy in the rural tourism aspect that

considers the interests of society, community members, visitors, and, eventually, the entire tourism sector.

1.3 Review of Literature

1.3.1 Review on Tourism

Pearce (1980) in his article “Host Community Acceptance of Foreign Tourists: Strategic Considerations” contends that extensive tourism development may aggravate congestion in areas along with safety issues, violence, pricing, and other factors among residents. However, it is self-evident that closer proximity by all tourism industries means more significant economic development and larger revenues for the locals. As a result, in addition to raising environmental awareness, it may also encourage high regard concerning the tourism business, which is a growing source of cash for the area.

Sharma (1985) investigates the socio-economic relevance of tourism in his paper “Tourism: Its Socio-Economic Importance” in *Southern Economist*. Remarkably, the tourism industry has grown to be considered as a catalyst for monetary development as well as a powerful tool for social healing and currency conversion opportunities. He considers the tourism sector’s financial importance, which he compares to its commitment to wage growth, fresh foreign earnings, work, profitability, and asset protection.

Var, Sheldon, and Liu (1987) analyze “Resident Perceptions of the Environmental Impacts of Tourism” as a capacity that is legitimately reliant on the proportion between the number of tourists and the number of residents. The findings show that regardless of the physical location or level of tourism maturity, all residents of a country are affected by tourism.

Murti and Kumar (1989) in their book *Tourists Activities Causing Depletion of Plant Wealth in Jammu & Kashmir, In: Impacts of Tourism on Mountain Environment* point out that the subject of

tourist numbers in the tourism sector is inextricably linked to preservation difficulties. They discover that the tourism sector is integrated into pilgrimage zones such as Vaishnodevi and Amarnath as well as adventure in different popular tourism destinations such as Sonamarg, Pahalgam and Gulmarg. As a result, such delicate excellence zones must be entirely secured after reaching their voyager transporting limit, so that their natural framework and natural landscapes operations are not imperiled.

Negi (1990) in his book *Tourism and Travel* features the attractions of rural areas, which incorporate satisfaction in the country landscape, the craving for open space, provincial games like fishing, chasing, and ethnic attractions like social life, custom, food, beverages, and celebrations. The article additionally expresses that rural tourism could incorporate delicate farms and fields of lowland rural areas and fields, slopes, and mountains of rough terrain rural areas along with rural areas developed in coastal sides.

Martin, and McCool (1992) in their study “Attitude of Montana Residents towards tourism Development, Missoula” found that residents fear that they might be driven out of nearby primary activities and other recreational areas as the tourism sector grows. However, the vast majority of such studies either never provide experimental evidence that increasing tourist volumes in a network leads to more unfavourable attitudes, or simply confine the research to instructive ambient assessments of mentalities in a single platform or place.

Panda, Mishra, and Parida (1992), in the book entitled *Tourism Management - The Socio-Economic and Ecological Perspective*, analyzes that from a single perspective, natural and man-made resources are essential components in the construction of the tourism sector. Contrary to this, tourism may harm the environment, resulting in a variety of adverse and unintended consequences.

Stettner (1993) in his article “Community or commodity? Sustainable Development in Mountain Resorts” emphasizes the approach which can be beneficial in improving the tourist industry and its impact on the local community in a reasonable manner. The tourist industry must be built to preserve the unique traits of the sights and residents that will aim to receive guests for the long term. As a result, the hill tourism link may prove to be a true paradigm of sustainable development for global reach.

Pandya and Oza (1994) in their study entitled “Biodiversity for the Masses” emphasize the necessity of natural resources protection and its economic utilization. People should know their responsibility to protect different species and create a pattern of harmony with the environment. They suggest that before the last chance is lost, awareness should be made among the public, primarily the young generation, different stakeholders, and different governmental as well as private agencies.

Chettri (1998) in his article entitled “Impact of Tourism on Biodiversity” analyzes that the beginning of restoration practices has really been prepared by the systems, and has actively undertaken works on resources and rich biodiversity observation. It is critical to look for specific specialties that rely on certain local species mostly for the important aspects of life that is ammunition, forage, and forestry to preserve the region’s biodiversity.

Michael and Addison (1999) in their book *Sustainable Tourism - A Geographical Perspective*, focus on the long-term benefits of ecotourism and express that ecotourism is naturally benevolent and manageable tourism that additionally benefits the nearby network. Numerous ecotourism adventures obliterate the very biological systems they guarantee to secure. They fear that with a lack of prudence, ecotourism winds up in ecological corruption.

Rajan and Thankappan (2001) in their article “Impact of Tourism on the Environment of Munnar” suggest that the proper implementation of eco-tourism activities can bring challenges to light as well as a need for preservation, which can greatly contribute to the ecological security and reverence of any region. They claim that uncontrolled regular tourism poses a significant risk to the biological system. Munnar, for example, requires an acceptable critical arrangement for practical and capable tourist development that includes travel industry exercises focusing on the protection of normal assets, circumstances, and respect for adjacent cultures and customs.

Gursoy, Jurowski, and Uysal (2002) in their study “Resident’s Attitudes: A Structural Modelling Approach” directed a review to present a good network of tourist residents and stakeholders and to support tourism, based on the components discovered to an effective response to its turn of events. The findings revealed that the residents’ contribution plays an important role in the development of society with the use of tourism assets and a positive attitude towards tourists.

Rao (2002) in his article “Challenges and Issues for Tourism in the South Pacific Island States: The Case of the Fiji Islands” has investigated the difficulties concerning tourism. He suggested that the government institutions should recognize tourism’s role as an economic generator and the most important source of foreign commerce. The tourism sector can be improved if the difficulties of stakeholders are reduced. He warns that a carefully crafted travel sector development strategy may have detrimental effects on the country rather than contributing to its advancement.

Kohli (2002) in his article “Ecotourism and Himalayas” argues that ecotourism can enhance residents’ livelihood and can bring regional development without harming the environment if proper methods are applied. Various awareness programs should be implemented. The enhancement of ecotourism by ensuring the condition of numerous sorts of trees and plants exasperates the great perfection of the Himalayas.

Sethi (2002) in the book entitled *Millennium Trends in Travel and Tourism* expresses that selling various tourism items to international tourists is an excellent way to earn foreign exchange. The converse is true in terms of tourism spending. The domestic tourists and the locals use different locations to buy different tourism packages investing very little as compared to foreign tourists. As a result, both local and international tourists are critical to the tourism industry.

Liu (2003) in his article “Sustainable Tourism Development: A Critique” examines the flaws in sustainable development. He believes that diverse stakeholders, governments, and scholars should pay attention to the function of tourist demand, the form of tourism products, tourism’s support of socio-cultural advancement, and various types of sustainability. He also suggests that various agencies execute different policies in practice.

Tosun and Timothy (2003) investigate the grounds of ineffective tourist improvement at the local level in their article “Arguments for Community Participation in the Tourism Development Process”. The tourism industry can grow only if the local community participates in different activities of tourism and contributes to the development of society. However, some factors that resulted in unsustainable tourism growth have been discovered to be beyond the capability or influence of indigenous individuals in the organization.

Perez and Nadal (2005) in their study “Host Community Perceptions” conducted group investigation methods to assess how residents perceive the tourist sector as shaping their environment. Their findings demonstrate that participants are aware of the favourable as well as adverse effects of tourism, thus participants are divided on an improvement proposition with growing vacationers. Furthermore, it shows that some progression strategies create severe restoration resistance, while others benefit from common assistance.

Badan and Bhatt (2006) in their book entitled *Sustainable Tourism* examine and evaluate the methods whereby the systems can efficiently and successfully promote tourism by properly monitoring its progress such that it introduces the benefits that the system desires while restricting its unfavourable impacts. Though the tourism industry offers huge opportunities for earning capital, the local people should be aware of its adverse effects. The government must work out ways to keep the tourism business commercially sustainable.

Aneja (2006) in his article “Sustainable Tourism Development Challenges Ahead” describes a feasible tourist industry that tries to solve the present stakeholders’ and tourists’ problems ensuring long-term socio-economic benefits from tourism. All the stakeholders and tourists involved in tourism activities should cope with the challenges positively without harming the environment.

Lepp (2007) in his article “Inhabitants’ Attitudes towards Tourism in Bigodi Village, Uganda” has brought up the occupant’s mentalities towards the travel industry and discovers that occupants have reliably inspirational perspectives towards tourism. Uplifting mentalities result from the inhabitant’s conviction that tourism makes network advancement, improves horticultural markets, creates pay, lastly, that the travel industry brings irregular favourable luck.

Bhattacharya (2008) in his article “Tourism Development in Northeast India: Changing Recreational Demand, Developmental Challenges and Issues associated with Sustainability” believes that the tourism industry needs to embrace a long-term tourism development plan. Effective marketing can enhance the region’s current socio-economic position, given the region’s cultural richness and biological and socio-cultural resources. Because the area is not really in a position to provide a better tourist experience, therefore, successful management and execution of the tourist industry in this geographical area will necessitate efficient performance at the local level.

Nomani and Khan (2015) in their article “Human Resource Development in Tourism Industry – An Analytical Framework” have discussed the role of tourism on human asset advancement. On the off chance that the travel industry prospers in India, the nation will have monetary addition. They propose that Human resource development methodologies ought to concentrate on maintainability-based industry rehearses, the travel industry improvement, esteem frameworks, and standards of conduct among all the partners.

Akihito (2017) in his article “Advancement of Tourism and the Tourist Industry in India: A Case Study of Uttarakhand”, expresses that the broadening of ways of life that go with a thriving working-class has empowered the improvement of the tourism industry as a relaxation action. He proposes that there are significant advantages that can be considered typical from the inundation of sightseers if there are upgrades in the frontage roads that interface significant parkways with housing facilities. Subsequently, a specific gradually expanding influence on the nearby economy can be noticed for both local inhabitants and traders inside the locale for work at housing facilities, vital administrations, and the interest for materials.

Goyal (2018) in his article “Economic Aspects of Tourism in India”, states that movement and tourism are significant monetary actions in many nations around the planet. Indian tourism has been developing at a quick speed and has displayed a tremendous potential for producing business, procuring unfamiliar trade along these lines elevating the economy. He analyses that tourism has contributed massively to the prospering diagram of India’s economy by pulling in countless both unfamiliar and home-grown tourists. He discovers that tourism in India has had the option to create a business, acquire unfamiliar trade, and get foundation improvement, and increment government income.

1.3.2 Review on Ecotourism

Singh (1997) in his article “Ecotourism and Environmental Conservation in India” endeavours to learn about various aspects of ecotourism and various techniques followed for the preservation of the environment. He opines that all ecotourism areas should be well preserved and protected by the authorities, residents and the tourists themselves. Ecotourism can be improved if an adequate measure of exertion is given on growing new interventions and procedures in rural areas. As Ecotourism is environment-friendly, the conservation measures should not only come from the government but also all the stakeholders involved in ecotourism sectors.

Henderson, et al. (2001) in their article “Urban Environmental and Nature-Based Attractions: Green Tourism in Singapore” discuss how nature-based tourism attracts both domestic and international visitors. They’ve discovered that the green travelers of the 21st century may be happy with advantageous and available normal attractions, which offer some benefit for cash, wellbeing, and security.

Bande (2005) in her article “Eco-Tourism and Mountains” brings up that ecotourism represents the administration of the travel industry in such a way, that man gets the greatest advantages from nature without upsetting its intrinsic equalization. It looks to re-establish man’s correspondence with nature, satisfying their need without upsetting the nearby culture and convention.

Gale and Hil (2009) in the book entitled *Ecotourism and Environmental Sustainability Principles and Practice* witness the brilliant connection between tourist industries with nature. Ecotourism is such a paradigm that vacationers are increasingly looking for in the travel business. Manufactured stocks, agricultural landmasses, and surface mining and quarrying have all been discussed concerning ecotourism.

Jalania (2012) in his article “Nearby People’s Perception on the Impacts and Importance of Ecotourism in Sabang, Palawan, Philippines”, investigated the effects of ecotourism on work age and individual inundation. He claims that the tourism business has been able to provide jobs for the villagers. While ecotourism benefits residents in some ways, ecological sustainability has seen the least amount of beneficial consequences in terms of job opportunities and city progress.

Kiper (2013) in his article “Role of Ecotourism in Sustainable Tourism” expresses that Ecotourism is a compelling instrument for the manageable turn of events and is the motivation behind why nations are presently grasping it and remembering it for their financial turn of events and protection procedures. Ecotourism must record for social, financial, and natural ramifications, to succeed. Ecotourism helps in network advancement by giving the substitute wellspring of jobs to neighbourhood networks, which is more feasible.

Postica and Cardoso (2014) in their article “Current Development Level of Ecotourism and Eco-Touristic Products in Moldova” look at the front line situation and improvement phase of ecotourism in Moldova and viewpoints ecotourism as a limit technique to ensure common biological systems and simultaneously to advance practical local improvement. Ecotourism is a creating region of premium commercial centre inside the enormous visit industry with the limit of being a pivotal economic advancement device. Ecotourism as a commercial centre area is essential for nature tourism and has more intense connections to country and social tourism.

Vishwanatha and Chandrashekara (2014) in their article “A Study on the Environmental Impacts of Ecotourism in Kodagu District, Karnataka” have examined the positive and negative ecological effects of ecotourism. As specified, the absence of information and mindfulness in individuals will affect ecotourism. Consequently, stakeholders and concerned specialists should work on this issue to the sincere and manageable improvement of ecotourism.

Bassam and Rahman (2016) in their article “Social Impacts of Ecotourism in India” focus on the handiness of investigation of ecotourism and understanding the issues and prospects of ecotourism in India which help to advance economic improvement by increasing expectations of living with incredible natural assurance. They propose that ecotourism ought to be nature-based and biologically feasible including fitting re-visitations of the local area and long haul protection of assets. They further propose that the incorporated natural, social, and financial arranging investigation ought to be attempted before the initiation of any significant activities.

Tripathi and Jain (2017) in their article “Openings and Challenges of Ecotourism concerning its Employability Potential: Uttar Pradesh, India”, have observed that ecotourism has procured much interest in current years, especially in non-industrial nations. It fulfills the local area’s desires for occupations, generates employment, and enhances new capabilities, and the work and better status of women. It moreover desires to prepare and provide information to the tourists, offers measurements and money for the preservation of nature, carries out direct preferred position to the financial improvement and political strengthening of local networks and zones, and cultivates respect for exceptional societies and common freedoms.

Mishra (2019) in his article “Analysing the Prospect of Sustainable Eco and Rural Tourism in Purulia District of West Bengal”, finds that the exertion of local area strengthening is treated as a compelling instrument for reverse zone advancement plans prompting controlling the size of the difference. He further talks about the significance and probability of presenting ecotourism and rural tourism towards achieving more prominent local area strengthening with regards to review perceptions on the interaction of change of country work in the forestland of the western part, especially the region of Purulia, of West Bengal - the centre of present decentralized plans and the prohibition of the nearby networks in dynamic cycles.

Saidmamatov et al. (2020) in their article “Utilizing Ecotourism Opportunities for Sustainability in the Aral Sea Region: Prospects and Challenges” observe the administrators’ mindfulness on advantages of advancing ecotourism in the district can diminish biological emergency and prompts feasible turn of events. They talk about their partner’s knowledge about ecotourism’s worth and are inspired to execute ecotourism in the district on one hand yet, on the other hand, they have restricted perception, skill, and worldwide organizations to advance and market ecotourism items and administrations. A wide scope of advantages can be harvested from creating ecotourism, including work, pay time, and the capacity to improve individuals’ lives in nearby networks.

Rai (2020) in her article on “Ecotourism Potential in the Darjeeling Hills: Prospects, Challenges and Possibilities” finds that ecotourism in the Himalayan district has the rich potential to prosper and improve the economic state of the resident population. However, the travel industry in the district is by all accounts saturated and has made extreme tension on the adjoining resources. To disperse this unfortunate pressing factor, tourists must be channelized away from the saturated metropolitan Darjeeling town to its rural areas. Luckily, as of late, even tourists have begun investigating rural areas. Her investigations suggest that with the new presentation of practical rural tourism in certain zones, the locals have noticed improved foundation and vocation openings.

1.3.3 Review on Rural Tourism

Bojnec (2010) in his article “Rural Tourism, Rural Economy Diversification, and Sustainable Development” explores different trends concerning diversification in the rural economy, to achieve environmental and economic sustainability. He further analyses that rural tourism development is based entirely on remarkable aspects such as a diverse range of environmental endowments, landscape and socio-cultural elements, which benefit the local growth and rural economy.

Dimitrovski (2011) in his article “Rural tourism and regional development: Case study of the development of rural tourism in the region of Gruza, Serbia” finds that the region has immense opportunities for tourism planning due to its environmental elegance as well as heritage monuments and that if these things are preserved and developed, along with effective government’s role in tourism promotion and development, the entire region will progress. According to the findings of his survey, the average tourist stays at a higher socio-economic and cultural level, with the majority of visitors coming from urban regions to enjoy the serenity and natural beauty of rural places.

Katoch and Gautam (2015) in their article “Rural Tourism as a Medium for Local Development in Himachal Pradesh: The example of Villages around Dharamsala (Kangra)” talks about the country individuals’ comprehension of the need for provincial tourism and its improvement just as its ensuing advantages to the townspeople around Dharamsala. The town’s people know about the advantages of tourism, however, they have almost no comprehension of rural tourism and country tourism approaches executed by the state just as focal government.

Chadha and Choudhary (2016) in their article “Nature, Problems and Prospects of Rural Tourism in Punjab: An Analysis” observe that the tourism industry has become a significant and indispensable piece of economic, social, cultural, and actual advancement on the whole agricultural nations. The rural countries, explicitly, advance the travel industry as a strategy for making a new exchange, growing work openings, drawing being created capital, extending government pay, and improving monetary opportunity. Other than being an instrument for creating business openings, the tourism industry has enormous linkages with various territories like cultivating, development, poultry, meticulous work, and advancement, and so forth. Consequently, it creates more comprehensive development.

Manoj (2016) in his article entitled “Impact of Rural Tourism on the Environment and Society: Evidence from Kumbalangi in Kerala, India”, witnesses rural tourism from the viewpoint of the nearby network individuals. Rural tourism has given advantages to the neighbourhood network and the conduct of sightseers towards the nearby individuals has been empowering. It has additionally been called attention to the unfavourable impacts of country tourism on the general public and condition, which thus may antagonistically influence its maintainability over the long haul.

Sharma and Parkash (2018) in their article “Rural Tourism in India: Challenges and Opportunities” examine how the various sorts of tourist item expansions impact the improvement prospects of rural areas in India. The public authority should support private areas to advance the tourism industry in rural areas. They further inspect how rural residents can be associated with rural tourism to improve their financial condition. They proposed that the extension of rural tourism and advancement in India can help decrease neediness and improve financial conditions. They proposed that the administration of India should promote rural tourism as a motor of development.

Thathera (2018) in his article “Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development in India” discusses another sort of development in rural areas related to the rural economy which can convey financial and social benefits to the overall population. He indicates that rural tourism will arise as a significant instrument for feasible improvement including natural assurance, destitution easing, business age, and advancement of distant regions.

1.4 Research Gap

The review of various works of writing on rural tourism and sustainable development reveals that a substantial number of studies on rural tourism and sustainable development in various parts of

the world have been conducted. Despite Darjeeling's international reputation as a major tourist destination, no significant or visible work has been done on the Darjeeling Himalaya. There are few studies mostly on the rise, sustainability, and significance of the region's rural tourism. In the Darjeeling hills, empirical research on rural tourism's influence from the perspective of sightseers is virtually non-existent. To close the gap, my research will be empirically grounded and will include a critical evaluation of rural tourism in the Darjeeling Himalaya.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

Despite the fact that the Darjeeling Himalaya is a well-known tourist spot, in many rural tourism schemes, locals are underrepresented in the formulation and management, which inhibits its growth. Disagreement among multiple agencies, insufficient capital inflows, absence of lawful organization, a lack of proper management adversely affecting the intricate ecosystem, issues in political decisions, problems pertaining to ecological and biological consequences, habitat destruction, pollution, water contamination, significant climate challenges, poor sanitation, degradation of native cultural aspects, minimal infrastructural development in some regions, poor transportation, and so on.

The concept of tourism is progressively migrating out of the centre and into the suburbs as a result of the development of several types of tourism. Areas surrounding Darjeeling town are indeed fast developing, with locations like Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong proving their tourism viability in a relatively brief period. However, some tourist programs fizzled out over a certain amount of time. At the earliest phases, careful regulation and plan implementation are essential. Local participants must be informed prior to the beginning of the venture, and adequate legislative support is essential for the growth of such ventures to be

managed. The suggested research looks at a few tourist areas in terms of sustainable rural tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya.

Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong are rural tourism models in the Darjeeling Himalayas that are ready to provide visitors with exceptional experiences. Despite the fact that indigenous travel has developed as an excellent strategy for promoting sustainable development in rural areas, there is yet to be a complete study evaluating the impact of this model of tourism. As a result, the goal of this study is to look into the impacts of indigenous tourism on the growth of rural areas in the Darjeeling Himalaya.

1.6 The Study Area

The Darjeeling district is the proposed research area for this study. “The district of Darjeeling lies between 26°31’ and 27°13’ north latitude, and between 87°59’ and 88° 53’ east longitude” (O’Malley, 1907, pp. 1). Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong, and Siliguri are the three subdivisions of Darjeeling district that constitute West Bengal's northernmost district. “In shape the district resembles an irregular triangle, of which the apex projects into British territory, while the base rests on Sikkim. It is a frontier district, running up between Nepal and Bhutan and stretching from the plains of Bengal on the south to the State of Sikkim on the north” (O’Malley, 1907, pp. 1). Darjeeling Himalaya covers approximately 1,721 km² of the district’s total size of 3,202 km². Darjeeling has been titled “Queen of the Hill Stations” due to its breath-taking scenery and refreshing atmosphere (Chakraborti, 1989).

The landscape of Darjeeling Himalaya is drained by the mighty Teesta River and its two major tributaries, Rammam and Rangit along with their innumerable sub tributaries. They have created an assortment of spurs, valleys, slopes, and valley forms decorated with an almost infinite variety of floral species and other biotic resources, viz., *Dhupi (pine)*, *Maling (small bamboo)*, *larch*,

maple, betula, walnut, chestnut, alder, birch, pipili, oak, sal and rich diversity of *lichens, mosses, and ferns* along with ethnomedicinal plants comprising about 281 species belonging to about 108 different families (O'Malley, 1907).

1.6.1 Areas of Case Study

Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, and Lepchajagat from the Darjeeling Sub-division and *Chatakpur and Sittong* from the Kurseong Sub-division have been selected as the sites of a case study concerning rural tourism.

1.7 Objectives of Study

Based on the analysis *ut supra*, the research has been done with the following objectives:

- i) To understand the scenario of rural tourism in the Darjeeling Himalaya,
- ii) To identify the nature and trend of growth of rural tourism in the study area,
- iii) To investigate the geographical factors determining rural tourism and the resulting benefits in the study area,
- iv) To investigate the rural tourism's potentials and opportunities in the study area,
- v) To analyze the impacts of rural tourism and tourist behaviour in the study area.
- vi) To analyze the diverse challenges of rural tourism in the study area,
- vii) To identify the issues and prospects for future rural tourism study and development in the study area.

1.8 Hypothesis

- i) Rural tourism promotes the expansion of the service sector and creates new job opportunities.
- ii) Rural tourism is unique in the study area.
- iii) The rural tourism growth in the study area has been steady over the years.

- iv) Rural tourism has a significant impact on the local population's quality of life.

1.9 Methodology

The present study employs descriptive, analytical, comparative, interpretive and evaluative methodologies. The study used both qualitative and quantitative data. A structured interview process was conducted in order to obtain primary data with tourists, tourism experts, and local stakeholders. To learn their opinions, a standardized questionnaire was circulated to the local people. Previous studies in tourism, rural tourism, and ecotourism, various publications produced by the Tourism Department of India and the Tourism Department of Darjeeling, a variety of journals, publications, magazines, newspapers and management plans related to National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries were used to collect secondary data. Additional information was obtained by browsing specific internet portals and websites.

Six sites of rural tourism have been selected based on their popularity, accessibility, the serenity of the landscape and the surroundings, and overall impact on the quality of life of the hosts and guests. These are *Takdah*, *Lamahatta*, *Mineral Spring*, and *Lepchajagat* from Darjeeling Sub-division and *Chatakpur* and *Sittong* from the Kurseong Sub-division. Different questionnaires are designed for content analysis with both structured and unstructured patterns and with both close and open-ended questions for the tourists, homestay owners and their family members, and local people. For this stratified random sampling methods have been adopted. Moreover, observations, interviews and photographs have been taken to investigate in detail the pattern of development of tourism, the elements that assumed a vital role for its high points and low points, tourists' and homestay owners' socio-economic aspects, the tourists' impact on the native community, the rural tourism's impact on the economy, the challenges that this particular sector has been experiencing, and the prospect that lies ahead. Internal data devotion has been guaranteed with field revisits. Summary tables have been

set up from the information sheets, and have been controlled utilizing both reasonable subjective and quantitative techniques. The outcomes of the study have been analyzed, managed and represented in the form of tables, charts, graphs, diagrams and maps maintaining conventional cartographic norms using MS Excel and GIS Software. Arc GIS 10 was used for mapping purposes and comparing development, while SPSS 23 was employed for data analysis.

To distinguish the tools, indicators, sample size and stakeholders, a pilot survey was conducted in the selected rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. To comprehend the viability of rural tourism as means for sustainable development in Darjeeling Himalaya six rural tourism destinations namely, Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong were selected. Measurements of rural tourism's economic, social, historical, and ecological implications were critical for examining rural tourism's long-term sustainability. Four sets of indicators were used to measure impacts of rural tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya viz. economic, social, cultural, and environmental. Primary data were collected from three types of stakeholders who were actively engaged in rural tourism activities in Darjeeling Himalaya. They were Homestay owners, local people and officials. Primary data from tourists too were collected through a Questionnaire (Schedule). A total of 40 respondents were chosen at random to investigate the impressions of homestay owners. A total of 120 respondents (20 samples from each site) were taken for studying local people's viewpoints, while a total of 420 respondents were questioned to assess tourists' impressions (70 samples from each destination). For the assessment of authorities who were legitimately or in a roundabout way engaged with ecotourism, 50 respondents were chosen randomly. The primary data were collected mainly through pre-tested questionnaires, personal interviews and focus group discussions. Three sets of interviews were conducted to collect information from these stakeholders

and a 5-point Likert scale has been used to measure the rural tourism's sustainability in Darjeeling Himalaya. Subtleties of sampling are explained with the assistance of the accompanying tables.

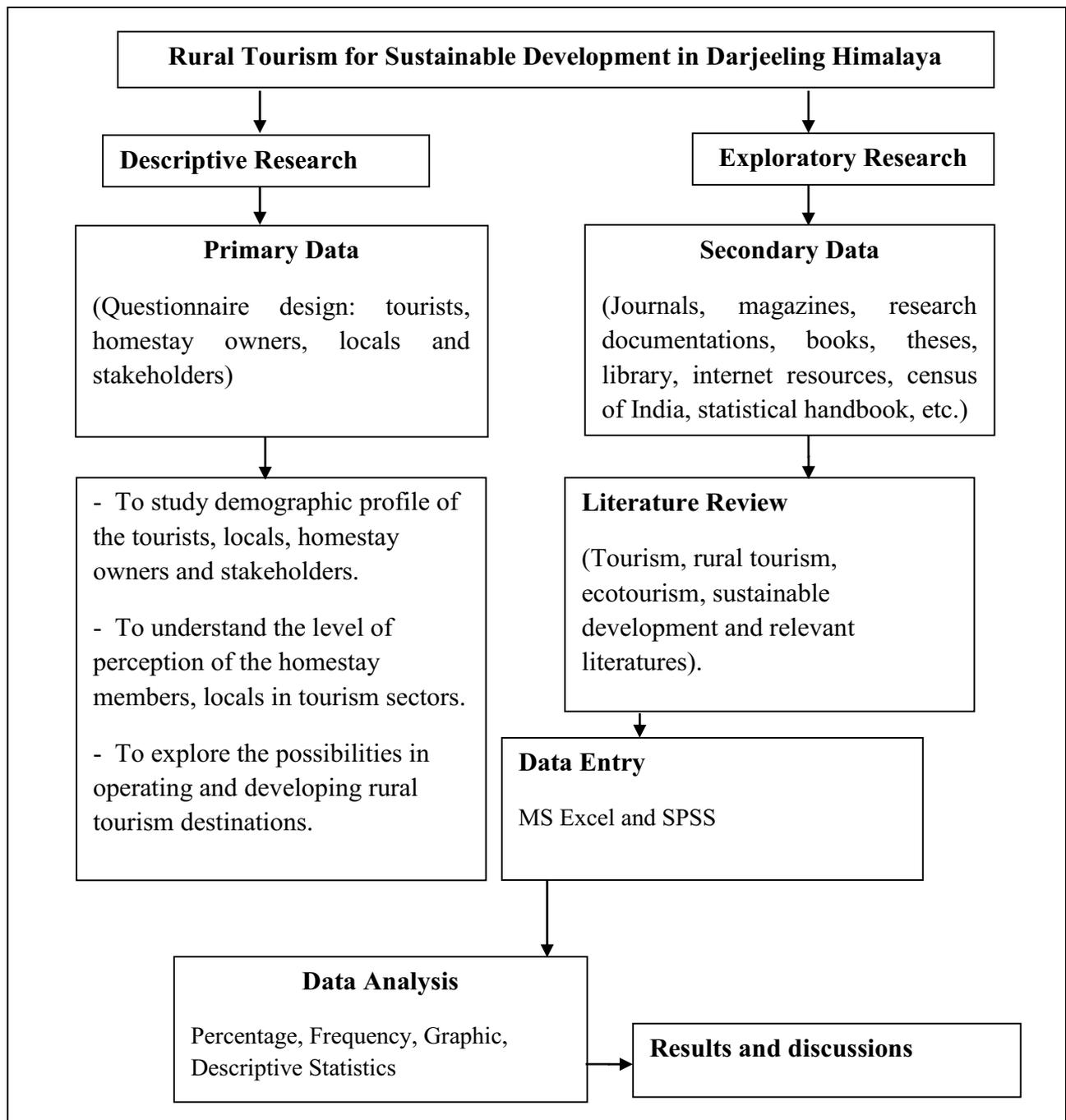
The different factors for economic, socio-cultural, and environmental development were recognized by a basic survey of the literature. A structured questionnaire schedule was constructed utilizing the factors acquired from the review of literature for the primary data collection. Hereafter, a study of the tourists, homestay owners, and the residents was attempted through the tables utilizing a 5-point Likert scale running from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5).

A structured questionnaire was used to investigate the tourist profile visiting rural areas and their satisfaction index. The fundamental elements of rural tourism with 5 'A's i.e. Attraction, Accommodation, Accessibility, Amenities, Awareness, and other aspects on the 5-point Likert scale have been analyzed.

An analysis has been made to obtain the satisfaction level of all the tourists i.e. domestic as well as foreign with the different facilities that they were delighted to have at their disposal at all the six rural tourism destinations, such as accommodation, infrastructure (transportation), food, services, attitude of people, culture, attraction of the place, shopping, parking, cleanliness, drinking water, the behaviour of the local people towards tourists, scenic beauty of rural destinations, beautiful landscapes, peaceful environment, safety and security, so on and so forth. 420 tourists were surveyed regarding facilities with the help of 5 points Likert scale ranging from Very Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Neutral, Unsatisfactory, and Very Unsatisfactory.

1.10 Research Design

Figure 1.10 Research Design



(Source: Ya Prum, 2019 and the researcher's conceptualization)

The research design has been divided into two categories: descriptive research and exploratory research. Primary data is included in descriptive research. Primary data was gathered on the ground using a questionnaire and schedule method. Tourists, homestay owners, residents, and other stakeholders involved in rural tourism in different Darjeeling Himalaya destinations provided basic information. In order to understand the demographic profile of tourists, locals, homestay owners, and stakeholders; to better understand the level of perception of homestay members and locals in the tourism sector; and to investigate the possibilities for operating and developing rural tourism destinations, primary data was collected from all. In exploratory research, secondary data has been used which was acquired out of a variety of sources, including journals, magazines, research documentation, books, theses, the library, internet sources, the Indian census, and statistical handbooks, and many others. A literature review on tourism, rural tourism, eco-tourism, sustainable development, and other related literature was conducted using material gathered from secondary sources. MS Word, MS Excel, and SPSS were used to enter the data. The data was assessed and implemented in percentage, frequency, graphic, and descriptive statistics, resulting in bar diagrams and pie charts. Eventually, after reviewing all of the material gathered from primary as well as secondary sources, conclusions and recommendations were obtained.

References

- Aggarwal, P. (1999) *Tourism and Economic Growth and Development*, Mohit Publications, New Delhi.
- Aneja, P. (2006). "Sustainable Tourism Development Challenges Ahead". *Kurukshetra*, Vol. 12, No. 5.
- Aytug, K. H., Mikaeili, M. (2016). "Evaluation of Hopa's Rural Tourism Potential in the Context of European Union Tourism Policy", *Elsevier*, Vol. 37, No. 1.
- Badan, B. S., Bhatt, H. (2006) *Sustainable Tourism*. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- Bande, U. (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Mountains". *Yojana*, Vol. 24, No.15 (August).
- Bharathbhushan, E. K. (2005). "Sustainable Tourism Development". *Kerala Calling*, Vol.50, No.16, October.
- Bhattacharya, P. (2008). "Tourism Development in Northeast India: Changing Recreational Demand, Developmental Challenges and Issues associated with Sustainability", *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research*, Vol. 3, No. 1
- Bhatia, A. K. (1991). *Tourism Development: Principles and Practices*. Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi.
- Bojnec, S. (2010). "Rural Tourism, Rural Economy Diversification, and Sustainable Development", *Academica Turistica*, Vol. 1. No. 1.
- Caprihan, K. V., Kirthi, S. (2004). "Eco-Tourism in India". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.12, No.2 (Jan-June).
- Chand, M., Bhushan, R. (2005). "Rural Tourism: A New Approach to Sustainability". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.9, No.2 (Jan-June).

- Chaturvedi, D. (2010). "Tourism in India: Ensuring Buoyancy and Sustainability". *Yojana*, Vol.13, No.8 (May).
- Chettri, N. (1998). "Impact of Tourism on Biodiversity: A Case Study from the Sikkim Himalayas, India". *South Asian Perspectives in Eco-tourism and Conservation*, Gangtok: Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim.
- D' Souza, R. (2009). "Rural Development through Rural Tourism", *Salesian Journal*, Kalpa Griha Publication, New Delhi.
- Das, N., Syiemlieh, H. J. (2004). "Eco-Tourism in Assam". *Yojana*, Vol.8, No.4 (July).
- Dashper, K. (2014). *Rural Tourism: An International Perspective*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, UK.
- Dimitrovski, D. D. (2011). "Rural Tourism and Regional Development: Case study of Development of Rural Tourism in the Region of Gruza, Serbia", *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, Vol. 14, No.1 (2011).
- Dordevic, Z. D., Susic, V., Janjic, I. (2019). "Perspectives of Development of Rural Tourism of the Republic Of Serbia", *Economic Themes*, Vol.1 No.1.
- Dorji P., Kinley (2017). "Rural Tourism in Bhutan: A Tool to Achieve Gross National Happiness", *Journal of Hospitality Tourism*, Vol. 4, No. 2, March (2017).
- Frederick, M. (1992). *Tourism as a Rural Economic Development Tool: An Exploration of the Literature*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
- Gale, T., Hill, J. (2009). *Ecotourism and Environmental Sustainability Principles and Practice*, Routledge Publication, (May 28, 2009), Bristol (U.K.)
- Gangotia, A. (2013). "Home Stay Scheme in Himachal Pradesh: A Successful Story of Community Based Tourism Initiatives (CBTIS)", *Global Research Analysis*, Vol.2, Issue 2.

- Gursoy D., Jurowski C., Uysal M. (2002). "Resident Attitudes: A Structural Modeling Approach". *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 1 No.1.
- Hall, M., Alan, A. (1999). "Sustainable Tourism - A Geographical Perspective". *International Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 2, Issue 5.
- Henderson, et al. (2001). "Urban Environmental and Nature-Based Attractions: Green Tourism in Singapore". *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 26 (3).
- Hunziker, W., Krapf, K. (1942). "General Tourist Theory". *The Outline of General Tourism Science*, Vol. 26, No. 3.
- Irshad, H. (2010). *Rural Tourism - An Overview*, Agriculture and Rural Development, Government of Alberta, Rural Development Division, October 2010.
- Jagmohan, N. (1990). *Tourism and Travel*, Gitanjali Publishing House. New Delhi.
- Jayapalan, N. (1984). *An Introduction to Tourism*. Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, Delhi (1984).
- Katoch, A., Prashant, G. (2015). "Rural Tourism as a Medium for Local Development in Himachal Pradesh: The example of Villages around Dharamshala (Kangra)". *South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage*, Vol. 8, No.1.
- Kiper, T. (2013). "Role of Ecotourism in Sustainable Tourism", *Advances in Landscape Architecture, Intech*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Kohli, M. S. (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Himalayas". *Yojana*, Vol.24, No.15 (August).
- Kumar, S., Sampad, M. (2007). "Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Development-A Case Study of Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary in Orissa". *SouthAsian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.7, No.2.

- Lane, B. (2009). "Rural Tourism: An Overview", *The SAGE Handbook of Tourism Studies*, (Ed. Tazim Jamal and Mike Robinson), SAGE Publications, Vol.1, No. 1.
- Lane, B. (2009). "What is Rural Tourism", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol. 2, Issue 1 (August 2009)
- Lepp, A. (2007). "Residents' Attitudes towards Tourism in Bigodi village, Uganda". *Elselvier*, March (2007) Volume 8, No.8.
- Liu, Z. (2003). "Sustainable Tourism Development: A Critique", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol. 11, No. 6
- Manoj, K. P. (2016). "Impact of Rural Tourism on the Environment and Society: Evidence from Kumbalangi in Kerala, India", *International Journal of Advanced Research in Computer Science and Management*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (February 2016).
- Martin, S. R., McCool, S. F. (1992). "Attitude of Montana Residents towards Tourism Development". *Research Report 23*. Missoula. MT: The University of Montana, School of Forestry, Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research 21.
- McIntosh, W. R., Goeldner, R. C. (1986). *Tourism: Principles, Practices, Philosophies*, Wiley Publisher.
- Mili, N. (2012). "Rural Tourism Development: An Overview of Tourism in the Tipam Phakey Village of Naharkhatia in Dibrugarh District, Assam, India". *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Vol. 2. Issue 12.
- Mohanlal, K. G. (2007). "Ecotourism in Kerala". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.18, No.1 (July-Dec 2007).

- Mousavi, S. S., Doratli, N., Mousavi, S.N., Moradiahari, F. (2016) “Defining Cultural Tourism”, *International Conference on Civil, Architecture and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (December 2016).
- Murti, S. K., Kumar, S. (1989). *Tourists Activities Causing Depletion of Plant Wealth in Jammu & Kashmir, In Impacts of Tourism on Mountain Environment*, (ed. S.C. Singh) Research India Publications, Meerut.
- Nomani, A., Khan, R. K. M. (2015). “Human Resource development in tourism Industry – An Analytical Framework”, *South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage (SAJTH)*, Vol. 8. No. 1.
- Nooripoor, et al. (2020). “The Role of Tourism in Rural Development: Evidence from Iran”, *Geo Journal*, Vol.1, No.1.
- O’Malley, L. S. S. (1907). *Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.
- Okech, et al. (2012). “Rural Tourism as a Sustainable Development Alternative: An Analysis with Special Reference to Luanda, Kenya”, *Cultur*, Vol. 3, No.1. (August, 2012).
- Panda, T. K., Mishra, S., Parida, B. B. (1992). *Tourism Management: the Socio-Economic and Ecological Perspective*. Hyderabad: Universities Press.
- Pandya, M.T., Oza, G. M. (1994). “Biodiversity for the Masses”. *Indian Forester*, Vol. 20, No1.
- Pearce, J. (1980). “Host Community Acceptance of Foreign Tourists: Strategic considerations”, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 7, Issue 2.
- Perez, E. A., Nadal, J. R. (2005). “Host Community Perceptions: a Cluster Analysis”. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 32, No. 4.

- Pizam, A., Milman, A. (1986). "The Social Impacts of Tourism", *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 11, No. 1
- Rajan, J., Sabu, K. T., (2001). "Impact of Tourism on the Environment of Munnar". *Review of Social Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Repetto, R. (1985). *The Global Possible: Resources, Development, and the New Century (World Resources Institute Book)*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London.
- Richardson, J. I. and Fluker, M. (2004). *Understanding and Managing Tourism*. Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia.
- Sethi, P. (2002). *Millennium Trends in Travel and Tourism*, Rajat Publications, Delhi
- Sharma, V. (1985). "Tourism: It's Socio-Economic Importance". *Southern Economist*, Vol. 24, No.14.
- Singh, S. (1997). *Ecotourism and environmental conservation in India*, Rajat Publication, New Delhi.
- Spychala, A., Sylwia G. (2013). "What is Nature Tourism? Case Study of University Students". *Turyzm*, Vol. 1, No.1.
- Stettner, A. C. (1993). "Community or Commodity? Sustainable Development in Mountain Resorts". *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 18, No. 1.
- Stojanovic, M., Stojanovic, D., Randelovic, D. (2010). "New Trends in Participation at Tourist Market under Conditions of Global Economic Crisis", *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, Vo. 1, No. 1.
- Sunlu, U. (2003). "Environmental Impacts of Tourism", *CIHEAM*, Vol. 1, No. 1
- Timilsina, P. (2012). "Homestay Tourism Boosts Ghale Gaon's Economy", *Gorkhapatra*, Vol.1, No.1.

Tosun, C., Timothy, J. D. (2003). "Arguments for Community Participation in the Tourism Development Process", *The Journal of Tourism Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2.

Upadhyay, P. (2016). "Envisaged for Sustainable Rural Development: Viability and Challenges of Rural Tourism in Nepal", *Repositioning*, Vol. 1, No. 1.

Var, T., Sheldon, P. J. and Liu, J. C. (1987). "Resident perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism". *Annals of Tourism Research*.

Ziffer, A. K. (1989). *Ecotourism: The Uneasy Alliance*, Conservation International, Ernst and Young, Washington D.C.

Chapter II

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY AREA

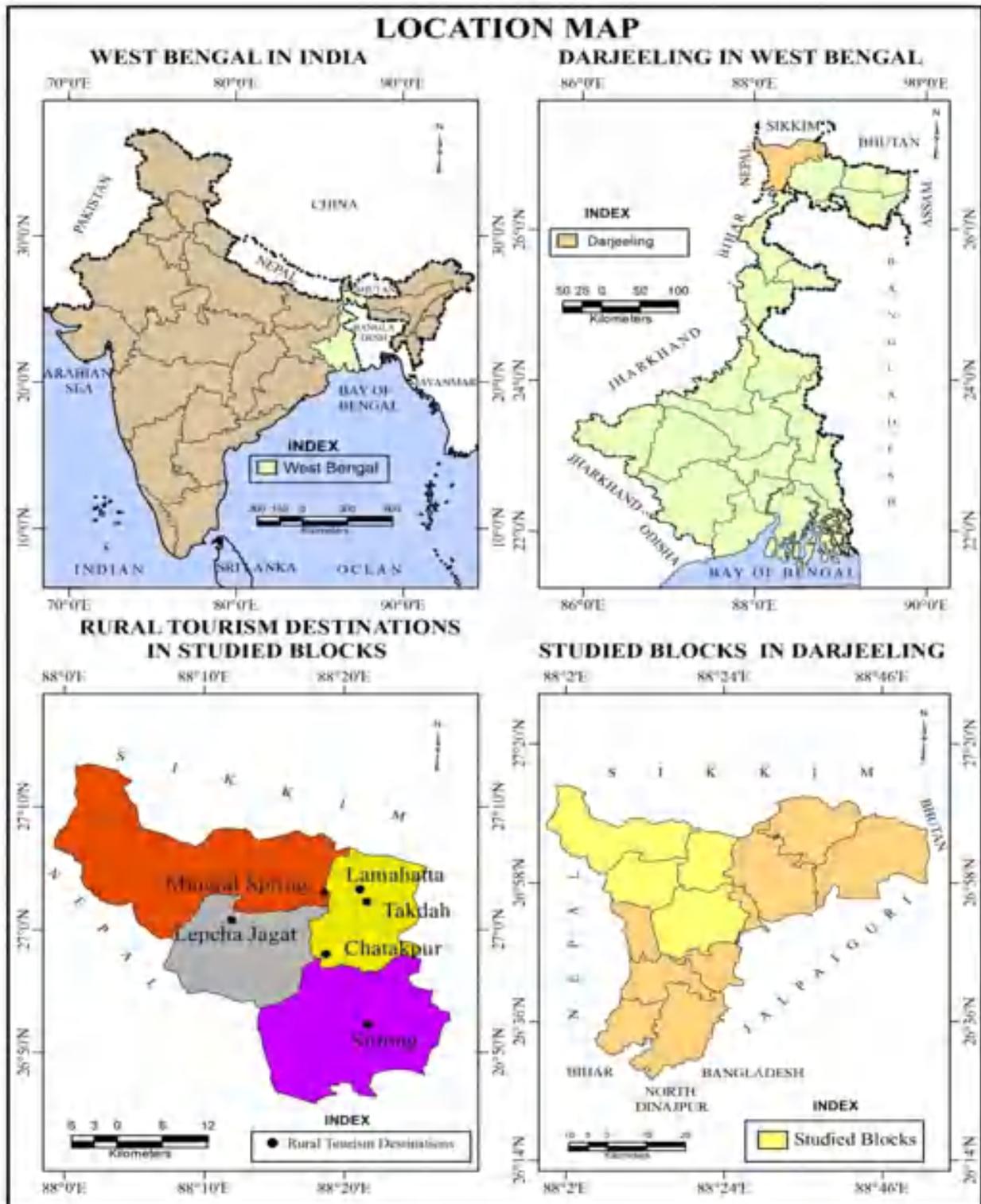
This chapter presents the profile of Darjeeling Himalaya. It emphasizes the physical determinants like location, physiography, climate, vegetation, drainage system, geology, soil types and demographic pattern of the study area.

2.1 Location of the Study Area

“The district of Darjeeling lies between 26° 31’ and 27° 13’ north latitude and between 87° 59’ and 88° 53’ east longitude and its total area is about 1,200 square miles. The principal town and administrative headquarters of the district is Darjeeling town at 27° 3’ north latitude and 88° 16’ east longitude” (Dash, 1947, pp. 1). “The name Darjeeling is a corruption of *dorje* and *ling*; *dorje*, the precious stone or ecclesiastical sceptre, which is emblematic of the thunderbolt of Sakhra (Indra) and of *ling*, a place. It means therefore the place of the *dorje*, the mystic thunderbolt of the Lamaist religion, this being the name by which the Buddhist monastery which once stood on Observatory Hill was formerly known” (O’Malley, 1907, pp. 1).

The district is shaped like an inverted triangle, with its base in Sikkim, a small Indian state. Darjeeling district is a bordering district that stretches from the mountainous state of Sikkim in the north to the lowlands of Bengal in the south, wedged between the neighboring nations of Nepal and Bhutan. A number of mountains and rivers separate the district from the state of Sikkim. The steep Singalila mountain chain forms the district’s northern boundary, while its south-eastern and southern boundaries run parallel to the districts of Jalpaiguri (West Bengal) and Purnea (Bihar). (O’Malley, 1907).

Figure 2.1 Location Map of the Study Area



Source: Tourism Department, GTA, Darjeeling

2.2 Physical Features of Darjeeling Himalaya

2.2.1 Physiography

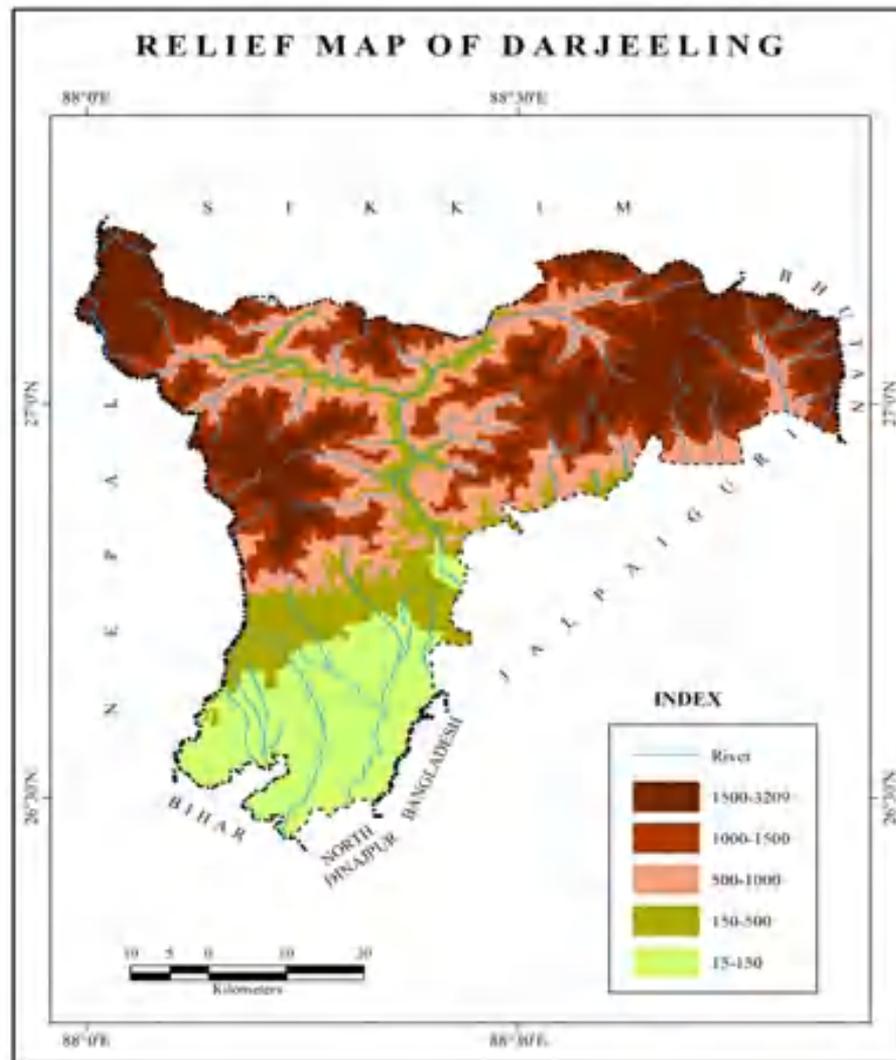
The hilly region and the Terai-Dooars region are two distinct physiographic units in the Darjeeling district. Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong, and Mirik are all part of the hilly region. The Terai-Dooars, which include the Siliguri sub-division, is the Himalayan foothills. The hills of the Darjeeling Himalaya are made up of large ranges that stretch north to south along their whole length. Mount Kanchenjunga (8579 m) lies to the northwest, and Mount Dongkya lies to the northeast (7066 m) (Dash, 1947).

The elevation of the Darjeeling Himalaya ranges between 150 m at the foothills to as much as 3,630 m at the highest point in the district - Sandakphu - which is the highest elevated place of the entire state of West Bengal. The area is drained by rivers such as Mahananda, Teesta, Mechi and Balason. Much of the region is dedicated to tea plantations and a variety of pine forests (Dash, 1947).

The Singalila range, the largest range of the state, extends south to the plains from Kanchenjunga, forming the boundary between Nepal and Darjeeling. The mountain extends south and southeast through Tanglu and Senchal with its various side branches that form the Darjeeling hill area west of Teesta. To the east of Teesta, a high mountain begins at Dongkya and divides into two large foothills at Gipmochi (351 km), one to the southeast and the other to the southwest, between which is the Jaldhaka valley. It is the lower part of the south-western spur along the Kalimpong Hills, east of river Teesta. The Singalila ridge commands Nepal on one side and Sikkim and Darjeeling on the other and the basins of two main river systems. The rivers draining its western part flow into the Ganges, while the rivers draining its eastern part flow into the tributaries of the Brahmaputra River. The mountain has risen from 0.048 3 meters to

3,658 meters, and the peaks of Sandakphu and Phalut meet the borders of Nepal, Sikkim and Darjeeling (O'Malley, 1907).

Figure 2.2.1 Relief Map of Darjeeling



Source: Tourism Department, GTA, Darjeeling

2.2.2 Climate

The climate of the Darjeeling Himalaya varies due to variations in altitude and aspects. It varies from hot and humid in the foothill regions to cold and moist in the higher altitudes. Darjeeling experiences severe winters when temperatures fall below freezing point and reach -5 °C during the

month. Darjeeling has a pleasant summer, with monsoon winds in May-September bringing heavy rainfall and occasional snowfall in the winter months. Frequent rains cause frequent landslides in the district and cause extensive damage to power lines, settlements, life and property. Tarai-Dooars plain, on the other hand, experiences warmer summers, less rain and milder, drier winters. In May, summer temperatures reach 35 °C in Dooars. In January, winter temperatures drop to 5 °C. In general, the hills of Darjeeling come under the monsoon climate regime. According to the Koppen classification, the region is mainly subject to hot temperate or humid mesothermal “CWB” environments. ‘H’ type climate or Highland climate has been experienced due to its hilly terrain (Barry and Chorley 1968, Chang 1972, Trewartha and Horn 1980). The transcendent ‘Cwb’ climate is portrayed by gentle winters and delayed summers with abundant rain (O’Malley, 1907). “As the Darjeeling district consists of valleys, in which the elevation above the sea may be not more than 1,000 feet, and hill ranges, which rise to a height of 10,000 to 12,000 feet, climatic conditions are necessarily varied, more especially as regards temperature. In the Tarai and the lower valleys the heat is tropical; but in the town of Darjeeling the temperature is that of a temperate zone and only about two degrees above that of London” (O’Malley, 1907, pp. 17). “During the cold-weather months very little rain falls in the Darjeeling hills. November and December are almost rainless, and the light showers which fall in January and February occur when shallow depressions are passing eastward over the plains” (O’Malley, 1907, pp. 17). January and February are the coldest months in the Darjeeling hills. During January and February, temperatures in steep areas may drop below freezing (0 °C), resulting in snowfall. The months of March and April are spring in Darjeeling Himalaya. In May, June, and July, people can experience the summer. In June, July and August, monsoon season can be experienced (Dash, 1947).

Table 2.2.2.1 Climatic Data of Darjeeling, 2020

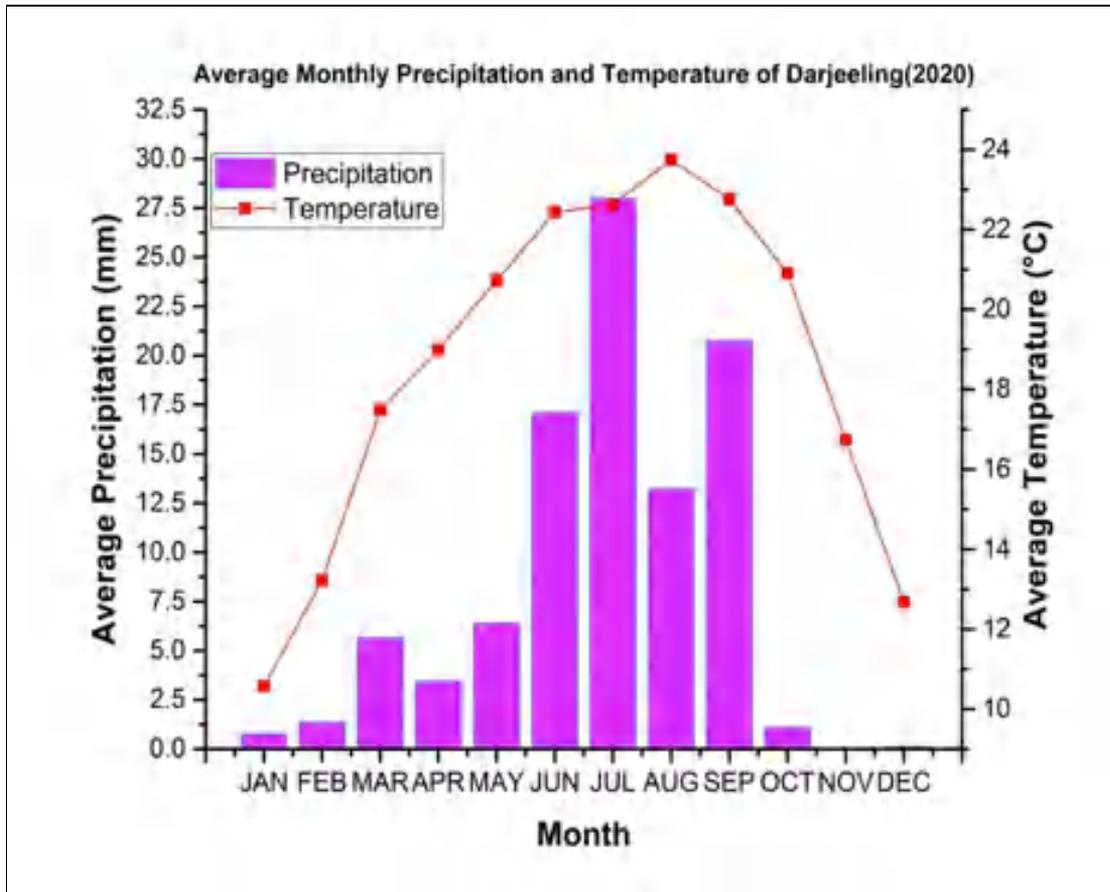
Month	Precipitation (mm)	Temperature (°C)
January	0.79	10.58
February	1.36	13.22
March	5.68	17.48
April	3.48	19.00
May	6.41	20.73
June	17.11	22.44
July	28.00	22.62
August	13.24	23.75
September	20.77	22.76
October	1.11	20.90
November	0.02	16.74
December	0.14	12.68

(Source: Indian Meteorological Department)

The above data shows the average monthly precipitation (in mm) and average monthly temperature (°C) of Darjeeling (2020). The highest precipitation of 17.11 mm is experienced in June while the lowest of 0.14 mm is experienced in December. The highest temperature of 23.75 °C is experienced in August while the lowest temperature of 10.58 °C is experienced in January. January is the coldest month in Darjeeling.

Climate of Darjeeling, 2020

Figure 2.2.2.1 Climatic Graph of Darjeeling, 2020



(Source: Indian Meteorological Department)

2.2.2.2 Rainfall

The Darjeeling Himalaya experiences high rainfall. The highest rainfall experienced is 28.00 mm in July and the lowest is experienced in November with only 0.02 mm. The average annual rainfall is 106.08 mm. (Dash, 1947).

2.2.3 Natural Vegetation

The physical nature of the Himalayas and the Indian monsoon has a profound effect on the characteristics of vegetation in the Darjeeling region. Even in relatively small areas, rainfall

variability can have a significant impact on species distribution and crop formation. The foothills of the southern slope of the Darjeeling Himalaya are at the altitude of 160 m to 1,000 m comprising tropical species like *Schima wallichii*, *Terminalia bellirica*, *Nyssa javanica* and *Shorea robusta*, and the community type is *Terminalia/ Shorea/ Schima*. The type of intermediate community is *Castanopsis/ Alcimandra/ Curacas*. The eastern and south-eastern belts are deciduous, with evergreen trees beneath the upper forest (1,800 m - 2,800 m above sea level). At the higher altitudes (3,000 m – 3,700 m), only first-class evergreen communities predominate. *Abyss densa*, scattered *rhododendrons* and *Betida aeroids* are on the second level and the community is classified as *abyss/ rhododendron/ betula*. In and around the city of Darjeeling, some of the city’s varieties can be found on the heights of tropical evergreen hills. Conifers such as Podocarpus are only grown locally and include mainly Frankensens (*Cryptomeria japonica*), Utis, Pipli, and Rhododendron. But now, with rapid urbanization, under the control of private or government, there is almost no trace of forest cover in the municipal limits except for a few pockets. Senchal forests which are also the famous Tiger Hill - the reservoir of Senchal Sarovar are on the verge of depletion and have become a major cause for scarcity of water in summer in Darjeeling. (O’Malley, 1907).

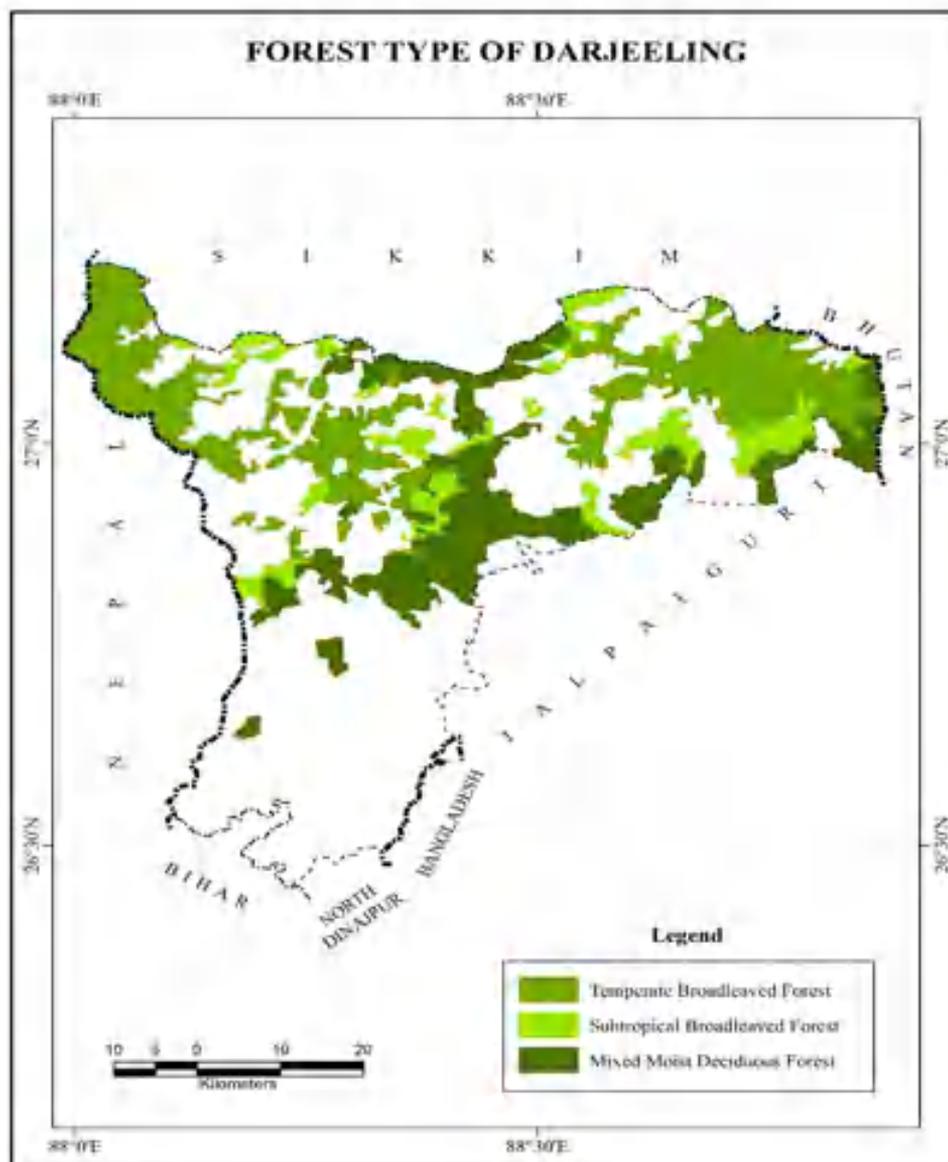
Table 2.2.3: Altitudinal Zones of Darjeeling Himalayan Forests

Sl. No.	Forest Type	Altitude
1	Tropical Moist Deciduous	300-1000 m
2	Tropical Evergreen Lower Montane	1000-2000 m
3	Tropical Evergreen Upper Montane	2000-3000 m
4	Temperate Coniferous	3000-3500m
5	Temperate Coniferous	above 3500 m

(Source: Municipal Office, Darjeeling)

The altitudinal zones of Darjeeling Himalayan forests fall between 300m to more than 3500m consisting of five zones. The Tropical Moist Deciduous forest ranges between 300 to 1000m, the Tropical Evergreen Lower Montane forest ranges between 1000m to 2000m, the Tropical Evergreen Upper Montane forest ranges between 2000 to 3000m, the Temperate Coniferous forest ranges between 3000 to 3500m, the Temperate Coniferous forest exists above 3500m altitude.

Figure 2.2.3 Natural Vegetation Map of Darjeeling



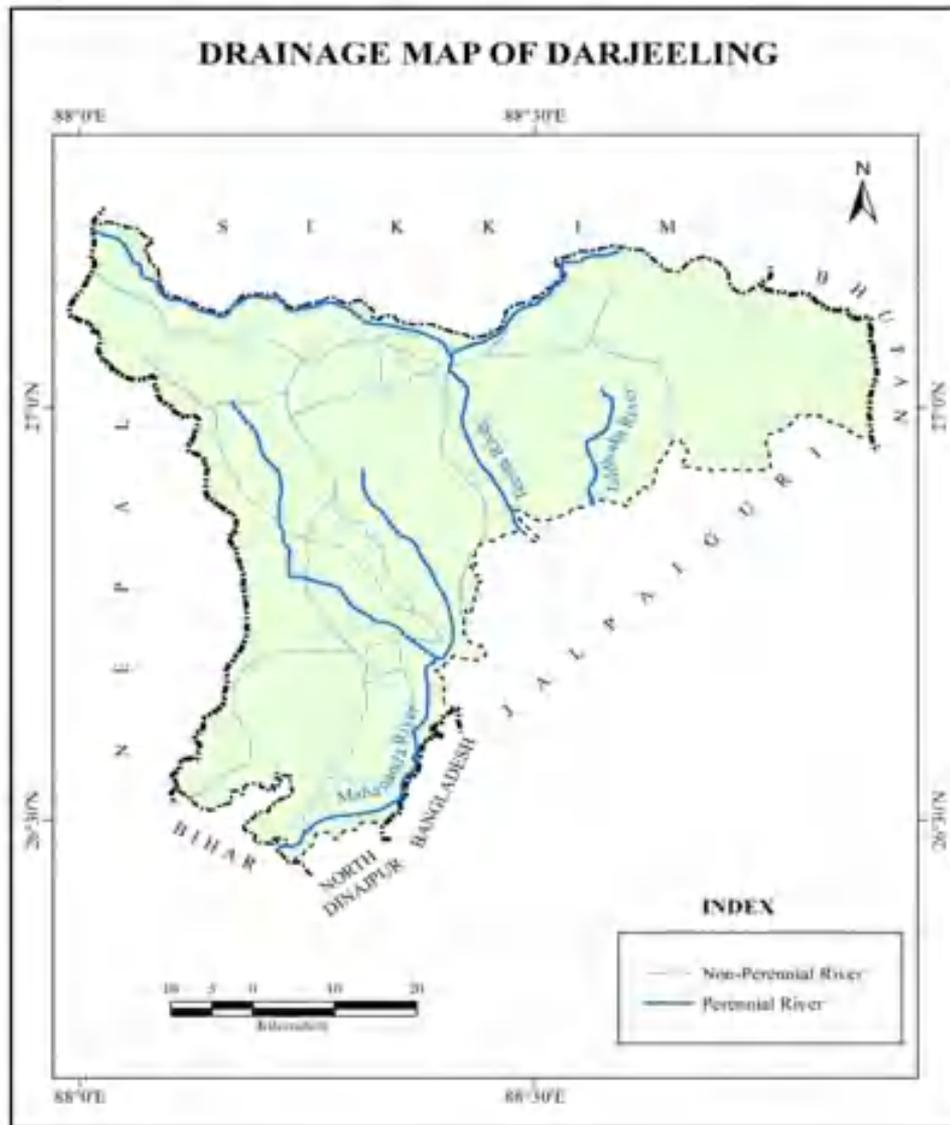
Source: Tourism Department, GTA, Darjeeling

Most of the parts of Darjeeling have been covered by Temperate Broadleaved Forest and Mixed Moist Deciduous Forest. Subtropical Broadleaved Forest is spread over the northern, north-eastern and central parts of Darjeeling.

2.2.4 Drainage System

Darjeeling Himalayan Rivers eventually flow south; from the west-eastern boundaries descend several tributaries and flows north and east or west before flowing into other major rivers. “Dominating all the other rivers in the District from the point where it is joined by the Rango down to its junction with the Great Rangit flowing in from the west. From that point it lies entirely in the Darjeeling District until it leaves it at Sivok, ultimately entering the Brahmaputra in Rangpur District. In Darjeeling District, its principal tributaries are the Rangpo and the Rili on its left bank and the Great Rangit, the Riyang and the Sivok on the right bank. The river is bridged by a suspension bridge near Melli. In the gorge, where both banks are in the District, there are three bridges, two of reinforced concrete carrying heavy road traffic and one suspension bridge carrying only animals and pedestrians” (Dash, 1947, pp. 3). Of the tributaries of Teesta, the Great Rangit is the most important. (Dey and Kushari, 1980)

Figure 2.2.4 Drainage Map of Darjeeling



Source: Tourism Department, GTA, Darjeeling

The Great Rangit River has a rocky or sandy bed. Its banks are usually covered with forests, with few individual crops. The meeting of the Rangit and the Teesta is one of the most captivating scenes along its course. The latter's colour and coolness are undoubtedly related to the number of glaciers it is attached to, while the coloration of the former depends mainly on the rains from the outer ridges of the Senchal and Singalila range, so the water is warm and clean. To the east of the

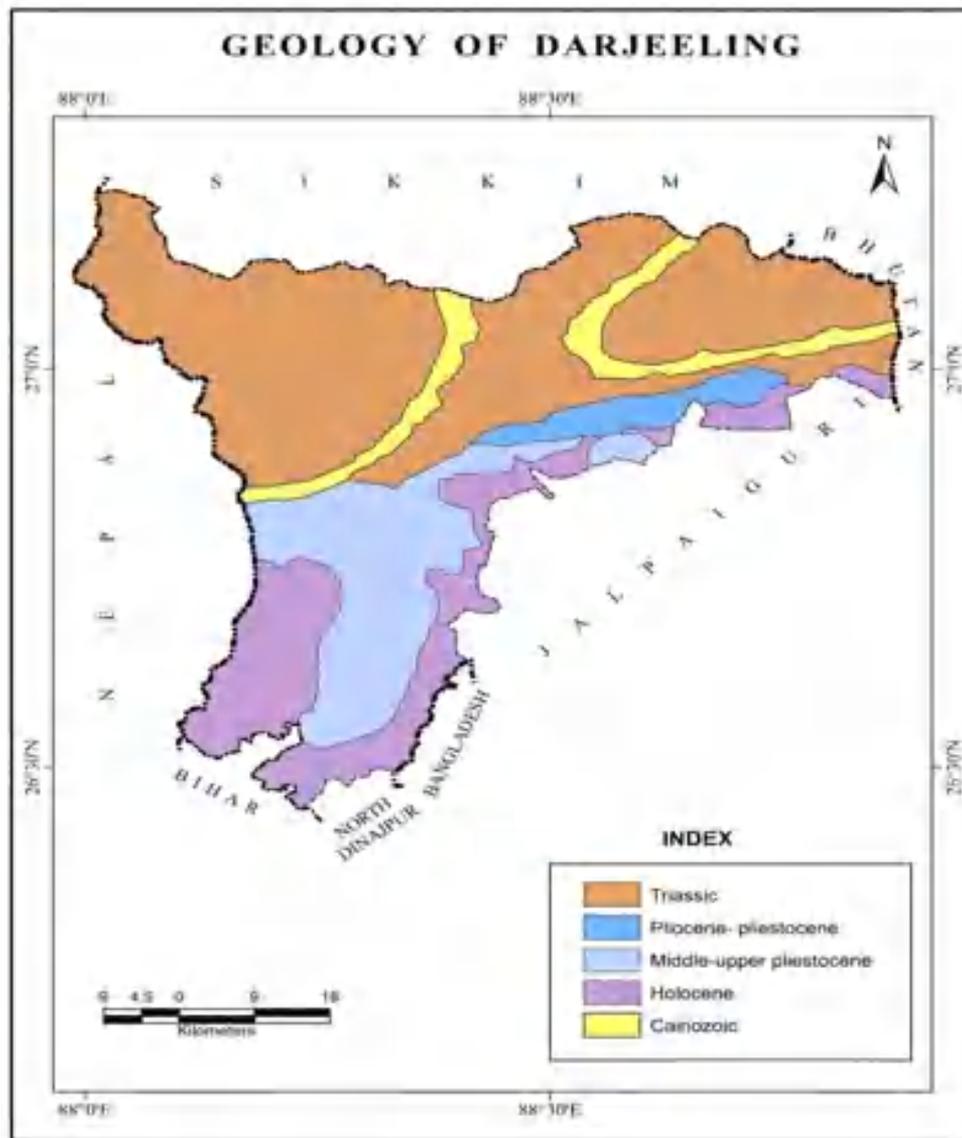
Teesta are rivers that drain to the Brahmaputra after coming out of the hills. “The Jaldhaka carries the largest volume of water of all this group of eastern foothill rivers” (Dash, 1947, pp. 6). The eroded materials from the hills are carried by the Lish, the Gish and the Chel rivers (Dey and Kushari, 1980).

2.2.5 Geology

“The geological formations of the Darjeeling District consist of unaltered sedimentary rocks, confined to the hills on the south, and different grades of metamorphic rocks over the rest of the area. The outcrops of the various rocks form a series of bands more or less parallel to the general line of the Himalaya and dip one beneath the other into the hills. A characteristic feature of the southern area is that the older formations rest on the younger, showing a complete reversal of the original order of superposition” (Dash, 1947, pp. 7).

The geographical structures found in the Darjeeling region are divided into five groups: Gneiss, the Daling series, the Buxa series, Gondwanas and the Tertiary system. This outflow forms a series of bands that conform to the general trends of the Himalayas. The most surprising aspect of the subdivision is that the tertiary layer disappears under Gondwana, because the young layer is underneath the old layer. The Gondwana under the Buxa and Darling series, and the second under the Gneiss, are completely contrasted with pots and warps in their original grading order. Gneiss foil varies from granite or quartz, feldspar, biotite to more or less pure mica schist and consists of a partially intrusive granite and partially metamorphic sedimentary source. The Daling series covers a large area north and east of the district. It contains phyllite, slate and quartzite, dolomite amphibolite schist and several dependent zones (Dash, 1947).

Figure 2.2.5 Geology of Darjeeling



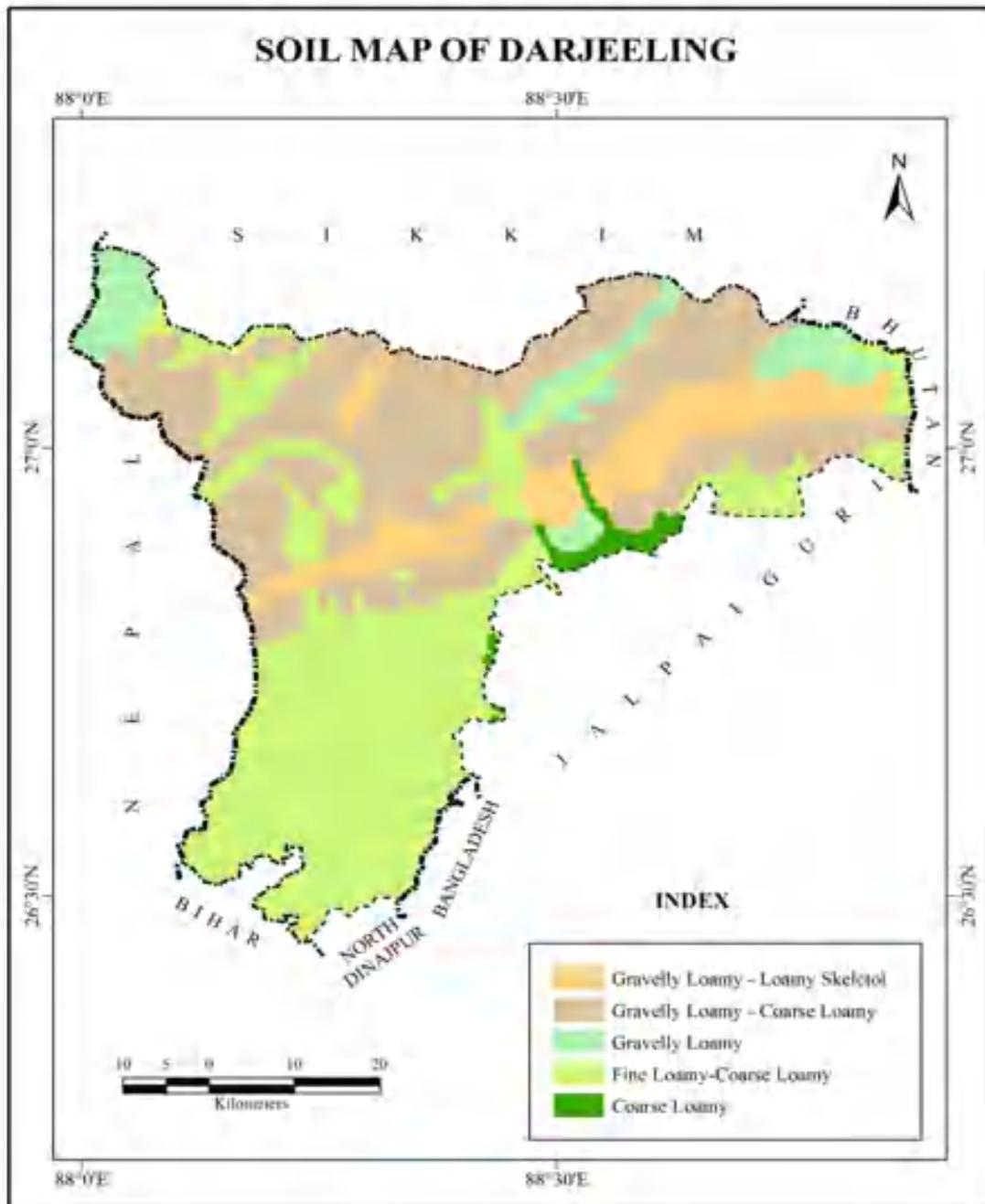
Source: Tourism Department, GTA, Darjeeling

2.2.6 Soil Types

Darjeeling hills soils are formed from two major rocks namely, Daling rocks and Darjeeling Gneiss. The soils in the area include black, acidic and deep forest soils that were high in silica but low in lime. "The soil in the Terai is composed of alluvium, a light sandy loam being the most common. There are also considerable tracts of sandy or gravelly soils, unsuitable for cultivation.

In the hills, cultivators recognize only three kinds of soil, white, red and black. Of these, the black soil is the richest, the white the poorest, the red soil occupying an intermediate position, requiring heavy manuring to give as good an outturn as the black” (Dash, 1947, pp. 102).

Figure 2.2.6 Soil Map of Darjeeling



Source: Tourism Department, GTA, Darjeeling

Darjeeling's entire territory is covered by four types of loamy soils. The gravelly to coarse loamy soils dominate in the northern section. A few areas in the north-western and north-eastern part is covered by gravelly loamy, the whole southern part is covered by fine loamy to coarse loamy, and only a few areas in the northeast is covered by coarse loamy soils.

2.3 Demographic Profile

Darjeeling has a population of 1,645,162 people, with 834,255 men and 807,907 women, according to the 2011 census. In India, it is ranked 257th (out of a total of 640). Darjeeling had a population of 1,609,172 people in 2001, with 830,644 men and 778,528 women. 727,963 people (39.42 %) live in cities, whereas 1,118,860 people (60.58 %) live in rural areas, according to the 2011 census. The region has a population density of 586 people per square kilometre, and a sex ratio of 973 females per 1000 males. The literacy rate of Darjeeling is 79.56 percent.

The Gorkhas, Lepchas and Bhutias are the three main ethnic groups in Darjeeling. In 1850, Dr. Campbell predicted a population of 10,000 people, which grew to 22,000 in 1869. Bengalis, Biharis and Marwaris migrated to the highlands for administrative and business purposes. Along with Bengalis, Adivasis such as the Santhals, Oraons and Mundas can be found in the plains, alongside Rajbansis. The Gorkhas make up a large portion of the population in the Hills. Brahmins, Chettris, Rais, Mangars, Newars, Gurungs, Tamangs, Limbus, Sherpas, Kamis, Damais, Sunwars, Sarkis, and other communities comprise the majority of Gorkhas (O'Malley, 1907).

Table 2.3.1: Block-wise Distribution of Population in Darjeeling Hills, 2011

Sl. No.	Name of the blocks	No. of Gram Panchayats	Population		
			Male	Female	Total
1	Darjeeling-Pulbazar	23	63,766	62,981	1,26,747
2	Rangli-Rangliot, Takdah	11	35,065	35,044	70,109
3	Jorebunglow-Sukhiapokhari	16	56,139	57,362	1,13,501
4	Kurseong	14	47,047	47,289	94,337
5	Mirik	06	23,082	22,706	45,788

(Source: Census of India, 2011)

Table 2.3.2: Population of Municipal Towns in Darjeeling Hills, 2011

Sl. No.	Name of the Municipality	No. of Wards	Population		
			Male	Female	Total
1	Darjeeling Municipality	32	60,113	60,300	1,20,414
3	Kurseong Municipality	20	21,642	20,704	42,346
4	Mirik Municipality	09	5,675	5,812	11,487

(Source: Census of India, 2011)

2.4 Cultural Background

Traditionally, the Gorkhas are divided into two categories: the Tagadari (the sacred thread's owner) and the Matwali (the drinker of alcohol). Most Brahmans and Khattris fall into the first type, while others fall into the second. Some Gorkhas are secular humanists who hold a strong shamanic belief. Most Gorkhas today practice Hinduism, but the Lepchas, Tamangs, Sherpas

and Bhutias practice Buddhism; some scheduled tribes, like the Kamis and Damais, practice Christianity. The majority of the festivals are observed with Hindu rites, either in accordance with Indian tradition or in defiance of it. Hinduism and Buddhism both have festivals that are historically observed (O'Malley, 1907).

2.5 Languages

The major hill language is Nepali, which is also the lingua franca of the Dooars, which is located in the northern section of the Jalpaiguri region. Few Lepcha and Limbu households speak their languages to their families in rural regions. The Indian Constitution recognized Nepali as an important language in India and in West Bengal's official language as well. Apart from the Nepali language, all Gorkhas understand and speak Hindi language as well in the hills. "Darjeeling contains a polyglot population. In the hills Nepali Hindi and in the Tarai Bengali are spoken by a great majority of the inhabitants, but there are a great number of other languages current. Nearly half the people speak languages of the Tibeto-Burman family, of which no less than 19 different dialects were shown in the census returns of 1901" (O'Malley, 1907, pp. 47). Apart from a variety of Indo-Aryan languages and dialects spoken in the district, both in the plains and hills, many Austric and Dravidian dialects are also spoken in the plains, particularly in the tea gardens. Nepali speakers make up the largest single group of Indo-Aryan speakers in the district (Dey and Kushari, 1980).

2.6 Economy

As Darjeeling is famous for tea, timber and tourism, the economy of Darjeeling Hill depends mainly on them. In addition to these, there may be small income from agriculture, sericulture, medicinal plant cultivation, hydroelectric power. The cultivation of rice and legumes is common on low slopes; cardamom, ginger and orange are treated like cash crops, albeit on a small scale. In

Kalimpong, sericulture and flower cultivation continues. Orchids are grown in Kalimpong and Takdah. The Taphill Stream minor hydroelectric plant is installed in Phaji, near Sidrabong and Kurseong, below the city of Darjeeling, with a large project in the Rambhang valley. The large-scale industry in the hills is practically nil. For a number of causes, cottage businesses such as textiles, tanning, paper manufacturing, and juice production have been involved. The hill economy largely depends on the tea industry.

2.6.1 History of the Tea industry in Darjeeling

Darjeeling tea is noted for its distinct flavour and taste. Dr. Campbell, the then-Administrator of Darjeeling, began the tea plantation in the hills in 1850. Later it expanded to the plains. Darjeeling's first tea garden was established in 1856 by the Darjeeling and Kurseong Tea Estate. Dhutardia Tea Garden was founded in 1859 by Dr. Brougham. The Kurseong and Darjeeling Tea Company created further tea estates in Takdah, Ambutia, Ging, and Phubsering between 1860 and 1864. The Lebong Tea Company enlarged its Takvar and Badamtam gardens. Several tea plantations, such as Pandam, Steinthal and Makaibari, were established during this time. "By the end of 1866, i.e., only ten years after the establishment of the industry on a commercial basis, there were no less than 39 gardens with 10,000 acres under cultivation, and an outturn of over 433,000 lbs. of tea. In 1870 there were 56 gardens with 11,000 acres under cultivation, employing 8,000 labourers and yielding nearly 1,700,000 lbs.; and in 1874 the number of gardens have increased to 113, the area under cultivation to 18,888 acres, the outturn to 3,928,000 lbs., and the labour force to 19,000 souls. In other words, between 1866 and 1874 the number of gardeners under tea was almost exactly trebled, the area under cultivation increased by 82 per cent., while the outturn of tea was multiplied nearly ten times. Since that time the industry has progressed steadily until no less than 50, 600 acres, or 79 square miles are under tea cultivation" (O'Malley, 1907, pp. 74).

2.6.2 History of Tourism in Darjeeling

Darjeeling's history begins in 1835 when Captain Lloyd founded a sanatorium. In 1838, the completion of the Calcutta-Darjeeling route marked the beginning of modern communication. The Darjeeling Himalaya is called after a British-built elevation modest village that served the East India Company's administrative and military employees' needs. In terms of functionality, it's gone through a lot of adjustments mostly in the development of the colonial environment and tourism. In terms of colonial and post-colonial events, Darjeeling's tourist evolution and expansion may be divided into three eras. The eras started from 1835 to 1947 called the British era, between 1947 and 1988 called the post-independence era and the contemporary scenario that is 1988 onwards called as post-Gorkhaland Movement. In 1868, the Darjeeling Planters' Club was founded. Darjeeling's rise to prominence as a famous hill station was brilliant. The term "Queen of Hill Stations" began to be used to describe the hill station. For the promotion of tourism, the British government beautified some tourist hotspots and erected bungalows for the tourists without damaging the environment. The Darjeeling Family Hotel debuted in 1839 with 12 rooms, succeeded by Wilson's Hotel with 18 rooms, which was erected in a two-storied building. The Woodlands, Rockville, Dam, Bellevue, and hotel Mt. Everest were other ones to emerge, accompanied by the Nelson Hotel. The development of tourism amenities coincided with a growth in the proportion of tourists. At this time, the majority of visitors were British officials and affluent Indian nobles who had opulent bungalows in Darjeeling, such as the Maharajas of Burdwan, Cooch Behar, and Dighapatia. During the British occupation, some hotels were built in Kurseong, Ghoom, and Kalimpong. As a result, the extension of colonialism in the tropics was represented by the rise of tourism in Darjeeling throughout the British period (Mitchell, Nora, 1972). They do represent the region's modern tourism expansion.

2.7 Conclusion

Geographical features have an essential role in drawing tourists from all over the world and boosting the country's economy. Each geographical feature has its significance concerning tourism. The better, more beautiful, and more exciting is the geographical location, the more tourists it attracts. The important factors of tourism such as attraction, accessibility, accommodation, amenities and awareness, and other aspects contribute to effective tourism development. Therefore, attractiveness is a fundamental aspect of tourism and reflects geographical characteristics such as physical, social, cultural and environmental aspects or features. The geographical or physical features such as landscape, topography, relief, slope, drainage, waterfalls, lakes, climate and biological environment, etc. attract tourists. Ethnicity, heritage, cultural traits, history, and other social and cultural characteristics, such as society and traditions, varied traditions, different languages, innovative ideas, improved technology, and so on, serve as a force of attraction for the tourists may it be domestic or it is foreign. With its varied landscapes, natural beauty, and pleasant climate, the Darjeeling Himalaya has a lot of tourist potential. Hilly and mountainous terrain with unique culture and customs enhance scenic splendour, various vistas, and a tranquil environment. As a result, a huge number of visitors are drawn to Darjeeling Himalaya's many tourism destinations to experience the serenity and natural beauty.

References

- Agarwal, A. C. (Eds.). (1977). *Darjeeling, Sikkim and Bhutan: A Travellers' Guide*. New Delhi: Nest and Wings.
- Bhanja, K. C. (1993). *History of Darjeeling and the Sikkim Himalaya*. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.
- Dash, J. A. (1947). *Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.
- De, B., Kusari, M. A. (1980). *West Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta, Superintendent of Printing.
- Dewan, D. B. (1991). *Education in the Darjeeling Hills: a historical survey, 1835 – 1985*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing House.
- Dewan, D. B. (2009). *Education today: A Darjeeling Hill Region*. Pedong, Kalimpong: Tender Bud's Academy.
- Dozey, E. C. (1989). *A concise history of the Darjeeling District since 1835*. Calcutta: Jetsum Publishing House.
- Gurung, N. (1971). *Darjeeling*. Kalimpong: Author.
- Hooker, J. D. (1980). *Himalayan Journal*. New Delhi: Today and Tomorrow's Printers and Publishers.
- Hutt, J. M. (1988). *Nepali: a National language and its literature*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.
- Jain, S. (Eds). (1991). *Kalimpong: a guide and handbook of information*. Kalimpong: Samresh Jain.
- Karkee, P. (2006). *Public libraries of Kalimpong sub-division: a survey of present positions and solutions*. Unpublished MLISc. Dissertation. Jadavpur University, Kolkata.

Khawas, V. (2006). *Socio economic conditions of Tea Garden labourers in Darjeeling Hills*. New Delhi: Council for Social Development.

Lama, B. B. (2009). *The story of Darjeeling*. Kurseong: Nilima Yonzon Lama.

Moktan, R. (2004). *Sikkim Darjeeling Compendium of documents*. Kalimpong: Sumanalaya.

Nora, M. (1972). *The Indian Hill-Station: Kodaikanal*, Paperback, University of Chicago.

O'Malley, L. S. S. (1907). *Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.

Sanskritayan, R. (1950). *Darjeeling Parichay*. Calcutta: Aadhunik Pustak Bhawan.

Chapter III

RURAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS AND THEIR POTENTIAL FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA

3.1 Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to determine the resource potential of a few rural tourism locations namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong in the Darjeeling Himalaya. It also covers tourist services such as lodging, transportation, and communication, as well as entertainment, recreation, and other amenities.

The term tourism potential refers to something that occurs but has yet to be completely recognized. As a result, it represents the set of descriptive and analytical variables that determine the degree and scope of tourism exploitation in the region. It's challenging to quantify potential in the tourism industry because there are so many aspects to consider (Marvah and Ganguly, 1999).

Any natural, cultural, or manmade entity with the potential to attract tourists and lead to development is considered to have tourism potential. As a result, natural landscapes and natural resources such as a river, a mountain, a hill, a waterfall, a lake, wildlife, and historical and cultural sites such as preserved heritage monuments, sculptures, architectures, historic landmarks, and so on, as well as resorts, parks, and other points of interest, can all become potential tourist attractions. Tourism potential is already reflected in infrastructure and cultural features (Munian Sushani, 2014).

Rural tourism potential exists when rural communities' long-term growth is built not only on appealing landscapes and infrastructure but also on competitively priced, high-quality services. Since the region's rural areas have a lot of cultural and historical value rural tourism has a lot of growth potential. Improving infrastructure, historic landmarks, rehabilitating architecture, and

encouraging the preservation of the environment in rural regions all benefit the development of rural tourism. Several variables, including the suitable infrastructure, development of different sites, viewpoints, attractions, etc. along with improvement in services, provision of parking facilities, provision of safety and security of tourists leads to tourism development in rural areas. Rural tourism which is an important source of income for the residents should be given special consideration in terms of diversifying rural economic sources.

As has been stated earlier, six rural tourism destinations, namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong have been selected from across Darjeeling Himalaya based on aesthetics and pristine location.

3.2 Methodology for assessing Rural Tourism Potential:

Tourism potential in all of Darjeeling Himalaya's rural tourism destinations has been assessed based on two factors: natural potential and anthropogenic potential. All rural tourism destinations' location factors, especially the natural, cultural, and historical components of tourism, are examined.

The tourism potential of six rural tourism places in Darjeeling Himalaya, namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, has been assessed using the methods mentioned above.

3.3 Rural Tourism Destinations in Darjeeling Himalaya

Darjeeling Himalaya is a repository of great tourism potential. The rustic mountain hamlets located at the back and beyond the typical hill stations are replete with rich tourism potential. However, inadequate infrastructure and remoteness of most of these places have held them unexplored. Based on natural tourism potential e.g. landscape relief, climate, hydrologic and biographic conditions, Chatakpur, Lamahatta and Takdah get greater importance since they have beautiful

landscapes and pleasant climates. While Lepchajagat has a colder climate, Sittong and Mineral Spring are a bit warmer. Chatakpur, Lamahatta and Takdah have scenic beauty while Lepchajagat, Sittong and Mineral spring give exposure to pristine locations. In terms of natural potential, it can be said that Chatakpur, Lamahatta and Takdah have an edge over Lepchajagat, Sittong and Mineral spring, but all have firmly established their places on the map of rural tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya.

Table 3.3: Location and Locational Advantages of Different Rural Tourism Destinations

Destinations	Location		
	Distance from NJP/ Bagdogra in Km. (apprx.)	Time taken (hours)	Transport Cost (as of 2020)
Takdah	65 (via Jorebunglow)	3.5	Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle
Lamahatta	60 (via Jorebunglow)	3	Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle
Mineral Spring	85 (via Darjeeling)	4	Rs. 800 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 4000 approx. by reserved vehicle
Lepchajagat	70 (via Ghoom)	3	Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle
Chatakpur	62 (via Sonada)	3	Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle
Sittong	78 (via Mungpoo)	3.5	Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle

(Source: Darjeeling Tourism Department, GTA, Darjeeling)

The Darjeeling Himalaya possesses natural potential as a rural tourism destination, such as various terrain configurations, breath-taking landscapes, geographical representation by flora and fauna, good weather conditions and clean water and air. The ingenuity of the Darjeeling Himalayas selected six rural areas that are Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and

Sittong is beneficial to the growth of rural tourism. With a rich cultural and historical potential and huge agricultural areas, there is indeed a significant deal of cultural and natural diversity. The environment, as well as local customs and identity, have been effectively preserved. In addition, the rural areas of the Darjeeling Himalaya have a relatively high tourism potential due to favourable conditions, beautiful landscapes, presence of natural resources, pleasant climate, good infrastructure and precious religious and cultural heritage.

3.3.1 Takdah, an old British cantonment area, is 65 km from NJP railway station (via Jorebunglow) and about 65 km from Bagdogra airport. The journey takes approximately 3.5 hours. The cost is Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle (as of 2020). Takdah, a quiet and serene place, attracts a lot of tourists from India and abroad. The meandering road, the scenic views, the nature trails through the forests make the journey beautiful and provide the traveler immense pleasure. The condition of the road is good. All-weather roads make it easy and comfortable for travelers. Except for traffic jams at Jorebunglow, the rest of the road remains open.

3.3.2 Lamahatta, a small village, is 60 km from NJP railway station (via Jorebunglow) and about 60 km from Bagdogra airport. This eco-tourism destination is around 3 hours away. The cost is Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle (as of 2020). The Lamahatta tour offers a quiet, serene and romantic atmosphere along the forest road. The beautiful metallic road makes for a fun trip to Lamahatta. Roads and the rest of the places are open except for traffic congestion at Jorebunglow.

3.3.3 Mineral Spring, a tiny village near Darjeeling town is 85 km from NJP railway station (via Darjeeling) and about 85 km from Bagdogra airport. The journey to the village takes roughly 4 hours. The cost is Rs. 800 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 4000 approx. by reserved vehicle (as of

2020). Mineral Spring is known for its clean water, lush greenery, and beautiful views of the mountains. Though traffic is slow between Jorebunglow and Darjeeling, paved and steep roads in the rural area offer an exciting travel experience to the tourists.

3.3.4 Lepchajagat, a small forest village is 70 km from NJP railway station (via Ghoom) and about 70 km from Bagdogra airport. This forest village is around a 3-hour drive away. The cost is Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle (as of 2020). Lepchajagat is connected with Ghoom with Sukhia Pokhri by an all-weather road. Lepchajagat offers a calm, serene and matte atmosphere through a maze of dense pine forests, oak and rhododendrons and spectacular mountain views along its way. The well-paved road offers a pleasant journey to Lepchajagat.

3.3.5 Chatakpur, a tiny forest village near Sonada is 62 km from NJP railway station (via Ghoom) and more or less 62 km from Bagdogra airport. This forest village is around 3 hours away. The cost is Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle (as of 2020). Chatakpur is entered through dense pine forests, oaks, and rhododendrons, providing a calm and peaceful environment. The rough road makes a thrilling trip to Chatakpur. Chatakpur is mainly inhabited by tribal communities.

3.3.6 Sittong, a horticulture village is 78 km from NJP railway station (via Ghoom) and about 78 km from Bagdogra airport. The journey to this forest village needs around 3.5 hours. The cost is Rs. 500 approx. by shared taxi/ Rs. 3000 approx. by reserved vehicle (as of 2020). The journey towards Sittong offers a calm and peaceful atmosphere through pine forests and rich orange gardens. The well-metallized roads to Sittong give the tourists pleasure and a happy journey.

3.4 Rural Tourism Destinations and their Potential for Development

3.4.1 Takdah

Takdah village is around 28 kilometres from Darjeeling, nestled in a luscious green Himalayan forest at an elevation of around 4,000 feet above sea – level and at 27° 2' N latitude and 88° 22' E longitude. Takdah remains cold although being much lower in elevation than Darjeeling. Takdah got its name from a Lepcha term that meant mist or fog, and it was originally called 'Tukdah'.

Takdah began as a military cantonment in the early 1900s in the British colonial period. Many prominent British commanders lived in the area at the time, and others came to see them regularly. As a result, for their accommodation, several houses and bungalows were made. Paving stones and sloping rooftops were used to construct the dwellings at the time. These century-old bungalows give Takdah a quaint look and add old-world charm. The village wore a deserted look after the British left and was not known to the tourists till the year 2000. The first homestay in Takdah was started in 2000 with four rooms and accommodations for eight persons. Run by a local Gurung family, it is the trend-setter for rural tourism and homestay in Takdah. As people started visiting the place, the homestay facility expanded to accommodate more people. Now this simple yet charming guesthouse has four double bedded rooms, four quadruple rooms, two deluxe rooms, and one cottage. It is located amidst a beautiful garden. Side by side, an ecotourism facility emerged in the place with two rooms and accommodations for four persons. Within 2017, seven more rooms have been added with a total of twenty accommodations. Another homestay was established in 2012 with nine rooms and accommodations for sixteen persons. It is now the largest homestay in the Takdah region. The families that run these homestays are very hospitable. They have improvised their humble cottages and added modern amenities to their homestays. In most of the homestays, there are double, triple and quadruple rooms with geysers and western-style

bathrooms. Of late, some of the British residential bungalows have been converted into lodges and resorts and cater to high-end tourists. Now there are no less than a dozen homestays in Takdah. The trend-setter Abiraj Homestay was followed by the establishment of Rai Resort (2013), Anugrah homestay, and Saino heritage guest house (2014), Norlah homestay, Tinchuley Gurung's homestay (2016), Shiwani homestay and Pradhan homestay (2017).

Tourism Potential of Takdah: Takdah is a rural tourism destination area with spectacular natural landscapes, mild climate, vegetation and peaceful environments as **natural potential** and nurseries, agriculture, structured landscapes monasteries, monuments and guest houses as anthropogenic landscapes. It is known for its mild climate, which features an average temperature of 22° C, with a relative humidity of 50 percent as well as an average rainfall of 850 mm. Forest reserves, the construction of various landscapes, attractive surroundings, unique flora and fauna and ultimately, climatic conditions are all conducive to tourism expansion in Takdah.

The anthropogenic potential: The development of educational resources and knowledge has simultaneously developed cultural values. Takdah is a fast developing rural tourism destination influenced by anthropogenic potential such as economic, social and historical-cultural factors. In the Darjeeling district, Takdah is known to a few of the best tea farms such as Teesta Valley, Poomong, Rungli-Rungliot, Namring, Gielle and Jinglam. The processing and manufacturing processes at factories can be watched by tourists. One of the beautiful tea estates is Rungli Rungliot located around 2 km from Takdah. Gielle tea estate is another beautiful rural tea estate that offers a panoramic view of many places such as Mungpoo, Tiger Hill, Takdah, 6th mile village, Ranju Valley, Kalimpong, Durpin Dara, Rambhi Khola, and so on.

Takdah has a large orchid centre that spans a large part of the area. The unusual and colorful Himalayan orchids are the source of an additional attraction for tourists. There is also a historic

monastery on the property. Takdah is reputed to have some of the beautiful British heritage bungalows and gardens. Around 12 colonial bungalows are there, some of which are now being used for the stay of tourists with well-equipped western-style bathroom, fireplace, and hot water facilities.

Tinchuley, a small village, usually associated with Takdah as Takdah-Tinchuley, is another charming retreat located about 3 km away from Takdah which provides a 360-degree view of beautiful surroundings especially view of different ranges of the mountain.

The infrastructure and transportation of Takdah are reasonably good. It is well connected to Darjeeling town and Kalimpong town with well-maintained metalled roads.

3.4.2 Lamahatta

Lamahatta is a revenue village situated at an altitude of around 5,700 feet above sea level at 27° 3' N latitude and 88° 21' E longitude and around 24 kilometres outside the town of Darjeeling. It is surrounded by lush greenery and rivers amidst picturesque terraced fields. Lamahatta is a mixture of two words: Lama, which means Buddhist monk, and Hatta, which means hut, which refers to a hermitage of a monk. Lamahatta is well connected to Kalimpong and Sikkim by the Darjeeling-Kalimpong as well as Darjeeling-Sikkim national highway which offers the locals to open different hotels, restaurants, homestays and shops which attracts more tourists. The residents of Lamahatta built ecotourism sites through government funding to attract more tourists. The practice of agriculture and animal husbandry still occurs among some rural people.

In this village, the balance between the environment and biodiversity remains almost unchanged, and the residents of this place cooperate closely with the development of tourism activities that are profitable and sustainable. Consequently, many homestays emerged, all owned by locals. About fifteen homestays stand on one side of the road and later many more emerged.

Two homestays, (Druk Homestay and Kanchenjunga View) came up in 2012 with a total of seven rooms and accommodations for fourteen persons. This was quickly followed by the opening up of more homestays, viz., Everest Hut Resort (2013), Mountain View (2014), Dukpa Homestay, and Private Lodge (2017). The Mountain View is the largest with seven rooms and 17 accommodations, while the others are relatively small. In 2017, the Everest Hut resort has expanded the most with an addition of four rooms and 10 accommodations. It is now the second largest in this region.

Tourism Potential of Lamahatta: Although Lamahatta is a small place, it has a high tourist potential and attracts many tourists from different parts of India.

In terms of **natural potential**, Lamahatta has a dense pine forest and panoramic view of the Kanchenjunga. The pines form a continuous dark green canopy that is easy to traverse. When the sky remains clear, Lamahatta offers great views of the distant mountains and snow-capped peaks on the horizon. Lamahatta offers a spectacular view of Mount Kanchenjunga.

The anthropogenic potential of Lamahatta: Homestays and the kind hospitality of Lamahatta's local families contribute significantly in luring visitors. The homestays are all basic and modest, but they are all clean and have western-style restrooms. Almost all homestays have geysers in the attached bathrooms, so hot water, which is a prerequisite in cold places, is always available. All of these accommodation options are extensions of the existing homes of residents. They offer homemade dishes to the guests; some also have a separate dining area. It is the perfect way to discover the local culture.

Lamahatta is also famous for its short hikes as follows:

- i) A short stroll through the Lamahatta eco-park gets to a small sacred highland lake.
- ii) A 3 km trek towards a fortress peak named Gari Danda.

- iii) Hike to various tea farms in the area, primarily, Takdah, Rungli-Rungliot and Glenburn.
- iv) From Lamahatta to Takdah within a distance of about 8 km a thrilling jungle trek can be done on a trail.
- v) A long trek of about 15kms to the Orchid Centre of Takdah.

3.4.3 Mineral Spring

Mineral Spring is a revenue village located at 27° 2' N latitude and 88° 18' E longitude and 16 km away from the main town of Darjeeling. It is situated in the Lebong Valley. It is a plantation-controlled area where villagers primarily grow potatoes, millet, maize, vegetables and tea.

In this area, the first homestay (Tathagata Farm) came up in 2007 with five rooms and accommodations for ten persons. Now it is the largest one with eight rooms and 21 accommodations. After five years another homestay (Gautam Paradise) was established with four rooms and accommodations for eight persons. After four years more homestays (Zimba and Humro homestays) came up with three rooms and accommodations for six persons that later expanded to five rooms and fourteen accommodations. The homestays in Mineral Spring offer a broad perspective through experience and interaction with nature, environment and lives around it, maintaining the authentic rural taste of a typical farm in the Darjeeling Hills.

The local entrepreneurs understand the value of sustainable living through organic farming and ecotourism. Some of them have started their organic farm by recruiting several young men from local villages to work and live on the farm. They grow tea plants, cardamom, ginger, corn, vegetables and fruits, e.g. oranges. There is also a small dairy. While everyone is actively involved in farming activities, most are doubling up filling other roles such as cooking, repairing, increasing guidance, and customer service.

Tourism Potential of Mineral Spring: The surrounding mountains and spring water are the **natural potential** and major attractions of Mineral Spring. Apart from the mountains, rivers, forests and pleasant climate, the other attractions of Mineral Spring are the nature trails. The trails around the estates led to the chalets and tents for tourists.

Anthropogenic potential: The homestay farms and man-made landscapes attract tourists to this village. A short walk from the Tathagata farmhouse is a small pool with fountain water, a garden and a shaded area for relaxing, sitting and enjoying the surrounding greenery. A long walk through the farm leads to various sections including the gardens, cottages, kitchens and dairies. The homestays make tea from the leaves collected from the tea plants grown on the farm. Not only do they harvest the tea, but they also process it by hand, dry it, roll it, and prepare for drinking. The purchase of an agricultural tea bag by tourists contributes to the cause of the socio-economic growth of the villages here. The homestay owners' main goal has been to pursue a sustainable lifestyle and create alternative sources of income for local villagers who depend solely on agriculture. In line with this vision, it also encourages villagers to open their homes to tourists and create host families in the aspiring villages. And several villagers turned their houses into foster families.

The organic farming of Mineral Spring has great potential whereby tourists enjoy fresh and organic vegetables and ingredients for lunch and dinner. The Farm allows visitors to participate in farming, milking and raising cows. A short 15 to 20-minute walk to the local mountain stream allows travelers to relax or do fishing. The tourists can take short hikes and walks in the village and beyond. The homestays offer a five-hour guided hike to Majitar, a place in South Sikkim, 13 km from Mineral Spring. Rangeet Forest across the Rangeet River is another

attraction. Tourists can enjoy natural views on their way towards Rangeet. Around 4 hours of the walk will lead to various villages such as Sinadura, Balbirudura and Gudamdura.

3.4.4 Lepchajagat

Lepchajagat is a small forest village located within 27° 0' N latitudes and 88° 11' E longitudes with an elevation of around 6,956 feet in a wild and tranquil atmosphere. It is 19 kilometres from Darjeeling Hill's main town and 4 kilometres from Sukhia.

Lepchajagat as the name itself says – the world of Lepchas - was once a hamlet of the Lepcha tribe. Lepchajagat is a combination of two words – ‘Lepcha’, a tribe, and ‘Jagat’ meaning the world. The hamlet was later acquired by West Bengal Forest Development Corporation (WBFDC) and is now a forest reserve.

Lepchajagat is a wonderful place for nature lovers. Nestled amidst the forest, it interacts with wildlife, beautiful plants, mainly rhododendrons. Lepchajagat is a dense forest area covered by pine, oak and rhododendron and offers a magnificent view of the Kanchenjunga peaks, tranquility and amazing birdlife.

In this region, the first homestay (Pakhrin Homestay) came up in 2008 with six modest rooms and accommodations for ten persons. It is now the largest with eight rooms and accommodation for eighteen persons. Rooms are well-appointed, clean, with western-style bathrooms. The Pakhrin family manages the homestay quite efficiently. The place is gaining popularity and attracts both domestic and foreign tourists. The early sunrise gives tourists a feeling of deep peace and happiness. All basic services are available to tourists. The homestay combines wonderfully with beautiful views and interaction with flora and fauna. The beauty of blossoming rhododendron, pines and oak gives tourists immense pleasure and happiness. This is the only place where tourists

can even experience an unusual interaction with wild animals such as wild pigs, porcupines, jackals, boars, etc. Bird lovers enjoy the beautiful chirping of various birds early morning.

After five years another homestay (Kanchankanya Homestay) was established with modest capacity and quickly grew to reach the capacity of the former. The spectacular view of Kanchenjunga can be witnessed from this homestay. After three years Salakha and Humro homestays came up with a total of three rooms and accommodations for six persons that increased to a total of five rooms and fourteen accommodations. WBFDC (West Bengal Forest Development Corporation) Lodge is another budget lodge operated by the government with six rooms and two suites.

Tourism Potential of Lepchajagat: The **natural potentials** of Lepchajagat are as follows:

Lepchajagat is a tranquil spot located in the lap of nature. The picturesque splendour of Lepchajagat, as well as the view of the majestic Kanchenjunga, are widely recognized. Early in the morning, guests can enjoy a breath-taking view of the sunrise. Gum Rock, which is generally a place of large boulders but is recognized as a sunrise point, is another sight of tourist attraction. A magnificent view of the Balasan valley opens up from here.

The rich flora and fauna of Lepchajagat forest are a major source of tourist attraction. Extensive flora with pine, rhododendrons and oaks gives the traveler a sense of fascination. Some faunal species such as wild pigs, boars, dears, porcupines, etc. offer tourists an opportunity to interact with animals. Lepchajagat is a place for bird watchers who enjoy watching wild birds. There are different types of birds in the forest, including several species of birds and sunbirds.

The anthropogenic potential of Lepchajagat includes the scope of additional housing, human resources, hiring new workers to get back the village youth, leveling up of standard of living, establishing new family businesses such as setting up of new farms and cottages to attract tourists.

WBFDC Forest Lodge offers great views of the snow-capped peaks. A staircase and path leading from the forest lodge cross a dense forest. There is also a hiking trail that leads to a place called Hawa Ghar, a resting place about 1 km away.

Lepchajagat offers some nearby sightseeing areas which include:

- i) Jorpokhri (about 5 km away), a beautiful lakeside and a famous tourist attraction is known for the rare Himalayan salamander. It is a famous tourist attraction well known for its serene beauty and views of Kanchenjunga.
- ii) Chataidhura viewpoint and Chataidhura natural lake around 2 km away.
- iii) Rock Garden around 15 km away.
- iv) Beautiful and quiet Ghoom Monastery (about 10 km).
- v) Peaceful Sukhia Monastery around 4 km away.
- vi) Simana viewpoint located around 10 km away.
- vii) Pashupati Market situated on the border of India and Nepal (about 15 km away), well known for cheap foreign goods' market.
- viii) Maneybhanjyang, a valley located between India and Nepal is a base of Sandakphu trail (about 15 km away).
- ix) Mirik (about 27 km away) - Famous for Mirik lake, its forest and tea garden.

3.4.5 Chatakpur

Chatakpur is a small forest settlement within 26° 58' N latitudes and 88° 18' E longitude at a height of 2350 meters. With a stunning view of the mighty Kanchenjunga and an atmosphere of a verdant wilderness in a tranquil village of just twenty in number and with a few population, it is a delight for peace and nature lovers.

The first homestay (Dhanmaya Niwas homestay) in this village came up in 2009 with five rooms and accommodations for ten persons. Now it is the largest one with six rooms and fourteen accommodations. After four years another homestay (Sherpa homestay) was established with four rooms and eight accommodations. Now it is the second largest one with five rooms and ten accommodations. After three years two more homestays (Tamang and Humro homestays) came up with a total of three rooms and accommodations for six persons, later expanded to a total of five rooms and fourteen accommodations.

Tourism Potential of Chatakpur: The **natural potentials** of Chatakpur are as follows:

Surrounded by hills, mountains, forests, and rivers, Chatakpur is primarily an ecotourism destination where residents actively participate and develop non-agricultural alternative forms of income. The Kanchenjunga range, which is a popular tourist destination, may be seen in the autumn and clear winters.

The forest is about 100 meters from the tourist hut. Chatakpur leads to many lush forest roads that are suitable for short hikes preferred by trained guides.

The ecology and wildlife of Chatakpur are well-known. Wild bores, black cheetah, fox, nilgai, and a variety of other creatures call this ecosystem home. The Red Panda is one of the forest's most valuable assets.

Chatakpur is a popular destination for birdwatchers, and indeed the forest is home to a variety of brightly coloured birds, including the Rufous Sibia, Kalij Pheasant, Green-backed Tit, Stripe-throated Yuhina, Hornbill, Verditer, Blue-fronted Redstart, Fire-tailed Sunbird and other species.

The anthropogenic potentials are as follows:

'Chimal' and 'Guras' are the famous governmental cottages of Chatakpur. The cottages give exposure to the fascinating view of Kanchenjunga.

Agriculture and tourism are important sources of income for the people. Tourists not only get the opportunity to eat organic vegetables but they can also partake in rustic activities such as picking fresh organic vegetables from a farm's garden. Tourists can even feed and milk cows if they desire.

Near the eco-cottages lies a small pond, locally known as Pokhri, another tourist visit point.

The famous sunrise viewpoint of Darjeeling i.e. Tiger Hill is situated nearby. Darjeeling, Jorebunglow, Ghoom, and Sonada are other popular destinations close to Chatakpur.

Rock climbing is popular among tourists near the village's rocky walls. The hiking routes through forests to multiple spots are available to tourists. The watchtower is conveniently located for seeing the sunrise and admiring the grandeur of Sandakphu, a well-known high-mountain tourist destination. Small tourist trips are organized by locals in Tiger Hill, Sola Village, Rambhi Village, Jorebunglow, Labda, and other locations.

The culture of Chatakpur is well expressed by the old folks in the village. In the evening, traditional folk dances are performed by the locals to entertain tourists. Myth, culture, heritage, and traditional values are well preserved by locals for tourist attraction.

3.4.6 Sittong

Sittong is a large village located at an elevation of around 4000 feet within the Kurseong subdivision at 26° 52' N latitude and 88° 21' E longitude. Located amidst beautiful nature and a peaceful environment, Sittong is a Khasmal village.

The first homestay (Pujan homestay) in Sittong came up in 2009 with five rooms and accommodations for ten persons. It was the largest one. After five years another homestay (Hankim homestay) was established in 2014 which was quickly followed by the opening up of more homestays, viz., Mukhia, and Chhyalomkyong homestay (2016), and Sittong homestay (2018). Sittong is the smallest homestay with three rooms and six accommodations. The region's

total capacity increased from twenty rooms to twenty-five rooms with a growth rate of 25%. Accommodations increased from forty persons to fifty-four persons with a growth rate of 30%. In this region, the average size of homestay increased from 4.0 rooms and 10.0 persons to 5.0 rooms and 10.8 persons respectively.

Tourism Potential of Sittong: The **natural potentials** of Sittong are as follows:

Two famous sanctuaries are located in Sittong. These are the Mahananda and Latpanchar Wildlife Sanctuaries, which are home to the great hornbill and daisy horn. Both the sanctuaries attract nature lovers. Aal Dara is another attraction for tourists which provides a beautiful sunrise viewpoint. One of Sittong's famous lakes is Namthang where rare species of Salamanders are found.

The anthropogenic potential of Sittong are as follows:

Sittong is well known for its orchard cultivation and is also known as Orchard Village. It is a resourceful area which opens to the best of nature away from the cities.

Sittong is privileged to have old bamboo bridges, a century-old church along a rivulet, and an old monastery. The Steel Bridge at Jogi Ghat on the Riyang River is another tourist attraction that connects the two towns of Mungpoo and Sittong. Short hikes from Sittong to Labda village give chances for interaction with the local Lepcha community and to visit their traditional houses.

Another tourist attraction is Rabindranath Tagore's house in Mungpoo, which is about 8 km away.

3.5 Hypothesis: *Rural tourism is unique in the study area*

Rural tourism in the studied destinations is unique in its way. The salient features/ characteristics of rural tourism in the study area are:

- i) Rich natural potentials such as the beautiful and spectacular scenery, magnificent view of Mountains (Mount Kanchenjunga), configured landscapes, moderate

climate, flora, and a peaceful environment along with anthropogenic potential such as nursery, agriculture, monastery, monuments, guest houses, bungalows, etc. are the typical features found in rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya.

- ii) Short trekking to different places, village tours, interaction with the local people, exchange of culture are the typical features found in all the studied rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya.
- iii) The vegetables and ingredients for cooking come directly from the farms and kitchen gardens and therefore they are always very fresh. The tourists enjoy organic food in all the studied tourist destinations.
- iv) Another typical feature of the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya is the provision to participate in the farming activities, milking & feeding the cows by the tourists.
- v) Some of the tourist destinations are places for bird lovers who enjoy watching the rich birdlife. Thus, rich biodiversity, forest reserves, eco-friendly environment are the typical features of studied rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya.
- vi) Local food, a cultural program in the evening, barbecue, etc. for the tourists are the typical features of all the studied destinations.

As these are rarely found in other types of tourism and other areas of tourist importance, therefore, it has been proven to be unique in the study area.

3.6 Conclusion

Different rural tourism destinations have different tourism potential. Some have high natural tourism potential and some have low and again, some have high anthropogenic potential while some have low depending upon their location and accessibility. But, most crucially, both

potentials, that is, natural and anthropogenic, help to attract tourists from all over the world, which helps to drive economic development.

References

- Asmelash, G. A. (2015). "An Assessment of Potential Resources of Tourism Development in Ethiopia: The Case of Dejen Wereda". *African Journal of History and Culture*, Vol.7.
- Certan S. (2014). "Rural Tourism Potential of the Republic of Moldova". *Theoretical and Scientific Journal*.
- Gupta, S., Singh A. (2015). "Potential and Performance of Rural Tourism in India: Assessing Intra-State Variations". *International Journal of Research in Management & Business Studies (IJRMBS)*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, (October).
- Ionel, B. (2013). "The Tourist Attractions - Factors of Rural Tourism Development In the Region Crisana?" *Academica Brancusi*, Issue 6.
- Mamun, A. A., Mitra, S. (2012). "A Methodology for Assessing Tourism Potential: Case Study Murshidabad District, West Bengal, India". *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Vol. 2, Issue 9, (September).
- Matei, D. F. (2014). "Cultural Tourism Potential, as Part of Rural Tourism Development in the North-East of Romania". *ScienceDirect*, (October).
- Munien, S. (2014). "Assessing Community Needs in Relation to Rural Tourism Potential in South Africa: A Case Study of Ndwedwe Municipality", *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Vol. 5(3)
- Rajoviv, G., Bulatovic, J. (2013). "Tourism Potential and Rural Tourism: A Case Study of the Municipality of Andrijevica". *International Letters of Natural Science*, Vol. 1, No.1.
- Richards G. (2018). "Cultural Tourism: A review of Recent Research and Trends", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 36, No. 1.

Sima, E. (2014). "Rural Tourism Potential as Part of Sustainable Development in Romania".
Globalization and National Identity. Studies on the Strategies of Intercultural Dialogue.

Chapter IV

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RURAL TOURISM

4.1 Introduction

Rural tourism is a common trend today since many tourists prefer to visit peaceful, beautiful, nature-friendly, attractive, functional, clean and pollution-free areas. Rural tourism is acquiring significance as it generates new ventures and employment opportunities. It leads to an inter-cultural and inter-ethnic mix. It also contributes significantly to the rural economy and the tourism industry as a whole. Judicious management of rural tourism in different rural areas results in sustainable development (Haven-Tang and Jones, 2012).

4.2 Role of Rural Tourism in Economic Development

Tourism generates cash for owners, stakeholders, and locals, which stimulates the economic growth of rural communities. In the long run, this raises national and per capita income. Infrastructure development in terms of roads, building construction, adequate sanitation, correct drainage, and other rural facilities are provided by rural tourism. Rural tourism has been successful in creating employment opportunities for locals and providing a variety of business opportunities for stakeholders. Increasing revenues enable sustainable land-use practices in rural areas.

Sustainable tourism generally contributes to a region's economic development. It manifests itself in increasing income and job possibilities, infrastructural development, and improved living conditions (Joshi and Dhyani, 2009). The massive flow of visitors and subsequent economic output at all native tourist spots in Darjeeling has hastened infrastructure development, providing jobs and revenue.

Rural tourism serves the indigenous communities by giving chances for business and jobs, as well as cash flow, handicraft and heritage preservation. It exposes people to a variety of earning opportunities, livelihood opportunities, cultural exchange, and investment opportunities, allowing them to develop a more holistic perspective on life. It also contributes to the development of cultural, socio-economic and cognitive qualities, in addition to the aforementioned advantages (Meena, 2015).

The long-term viability of rural tourism in many rural destinations is dependent on environmental protection along with economic growth. Local communities are becoming more aware of the idea of sustainability and thus, they should be aware of the negative consequences of the environment and should work to conserve it in order to ensure its sustainability (Richards and Hall, 2000).

Rural tourist development benefits the local population by contributing to local economic growth. To verify the following facts and ideas, a field study was conducted at six rural tourist sites. Ten proprietors from each rural tourism site were interviewed, and their earnings reflect the growth of their economy through homestays. Income growth, on the other hand, is not consistent. Political movements and the occurrence of strikes that shut down homestays for months caused a sharp decline in income between 2013 and 2017. The table given below shows the enhancement in homestay owners' earnings in six rural tourism destinations since 2008:

Table 4.2: Approximate Earnings of the Homestay Owners (‘000 Rs)

Destination	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Takdah	-	-	-	-	88.2	30.6	70.8	322.2	410.4	348.0	157.2
Lamahatta	-	-	-	-	10.8	14.4	51.0	194.0	247.2	36.6	127.2
Mineral Spring	126.0	252.0	186.0	504.0	549.0	93.0	144.0	846.0	756.0	90.0	258.0
Lepchajagat	26.4	28.8	39.0	40.8	49.2	12.0	92.4	255.6	296.4	20.4	58.8
Chatakpur	-	-	14.0	27.6	50.4	10.8	81.6	127.2	151.8	20.4	58.8
Sittong	-	-	-	-	122.4	30.6	85.2	196.8	232.2	27.6	141.6

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from registers of homestays)

Despite hindrances and political movements in Darjeeling Himalaya, the growth of the economy is continuously increasing. Per capita income, transportation systems, infrastructure, local job possibilities, the standard of living, diversification of activities, diversification of rural economies, and so on are all indicators of the development of Darjeeling’s rural tourism destinations. Some inhabitants have taken advantage of the potential to prosper as entrepreneurs by utilizing available resources, resulting in the establishment of a permanent location for rural residents. Rural tourism has visibly accelerated economic development in rural areas of Darjeeling Himalaya.

Rural tourism has registered positive growth in all the tourist destinations of the study area despite occasional setbacks. Tourism in rural Darjeeling has expanded and strengthened the base of owners, residents and stakeholders. This has increased the economic value of rural areas.

Rural tourism has brought economic diversity to the region. In Darjeeling Himalaya, it has encouraged villagers to adopt a diversified economy and sustain their livelihoods as most rural people are unskilled. Rural tourism also provides employment opportunities for less-skilled and marginal workers and therefore reduces unemployment to some extent.

Incomes from tourism in the destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya are used for the development of local areas rather than creating more employment opportunities such as funding for education, health, infrastructure, women empowerment, facilities for agricultural extension, socio-economic, cultural development and environmental protection. The indirect benefits of rural tourism are measured by the regional economic impact. However, there are some limitations in rural tourism that can be alleviated to some extent through the effective participation of all interested and the implementation of certain rules and regulations by the government.

4.3 Homestays in the study area (The names have been used on receipt of the consent of the respondents)

Homestays are the major sources of tourist attraction in any rural area which not only provide accommodations and services but also provide an opportunity to live a rural life. Some entrepreneurs in the Darjeeling Himalaya started a new homestay, while others transformed an existing house into a homestay. The scenario of homestays in the study area has been depicted in the following table.

Table 4.3: Homestays in the study area

Destinations	New Homestays	House turned into homestays
Takdah	i) Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Ecotourism ii) Abiraj Homestay iii) Anugrah Homestay iv) Gurung Guest House v) Rai Resort vi) Pradhan Homestay vii) Saino Heritage Guest House	i) Shiwani Homestay ii) Norlha Homestay iii) Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay
Lamahatta	i) Dukpa Homestay ii) Mountain View iii) Kanchenjunga View iv) Everest Hut Resort v) Private Lodge	i) Druk Homestay
Mineral Spring	i) Tathagata Farm ii) Gautam Paradise	i) Zimba Homestay
Lepchajagat	i) Pakhrin Homestay ii) Dukpa Homestay	i) Kanchankanya Homestay
Chatakpur	i) Humro Homestay	i) Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay ii) Sherpa Homestay
Sittong	i) Pujan Homestay ii) Mukhia Homestay iii) Chhyalomkyong Homestay iv) Sittong Homestay	i) Hankim Homestay

(Source: Compiled from Field Survey, 2014-2017)

4.4 Tourist Accommodation in the Homestays of the study area

Table 4.4.1: Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Takdah, December 2017

Sample size: 10 Homestays

Sl. No.	Homestay	Year	Room	Accommodation	Room	Accommodation
1	Gurung Guest House		4	8	6	14
2	Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Eco – tourism	2000	2	4	9	20
3	Abiraj Homestay	2012	9	16	12	22
4	Rai Resort	2013	3	6	7	18
5	Anugrah Homestay	2014	3	6	5	14
6	Saino Heritage Guest House	2014	4	12	6	18
7	Norlah Homestay	2016	2	4	4	10
8	Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay	2016	4	9	6	15
9	Shiwani Homestay	2017	2	4	2	4
10	Pradhan Homestay	2017	3	7	3	7
	Total		34	55	68	122

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

The Gurung Guest House is the first homestay of this region that started in 2000 with four rooms and accommodations for eight persons. After 17 years, two more rooms have been annexed with a total of 14 accommodations. Then came up the Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Ecotourism with two rooms and accommodations for four persons. By 2017 seven more rooms have been added with a total of 20 accommodations. After almost 12 years Abiraj Homestay was established in 2012 with nine rooms and accommodations for sixteen persons. Within 2017, three more rooms have been added with a total of 22 accommodations. It is now the largest homestay in the Takdah region. This was quickly followed by the opening up of more homestays, viz., Rai Resort (2013), Anugrah homestay, and Saino heritage guest house (2014), Norlah homestay, and Tinchuley Gurung's homestay (2016), Shiwani homestay and Pradhan homestay (2017). The Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom ecotourism expanded the most with nine rooms and 20 accommodations, while Pradhan homestay remained the smallest. The region's total capacity increased from 34 rooms to 68 rooms with a growth rate of 100%. Accommodations increased from 55 persons to 122 persons with a growth rate of 121.81%. In this region, the average size of homestay increased from 3.4 rooms and 5.5 persons to 6.8 rooms and 12.2 persons respectively.

Table 4.4.2: Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Lamahatta, December 2017

Sample size: 6 Homestay

Sl. No.	Homestay	Year	Room	Accommodation	Room	Accommodation
1	Druk Homestay	2012	4	8	6	16
2	Kanchenjunga View	2012	3	6	4	10
3	Everest Hut Resort	2013	3	6	7	16
4	Mountain View	2014	7	17	8	20
5	Dukpa Homestay	2017	3	6	3	6
6	Private Lodge	2017	3	6	3	6
	Total		23	49	31	74

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

Druk Homestay and Kanchenjunga View came up in 2012 with a total of seven rooms and accommodations for fourteen persons. This was quickly followed by the opening up of more homestays, viz., Everest Hut Resort (2013), Mountain View (2014), Dukpa Homestay, and Private Lodge (2017). The Mountain View was the largest with seven rooms and 17 accommodations, while the others were relatively small. In 2017, the Everest Hut resort expanded the most with an addition of four rooms and 10 accommodations. It is now the second largest in this region. The region's total capacity increased from 23 rooms to 31 rooms with a growth rate of 34.78%. Accommodations increased from 49 persons to 74 persons with a growth rate of 51.02%. In this

region, the average size of homestay increased from 3.8 rooms and 8.1 persons to 5.1 rooms and 12.3 persons respectively.

Table 4.4.3: Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Mineral Spring, December 2017

Sample size: 4 Homestay

Sl. No.	Homestay	Year	Room	Accommodation	Room	Accommodation
1	Tathagata Farm	2012	5	10	8	21
2	Gautam Paradise	2012	4	8	6	14
3	Zimba Homestay	2013	1	2	2	6
4	Humro Homestay	2014	2	4	3	8
	Total		12	24	19	49

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

Tathagata Farm was the first one that came up in 2007 with five rooms and accommodations for ten persons. Now it is the largest one with eight rooms and 21 accommodations. After five years Gautam Paradise was established with four rooms and accommodations for eight persons. It is the second largest in this region. After four years Zimba and Humro homestays came up with a total of three rooms and accommodations for six persons that increased to a total of five rooms and 14 accommodations. The region's total capacity increased from 12 rooms to 19 rooms with a growth rate of 58.33%. Accommodations increased from 24 persons to 49 persons with a growth rate of 104.16%. In this region, the average size of homestay increased from 3.0 rooms and 6.0 persons to 4.7 rooms and 12.2 persons respectively.

Table 4.4.4: Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Lepchajagat, December 2017

Sample size: 4 Homestay

Sl. No	Homestay	Year	Room	Accommodation	Room	Accommodation
1	Pakhrin Homestay	2008	6	10	8	18
2	Kanchankanya Homestay	2013	6	10	8	18
3	Salakha Homestay	2016	1	2	2	6
4	Humro Homestay	2016	2	4	3	8
	Total		14	26	21	50

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

Pakhrin homestay was the first to come up in this region in 2008 with six rooms and accommodations for ten persons. Now it is the largest one with eight rooms and 18 accommodations. After five years Kanchankanya homestay was established with identical capacity and quickly grew to reach the capacity of the former. After three years Salakha and Humro homestays came up with a total of three rooms and accommodations for six persons that increased to a total of five rooms and 14 accommodations. The region's total capacity increased from 14 rooms to 21 rooms with a growth rate of 50%. Accommodations increased from 26 persons to 50 persons with a growth rate of 92.30%. In this region, the average size of homestay increased from 3.5 rooms and 6.5 persons to 5.2 rooms and 12.5 persons respectively.

Table 4.4.5: Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Chatakpur, December 2017

Sample size: 4 Homestay

Sl. No.	Homestay	Year	Room	Accommodation	Room	Accommodation
1	Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay	2009	5	10	6	14
2	Sherpa Homestay	2013	4	8	5	10
3	Tamang Homestay	2016	1	2	2	6
4	Humro Homestay	2016	2	4	3	8
	Total		12	24	16	38

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

Dhanmaya Niwas homestay was the first to come up in this region in 2009, with five rooms and accommodations for ten persons. Now it is the largest one with six rooms and fourteen accommodations. After four years Sherpa homestay was established with four rooms and eight accommodations. Now it is the second largest one with five rooms and ten accommodations. After three years Tamang and Humro homestays came up with a total of three rooms and accommodations of six persons that increased to a total of five rooms and fourteen accommodations. The region's total capacity increased from 12rooms to16 rooms with a growth rate of 33.33%. Accommodations increased from 26 persons to 50 persons with a growth rate of 92.30%. In this region, the average size of homestay increased from 3.5 rooms and 6.5 persons to 5.2 rooms and 12.5 persons respectively.

Table 4.4.6: Accommodation Profile of the Homestays: Sittong, December 2017

Sample size: 4 Homestay

Sl. No.	Homestay	Year	Room	Accommodation	Room	Accommodation
1	Pujan Homestay Homestay	2009	5	10	6	14
2	Hankim Homestay	2013	4	8	5	10
3	Mukhia Homestay	2016	4	8	5	10
4	Chhyalomkyong Homestay	2016	5	10	6	14
5	Hankim Homestay	2017	2	4	2	4
	Total		20	40	24	52

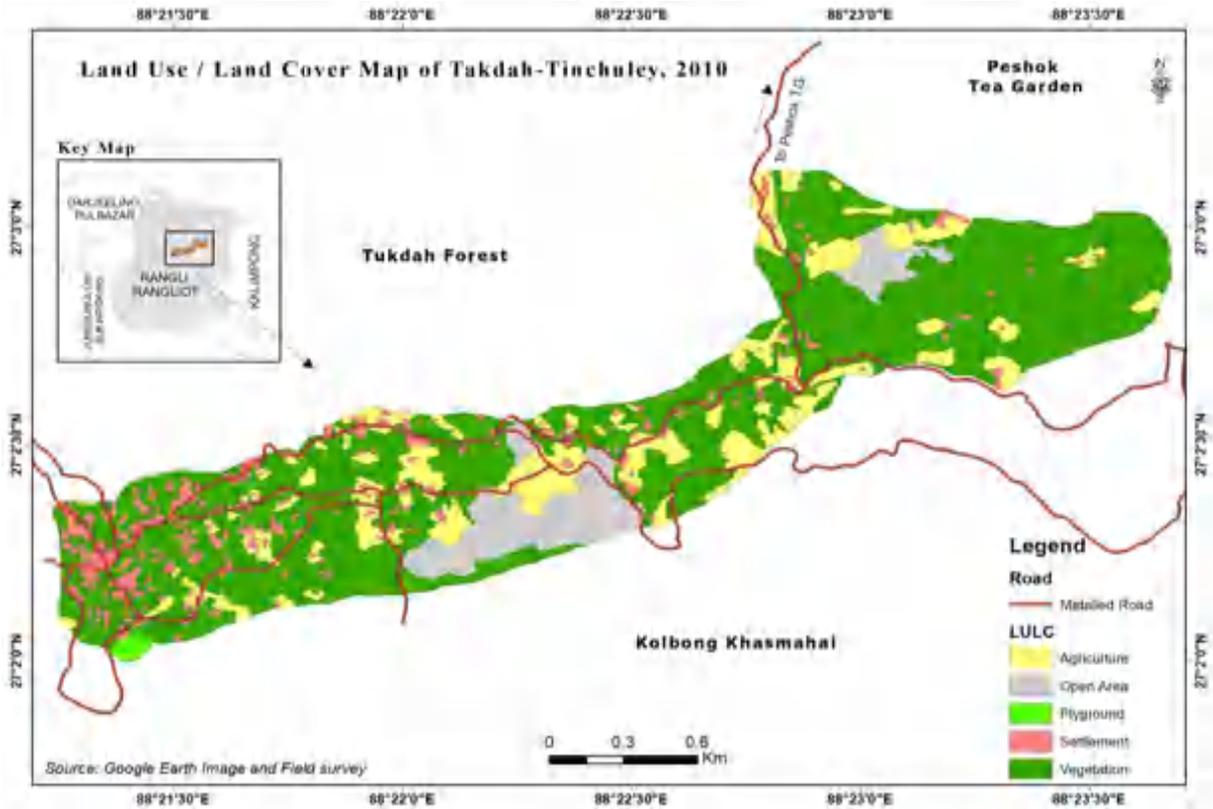
(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

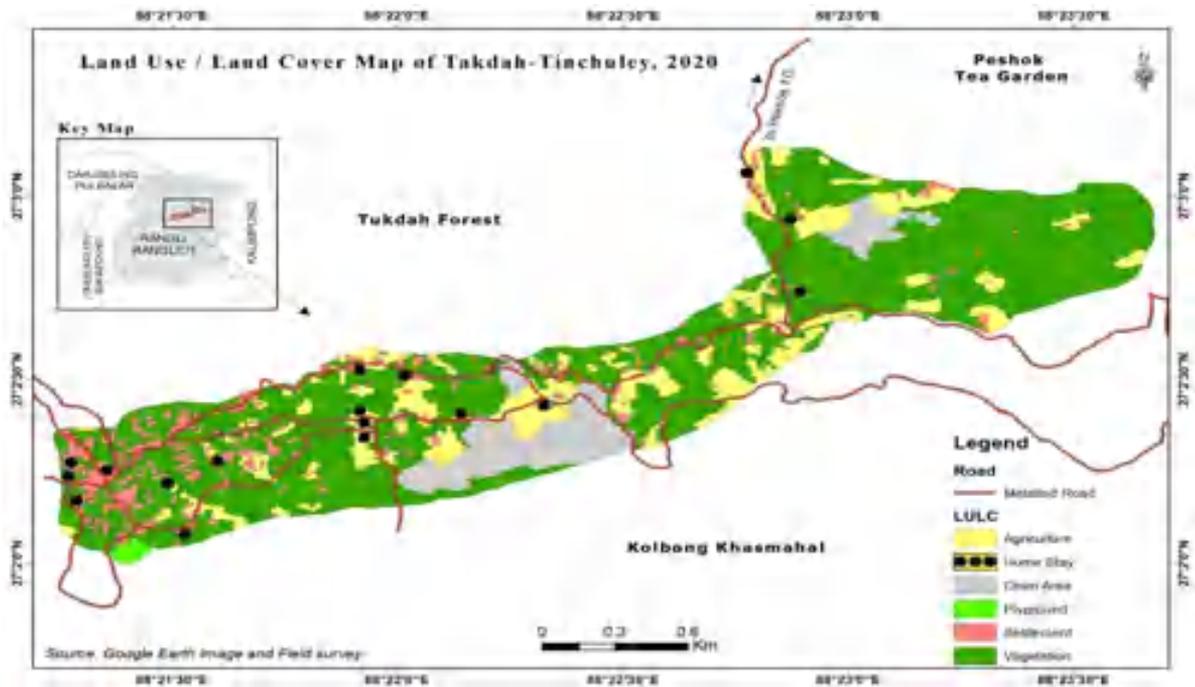
The Pujan homestay was the first one that came up in 2009 with a total of five rooms and accommodations for ten persons. It was the largest one. After five years Hankim homestay was established in 2014 which was quickly followed by the opening up of more homestays, viz., Mukhia, and Chhyalomkyong homestay (2016), and Sittong homestay (2018). Sittong is the smallest homestay with three rooms and 6 accommodations. The region's total capacity increased from 20 rooms to 24 rooms with a growth rate of 20%. Accommodations increased from 40 persons to 52 persons with a growth rate of 30%. In this region, the average size of homestay increased from 4.0 rooms and 8.0 persons to 4.8 rooms and 10.4 persons respectively.

4.5 Development of Infrastructure and Homestays in the study area

The following maps illustrate the growth of infrastructure and homestays in study area in Darjeeling Himalaya from their inception to the present:

Figure 4.5.1: Landuse/Landcover Map showing the development of infrastructure and homestays at Takdah from 2010 to 2020





(Source: Google Earth)

Figure 4.5.2: Landuse/Landcover Map showing the development of infrastructure and homestays at Lamahatta from 2010 to 2020

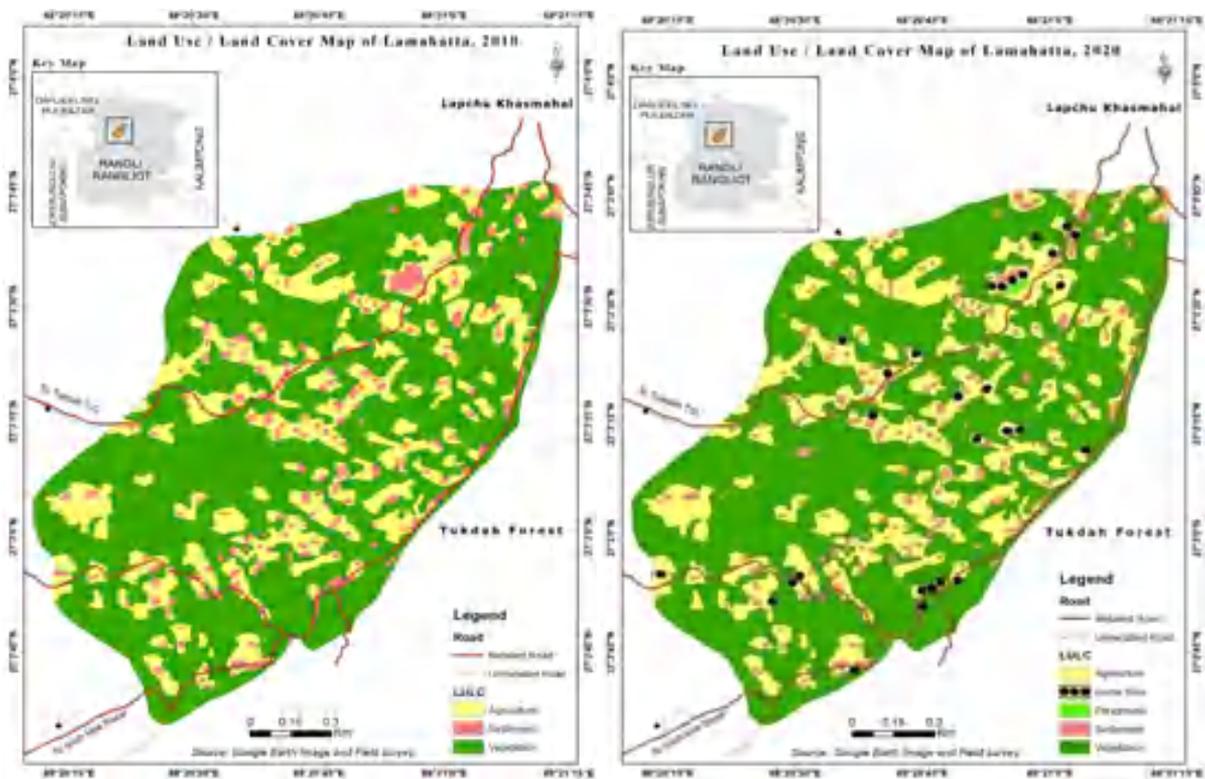
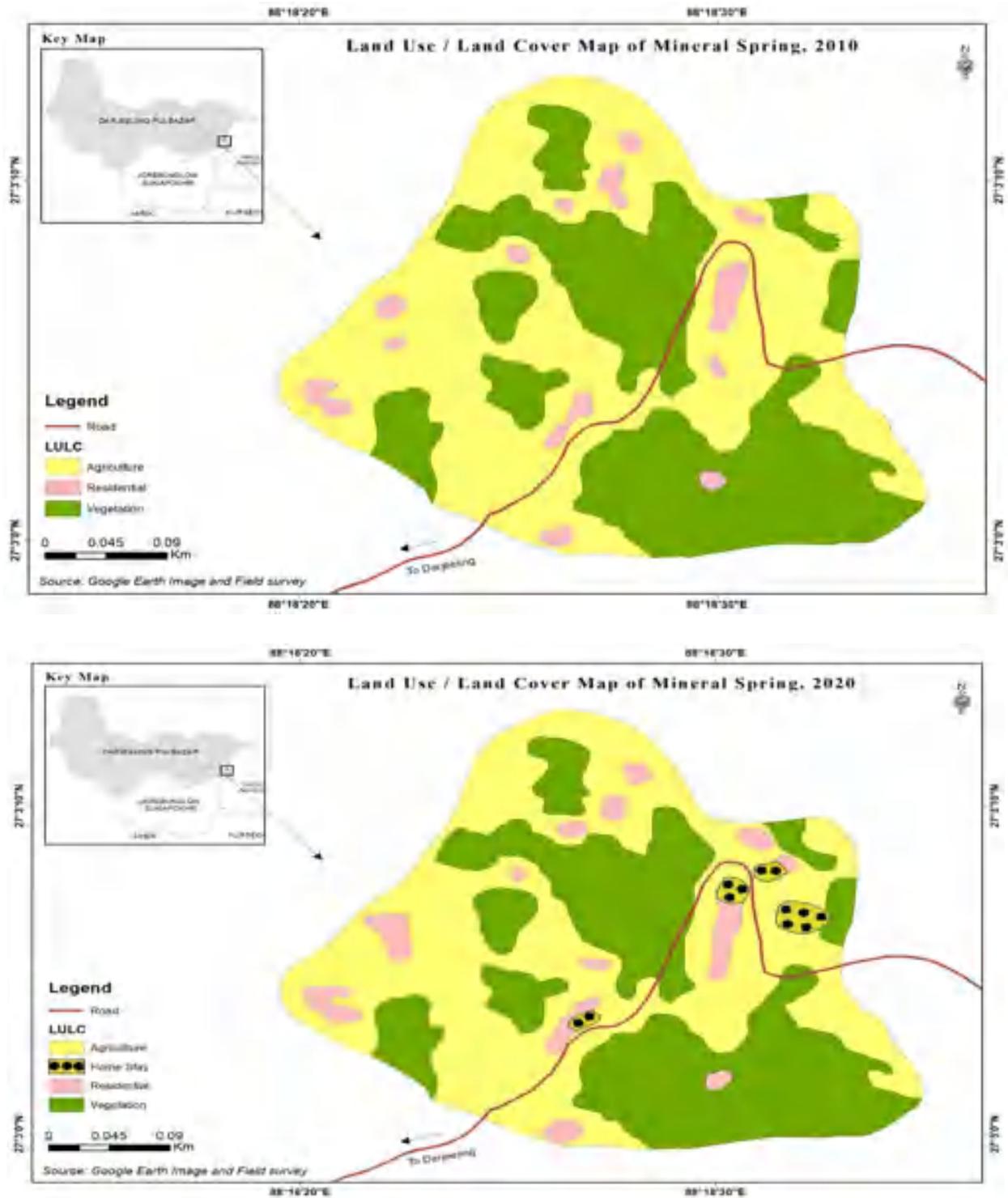
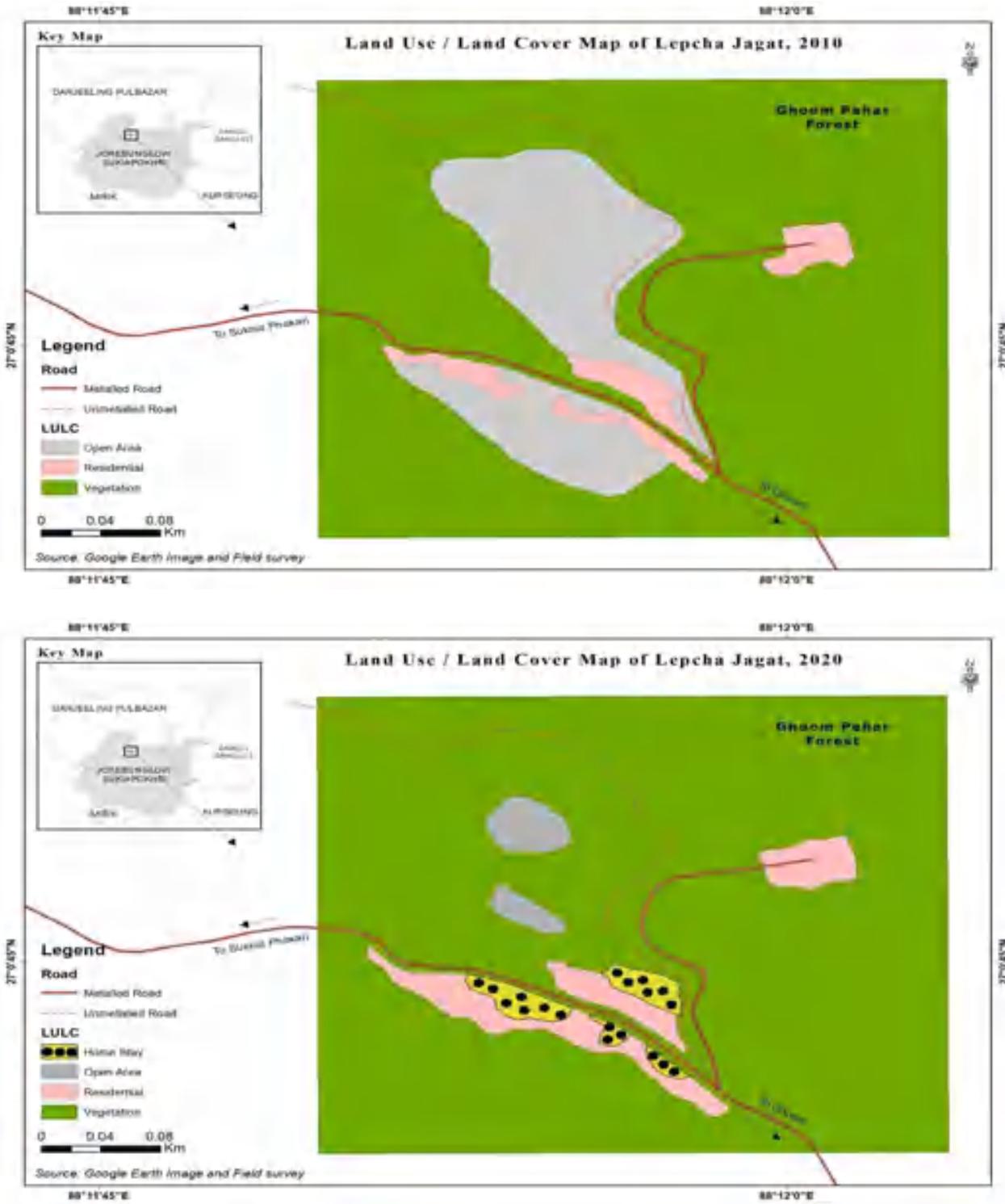


Figure 4.5.3: Landuse/Landcover Map showing the developmentt of infrastructure and homestays at Mineral Spring from 2010 to 2020



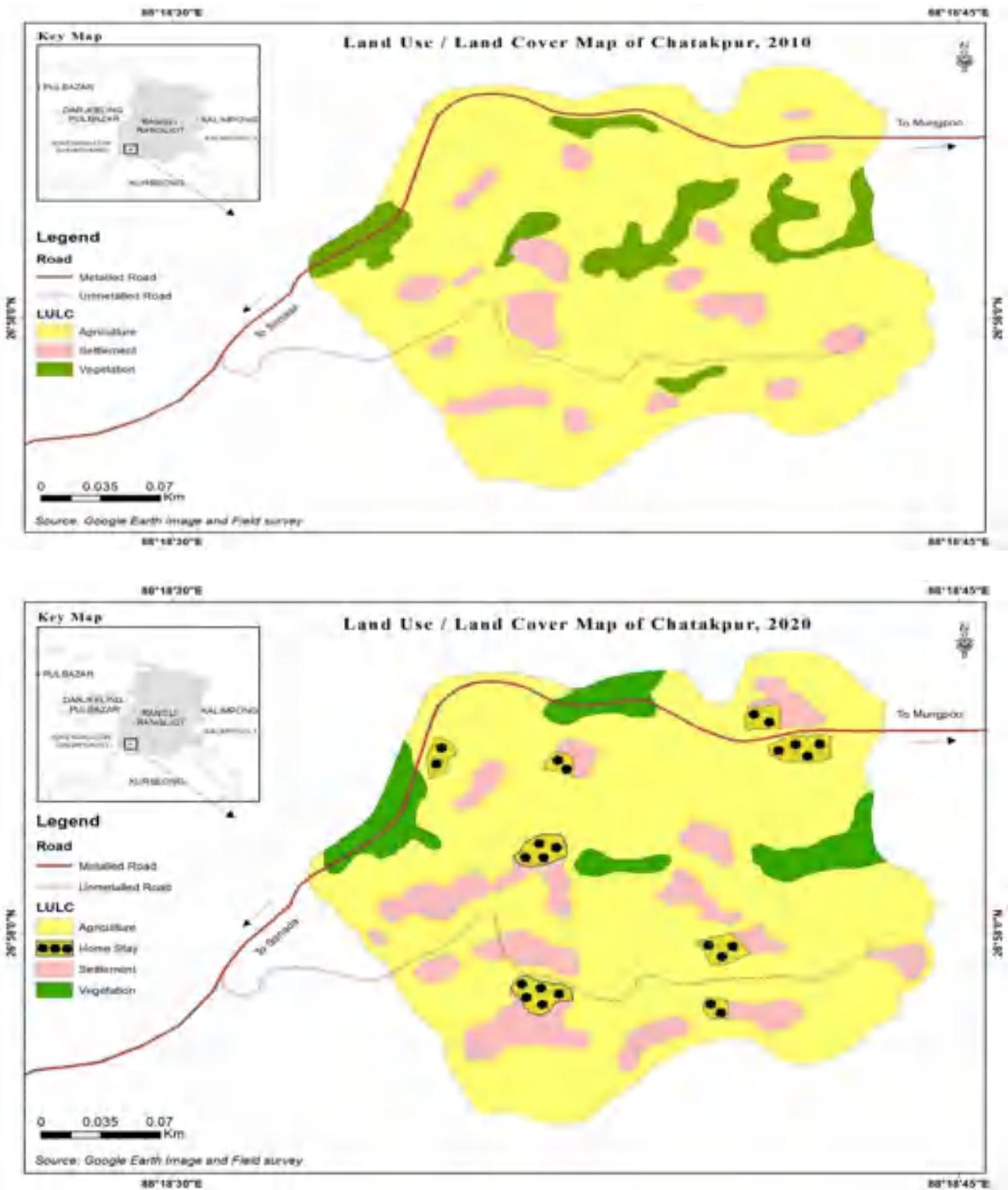
(Source: Google Earth)

Figure 4.5.4: Landuse/Landcover Map showing the development of infrastructure and homestays at Lepchajagat from 2010 to 2020



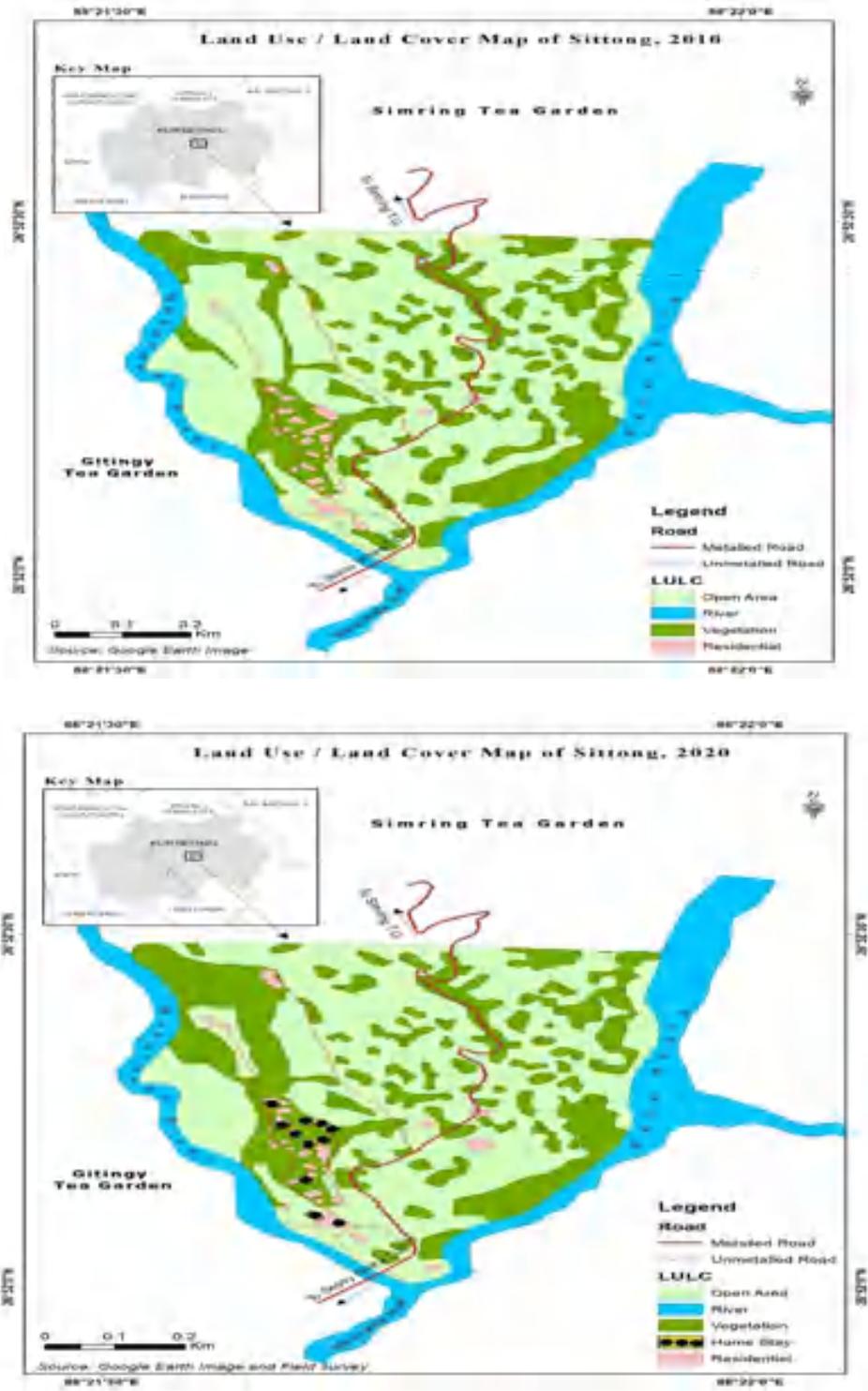
(Source: Google Earth)

Figure 4.5.5: Landuse/Landcover Map showing the developmennt of infrastructure and homestays at Chatakpur from 2010 to 2020



(Source: Google Earth)

Figure 4.5.6: Landuse/Landcover Map showing the development of infrastructure and homestays at Sittong from 2010 to 2020



(Source: Google Earth)

4.6 Stakeholders networking model for sustainable rural tourism development

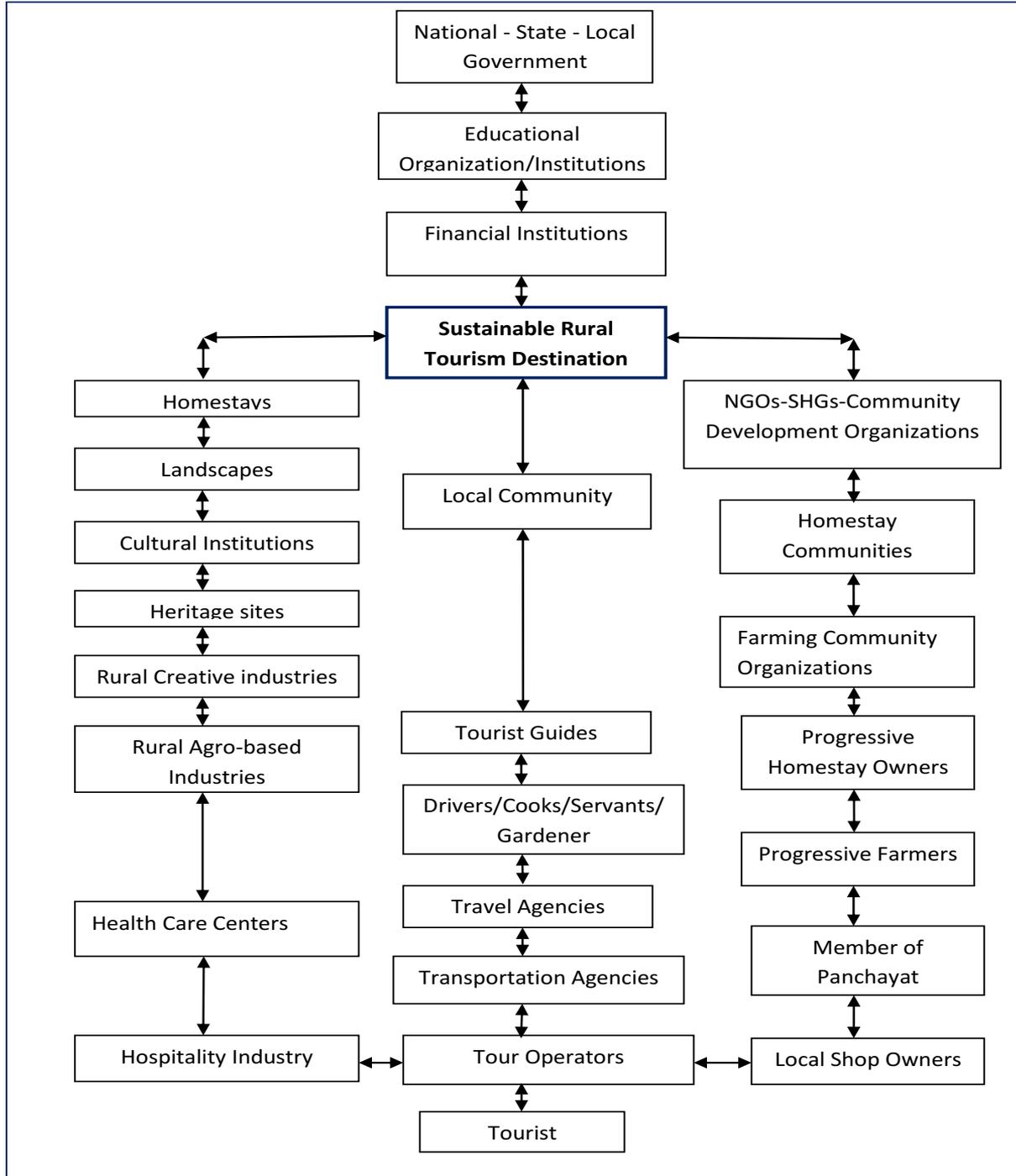
Stakeholders are some group of individuals who have an impact on the company's ability to achieve its objectives. They can be primary, usually direct influencers who are economically active, or secondary, usually non-direct influencers who are not directly involved in financial transactions but are influenced and indirectly affected by the company (Freeman, 1984).

The first and most crucial stage in developing inter-stakeholder networking is to identify stakeholders since they can be a part mostly of project development. Following their identification, they must be contacted to inquire about their interest and opinions in order to learn more about the number of tourists and their possible involvement in upcoming sustainable tourism.

The diagram below depicts the schematic stakeholder networking for long-term rural tourist development.

Figure 4.6 Stakeholders' Networking

Stakeholders' Networking for Sustainable Rural Tourism Development



(Source: Joshi, Paresh Vidyadhar and the researcher)

According to the aforementioned model, national, state, and high-level stakeholders play a critical role in planning and formulating policies for sustainable tourism development that take into account the destination's socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural principles. The scientific and educational organizations/ institutions play an important role in providing necessary training to stakeholders, informing them of government policies and controlling the use of natural resources. To encourage sustainable tourism, educational institutions can provide skilled manpower.

Rural tourism is reliant on the smooth operation of homestays, the presence of magnificent landscapes, social and cultural attractions, and various rural industries. Local communities play a vital role in rural tourism by providing cooks, servants, drivers, gardeners, and other services. Stakeholders are based on the various tourist agencies and tourists.

Economy and finance are the backbones of any business activity, so it is necessary to have sufficient funds at the right time for the development of infrastructure. A financial institution's role is concise as to financially support the people. The system should perform policies and partnerships to fund the tourism development initiatives. For significant tourist activities, the funding flow should reach numerous organizations and individuals engaged in tourism. The local community's participation too enhances the smooth function of tourism.

Tourists are the ultimate stakeholders and consumers of tourism activities, and their actions in the tourist region can influence the numerous stakeholders involved in tourism development's viewpoints. To attain total tourism growth stability, tourists should be responsible tourists.

Eventually, it is suggested that good networking of all stakeholders involved in rural tourism development in Darjeeling Himalaya is required to enhance the destination's profile as well as to attain sustainability in the tourism development process.

4.7 Model for sustainable development of rural tourism

A model was developed to reflect the four essential pillars of rural development: economic, social, cultural, and environmental, all of which lead to the growth of rural tourism.

Figure 4.7 Model showing Rural Tourism for Sustainable Development



(Source: Hall, 1998 and researcher's conceptualization)

In the Darjeeling Himalaya, the study also assisted in recognizing constraints to rural tourism strategy. All stakeholders have a vital role to play, but the responsibility of the local community should never be overlooked. Rural tourism's success is determined by how much financial gain is transmitted to the broader residents and how often they participate in rural tourism's administration and governance.

The importance of rural development and carrying capacity cannot be ignored. Tourist taxes and economic benefits are welcomed by the local population in order to save tourist landmarks and properties. However, if they are unable to utilize the available resources, they will be in confrontation with the visitors. Therefore, a personal impression is essential in the social phase of the host-guest conversation. It is important to manage this individual belief in the local community through planning, management and research. Since the goals and agendas of the local community are different from the goals of the tourists, their satisfaction and positive attitude towards tourism, whatever the type of tourism, is very helpful in the development of tourism.

4.8 Case Studies: Local Stakeholders' Perspectives

4.8.1 Takdah

At an elevation of 1400 feet, Takdah is a cantonment site situated under the Kurseong district's Rangli-Rangliot block. Takdah has become a popular rural tourism destination due to the presence of the Teesta River, orange garden, Rungli tea garden, rock climbing, hanging bridge as well as numerous viewpoints.

Takdah is a place having numerous tourist attractions. The Rangli-Rangliot Homestay Owner Association, which oversees roughly 75 homestays in Takdah and Lamahatta, is responsible for Takdah. There are 56 homestays in Takdah and 14 in Lamahatta. Rural tourism in Takdah has now become a viable source of income for the locals. Takdah has prospered from the growing

popularity of rural tourism, which includes not just homestays but also forest reserves and floriculture.

Orchid plantations of various varieties are well-known in the area as far as floriculture is concerned. Orchids grown in this location are sold across the nation as well as overseas. *Eulophia spectabilis*, *Appendicular cornuta*, *Micropera obtuse*, *Chasiloschista parishii*, *Anthogonium gracile* are some of the known species of orchids in Takdah. It is typically open to tourists during spring and autumn.

The Rangli-Rangliot Homestay Owner Association (founded in 2017 to address various problems of all homestays in Takdah and Lamahatta) has a long-term strategy to make the region into a heritage site, according to Narbuji Lama, the association's president. He went on to remark that rural tourism must have the potential to benefit the especially of the rural area's growth, not just economically, but also socially. The proprietor and locals should treat tourists with the utmost respect. To allow for social, cultural, religious, and linguistic exchange, tourist relationships should be well-maintained. Tourists who are welcomed as guests, he believes, may go back as members of the family, and the interpersonal relationship with them will continue to deepen.

Buddhiraj Rai, a resident of Takdah and 46-year-old, is a driver who possesses a car and makes a living from rural tourism. He leads guests on sight-seeing tours of the surrounding locations and offers them relevant and extensive information about the area. His kind nature and well informative talks encourage visitors to come back again to Takdah under him as a driver and a good guide.

M.K. Pradhan, a 65-year-old respondent, claims to be the pioneer of rural tourism in Tinchuley, Takdah. He was a science graduate with a passion for medicinal plants conservation. In 1998, he began rural tourism in Chhota Mangwa, Takdah, because the agro-climatic conditions in the area encouraged the floral environment. However, he did not succeed in attracting tourists until the year

2000. After repeated travels to Kolkata, he was able to attract eight tourists to the city in 2001, and his tourist trade has been steadily developing since then. He put in a lot of effort to help his village's tourism thrive. He began with ecotourism, then moved on to homestay tourism, and is today known for his Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Eco-tourism. In order to ensure the long-term viability of rural tourism, he established a homestay program, which has since been a source of inspiration for the entire community of Takdah and Tinchuley. M.K. Pradhan believed that rural tourism may help to improve his society. His commitment to community growth, environmental protection, water conservation, and energy conservation aided the society's long-term viability. Around 25 families in Chhota Mangwa rely on his homestay as a source of income. Aside from their income, employees receive additional bonuses of Rs. 15,000 each year, as well as medical benefits.

Diwas Gurung, a 27-year-old Takdah youngster, claims that rural tourism has allowed people to boost their livelihood. Rural tourism in Takdah provides them with the opportunity to work independently, operate additional homestays, boost their earnings, and enhance their performance. They don't have to leave their hometown to find work because rural tourism has given them the opportunity to work for themselves.

4.8.2 Lamahatta

A forest village, Lamahatta, situated at an elevation of roughly 1,500 meters in the Darjeeling subdivision, is some 24 kilometres from Darjeeling's main centre.

Lamahatta is a popular rural tourist site in the Kurseong block, featuring scenic splendour and a glimpse of the majestic Kanchenjunga. Mamata Park, Lamahatta's eco-park, is well-known which impart immensely to the ecotourism's success as a means of community development in harmony with nature. The mission of this ecologically responsible park is to engage local residents in environmental preservation and conservation. As a consequence of different park pursuits and a

rise of mass tourism, the locals got an opportunity to earn their livelihood as homestay owners, shopkeepers, restaurant owners, distributors, photographers, vendors and farmers.

Rural Tourism and ecotourism have played a major role in achieving a sustainable livelihood and a good standard of living for the local people. Lamahatta is well-known for the cultivation of organic vegetables, especially carrots.

The earnings from homestay have allowed Samten Dukpa, the owner of Druk Homestay, to not only earn a living but also to contribute to the local economy. He has provided opportunities for his villages to work as cooks, servants, drivers, gardeners, and guides. He further said that he and his brother were the first to initiate tourism in the area using tents and that they have made significant contributions to tourism marketing through their knowledge of local medicinal herbs, birds, and butterflies.

Rai, a 42-year-old woman, explained that she supports herself by selling her vegetables to the homestay owners. She grows cabbage, cauliflowers, carrots, saag, peas, tomatoes, cauliflower, and simi, which she sells to locals and sends to Darjeeling's market. Tourists are welcome to visit her agricultural area and sample the freshness of her produce. She cares about her child using the proceeds from the vegetable sales. She is now able to run her family's business due to rural tourism.

Various park activities and an increase in tourist influx have enhanced livelihood opportunities to many other local people who are not regular employees of eco-park but beneficiaries as local homestay owners, photographers, small shopkeepers, restaurant owners, vendors, including local farmers producing seasonal vegetables and fruits, etc.

4.8.3 Mineral Spring

Located at the periphery of Darjeeling at around 16 kilometres, Mineral Spring is a tiny rural revenue village as a part of the Panchayat of the Pulbazar Bijanbari block.

The bulk of the people is farmers. They raise potatoes, round chilies, millets, tree tomato, cardamom, corns, tomatoes, ginger, other vegetables as well as tea on their fields, for sale in a close market that is Lebond and even to the market of Darjeeling. Animal husbandry is also used to supplement this. Goats, sheep, pigs, cows and poultry additionally help them get by on a daily basis. According to the 2011 census, Mineral Spring has a total of 40 households. Thirty percent of these households are involved in rural tourism.

Mineral Spring has become a well-known rural tourism attraction owing to its beautiful natural landscapes, serene environment, orange garden, organic farming, river Yanku, hiking routes, and some viewpoints. Locals have turned to rural tourism as a source of income. People need not look for work outside of their area. Their earnings may rise two to three lakhs during autumn when tourists visit their native place for a home stay. Apart from agriculture, Mineral Spring has benefited from the expansion of rural tourism. Its rich and traditional culture is given adequate respect and well preserved as well.

In 2007, Navin Tamang, a native trader, resigned his office of a Non-Government Organization to launch Tathagata Farm as an organic farm. Collaborating with the Tathagata Farm has provided residents with the option to make a living. Tathagata Farm is not just a homestay in the hamlet, but it also produces organic tea. This farm's organic tea is even offered in Darjeeling's marketplaces. This farm's high-quality tea generates a healthy profit. The preparation of this tea is done by hand by the local residents. The tourists' purchases of the farm's tea have contributed to the improvement of the locals' socioeconomic situation.

Rural tourism, according to Rajesh Chettri, 36 years of age has had a significant impact on local people's livelihoods. He is in charge of the Tathagata farm, which has provided him with not just a job but also the opportunity to improve his talents. Within a year, he received Permaculture Training twice that assisted him in addressing tourists, coping with their concerns, and honing his Permaculture expertise. Local people, he claims, are given preference and opportunities to work as cooks, caretakers, gardeners, guides, cleaners, drivers, service providers, and trekkers. Since the farm only has one car, it's obliged to hire several cars from the community and adjacent communities.

Mineral Spring is a sustainable community. The majority of farm production remains organic. Residents are prohibited from using pesticides and agrochemicals in their fields. They are restricted in using bleaching powder, phenyl, or other similar substances. Tourists are drawn to sustainably grown items as a bonus. Cash crops such as cardamom, oranges, and brooms are among the farm produce. As a result, the hamlet has made significant improvements. All participants are accomplishing long-term growth.

Tourism provides several options for locals to continue their livelihood, according to Pratima Sherpa, a female respondent, who is 32 years old. She is engaged in the distribution of vegetables like saag, coriander leaves, cauliflower, radish and cash crops like cardamom and brooms to the owners of the farm and the entire village encourages her to cultivate additional vegetables and crops increasing her agricultural profitability.

Lendup Lepcha, a 34-year-old man, operates a restaurant that is his sole earning. The majority of Tathagata farm visitors go to his shop for various local fast foods. Tourists are attracted to his shop because of his welcoming demeanor. His family's livelihood is supported by the revenue that

he receives from the visitors. As a result, rural tourism has provided chances for many villagers to earn a sustainable living.

As a driver by profession, 36 years of Ambar Thami drives Tathagata farm's vehicle during peak season time with an earning of around Rs. 50,000, enough to support his family which inspires the majority of Mineral Spring's drivers to help grow tourism in the area.

The addition of cottages, swimming pools, tents, and other facilities, as well as new homestays, buildings, roads, small markets, floriculture, plantations, and other infrastructural development in Mineral Spring's rural sector, have all contributed to the area's long-term development. Because of the establishment of capacity-building programs, people in this area have been able to encourage tourism.

The region is undergoing changes as far as social development is concerned. People's viewpoints have shifted toward growth. Everyone works together to improve their social relationships. With the tourists, the locals maintain a friendly attitude. Good interactions and relationships with the local population lead to societal well-being. In this area, rural tourism has offered opportunities for the preservation of traditions and culture and expanded chances for socialization.

In terms of cultural development and interchange, the village has the opportunity to meet new people, learn new languages, discover new thinking, gain new ideas, and experience different life experiences.

In terms of the environment, all participants, tourists, and locals are acutely aware of the importance of maintaining the rural area safe and clean. The majority of the surroundings have been carefully conserved. Plantations and afforestation are prioritized. Rural tourism has aided in the conservation of natural resources. Hence, Mineral Spring's rural tourism is attracting a large number of worldwide tourists.

4.8.4 Lepchajagat

At an elevation of about 2,120 meters, Lepchajagat is a small forest village in Sukhia block, Darjeeling along the highway connecting Ghoom and Sukhia. With a beautiful environment, a quiet atmosphere, and a breathtaking landscape, Lepchajagat is an excellent destination for nature enthusiasts and bird photographers. Located amidst the wilderness, it provides an opportunity to see wild creatures as well as beautiful foliage, mainly rhododendron.

Rural tourism, according to Rabin Pakhrin, 29 years of age, owner of Pakhrin Homestay, has not only enhanced their revenue and moreover contributed a significant improvement to their area. As the number of visitors grew steadily, he opened his debut homestay, followed by several others in his hamlet, which is a good indication for the inhabitants' livelihood. For the benefit of society, they established the Lepchajagat Homestay Welfare Association. It has established several norms for the proprietors and residents to follow in order to preserve the society's tranquility, safety, and prosperity. As a result, a community or cooperative act was intended to accomplish some degree of sustainability.

As the majority of the homestays within the region lack automobiles for sightseeing and exploring adjacent locations, drivers from the neighboring regions are usually hired for site-seeing. Buses and taxis from Pokhriabong, Nagari, Mirik, Pashupati, and Sukhia occasionally convey tourists to Siliguri and Darjeeling.

In the village, some new firms have emerged. Economic stability has resulted from the growing importance of local goods and services. Local residents have been motivated to participate as local tour guides, cooks, maids and painters, and to open stores, restaurants, and other businesses by Pakhrin homestay. Pakhrin claims that if surplus visitors are coming to his homestay, he somehow manages their stay in his neighbours' homes and provides them with a warm reception.

The remainder of the villagers will profit economically as a result of this. The people of Lepchajagat have seen a visible improvement in income success as a result of rural tourism.

For the preservation of the area's cleanliness and proper hygienic conditions, the association of the village is responsible. The residents have become more conscious of the sanitation and cleanliness condition of the community and area as a result of the talks and assessment of visitor needs.

Subash Tamang, aged 57, a native of Sukhia avails short-term employment at Pakhrin Homestay as a painter. He works on a lump sum basis at least for one month and earns Rs.50,000 in one month. He earns his livelihood through painting as his main occupation.

Bikkey Darjee, aged 33 works as a cook at Pakhrin Homestay. He earns Rs. 10,000 per month. He provides room service to the tourists as well.

Thus, Pakhrin Homestay serves as a model homestay in the region. The committed villagers ensure that tourists visit their village time and again.

In this area, rural tourism has aided in the conservation of regional identity, heritage, and diverse artwork. Residents' feedback is accorded importance in attaining sustainability since they can supply the most up-to-date information on environmental related issues.

4.8.5 Chatakpur

At a height of 2,403 meters, Chatakpur is a tiny forest community. It's a quiet village with only 88 residents and 19 residences, the majority of those are being turned to homestays.

Chatakpur, located within the Senchal Wildlife Sanctuary in West Bengal's Darjeeling District, is a small eco-friendly community. Since Chatakpur is a preserved area, steps were taken to keep the environment in good shape in order to attract more visitors. Chatakpur's attractive natural features, diverse vegetation and wildlife, typical herds and native culture befit the foundation for the area's

prosperity. In Chatakpur, rural tourism has centred on studying the ecosystems, the varied landscape, different species of animals and plants, among other things, and has thus been capable of supporting environmental preservation. Chatakpur has achieved and maintained a long-term balance of commercial, societal, and environmental concerns.

Rural tourism in Chatakpur, according to B. B. Thapa, the proprietor of Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay, has enhanced their revenue and has contributed evident progress in the area as well. Since the number of visitors grew regularly, he opened his first homestay, followed by some others in the area. The homestay entrepreneurs, concerned about their individual as well as social development, organized an association to help the community. It has established several norms for the proprietors and residents to follow in order to ensure peace, safety, security, and socio-economic development. As a result of the residents' collaborative attitude, they are on the verge of attaining sustainability.

In the area, some small firms have opened. Economic stability has resulted from the increased demand for the village's goods and services. Residents have been eligible to function as caretakers, cooks, guides and maids due to the opportunities given by homestay owners. Few small restaurants and shops have emerged due to the growth of tourists' demand. The majority of homestays lack automobiles for travellers to use for sightseeing and exploring surrounding attractions for which neighbouring areas' drivers are approached particularly from Sonada and Ghoom-Jorebunglow.

According to the proprietor of Sherpa Homestay of Chatakpur, the residents have raised funds and began road construction on their own for easy accessibility, demonstrating their intentional willpower for the development of the area's long-term infrastructure.

Chatakpur is considered an ideal village for rural tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya. Having been located in the wildlife sanctuary, the village is privileged to have forest dwellers who keep an eye on the sustainability and conservation of the natural environment.

4.8.6 Sittong

Sittong is a revenue village in the Kurseong subdivision located at altitudes ranging between 300 m and 1,200 m from valleys to uplands. It is located at the foothills of Darjeeling Himalaya. It is one of the Lepcha villages endowed with a picturesque landscape and a beautiful environment. Well known as Orange Valley, Sittong is an ideal rural tourism destination.

Rural tourism in Sittong has been supported by the Tourism Department of West Bengal which offered five tourism buildings. Pujan Homestay run by Anil Mangar has given a good opportunity to the entire village to earn a good livelihood by converting their homes into beautiful homestays. His family is engaged in most of the activities of serving tourists. He has hired three village youths for cleaning and serving. Mohan Rai, a local, aged 26 got the opportunity to serve the tourists with a monthly wage of Rs.4,000 and other incentives. Sudeep Biswakarma, aged 29, a resident has been hired as a cleaner with a monthly wage of Rs.3,000. Chandan Subba, aged 25 too got the opportunity to provide his service to the tourists at a monthly wage of Rs.3,500. Homestays of Sittong mostly remain clean and hygienic. Most of the tourists are quite satisfied with the service and cleanliness.

The owner of Hankim Homestay, Mahendra Rai, aged 46 was inspired by his friend to open a homestay in 2010. He has hired two local people as workers in his homestay. Rohan Mukhia, aged 30, male, is a cook who is an expert in cooking local food as well as Chinese food. His food is appreciated by most of the tourists. He earns Rs.5,000 per month along with other incentives. Saran Rai, aged 29, male, provides service to the tourists. Tourists feel quite happy with his service which

allows him to earn extra tips (incentives) from the tourists along with an average income of Rs.5,000 per month. Most of the locals are hired as drivers with their vehicles for sightseeing in nearby beautiful places. Thus rural tourism in Sittong has overall benefitted most of the residents and to some extent has brought sustainable development.

The case studies and viewpoints of local stakeholders show that the introduction of homestays and other rural tourism paraphernalia has benefited all six rural tourist destinations in the Darjeeling Himalaya in more than one way.

People prosper particularly when economic development is evident, as they have the opportunity to entertain tourists, sell fresh produce, and some consumer applications, among other things. The village's income has expanded significantly as a result of tourism activities.

Tourism-related events and interactions with qualified and experienced tourists have contributed to the growth of people's attitude, opinion, information and competence, as far as social development is concerned. Various agencies deliver assistance to the communities in order to help them establish their rural tourist businesses.

Rural communities have witnessed favourable advances in regards to cultural development and interchange. The majority of the locals communicate with visitors, sharing and expressing thoughts, learning languages and cultural exchange. During festivals and events, people get the opportunity to showcase their local cultural dance and perform local music to attract tourists.

There has also been significant progress in terms of the ecology, due to the increased awareness of educated tourists. They discourage littering, motivate cleaning of the area and dispose of trash in designated bins. As the majority of the visitors are foreigners, they prefer a hygienic environment. As a result, environmental sustainability is maintained by all participants and visitors.

In all six tourism areas, sustainable development was identified as a vital element of rural tourism, ensuring the most eco-friendly use of environmental assets. So far, rural tourism has been successful in maintaining the ecology, preserving heritage and sustainably promoting tourism communities' economies.

4.9 Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development in Study Area: A Comparative Analysis:

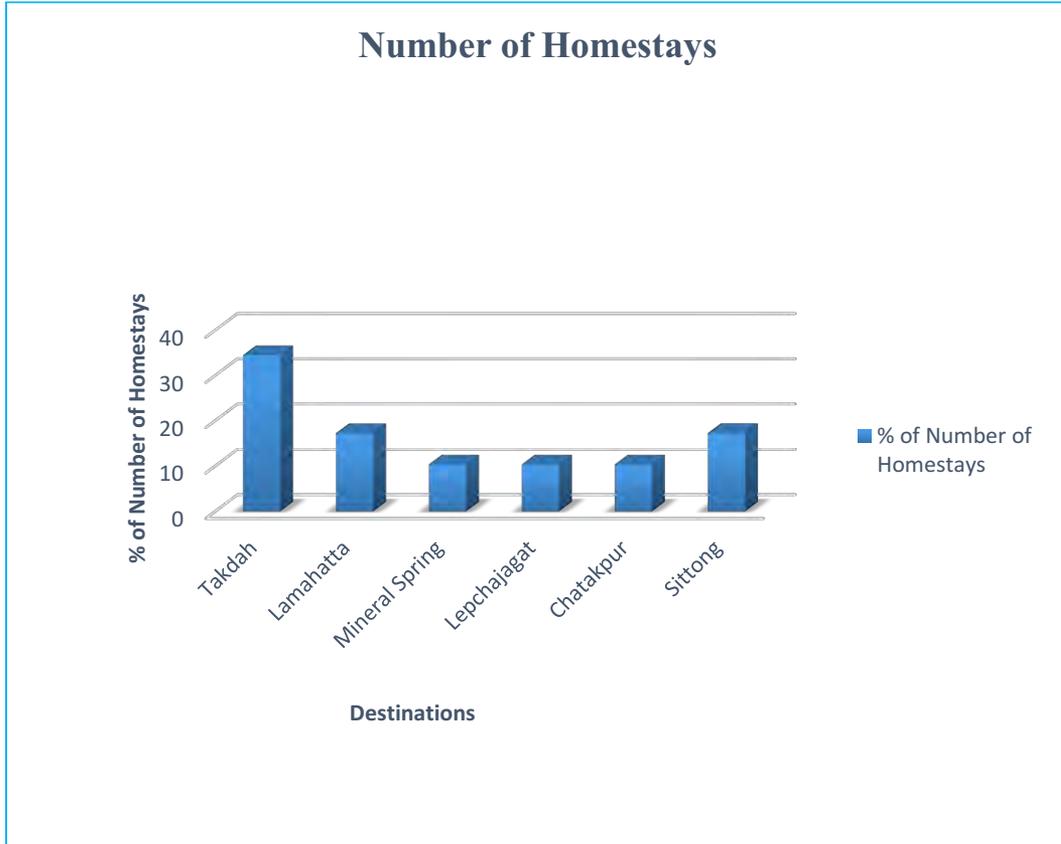
According to primary data obtained from field research performed from 2014 to 2017, a complete comparative assessment of six rural tourism locations has been done.

Table 4.9.1: Distribution of Homestays in Rural Tourism Destinations of Study Area

Sl. No.	Destinations	No. of Homestays	% of No. of Homestays
1	Takdah	10	34.48
2	Lamahatta	05	17.24
3	Mineral Spring	03	10.34
4	Lepchajagat	03	10.34
5	Chatakpur	03	10.34
6	Sittong	05	17.26
	Total	29	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

Figure 4.9.1: Distribution of Homestays in Rural Tourism Destinations



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

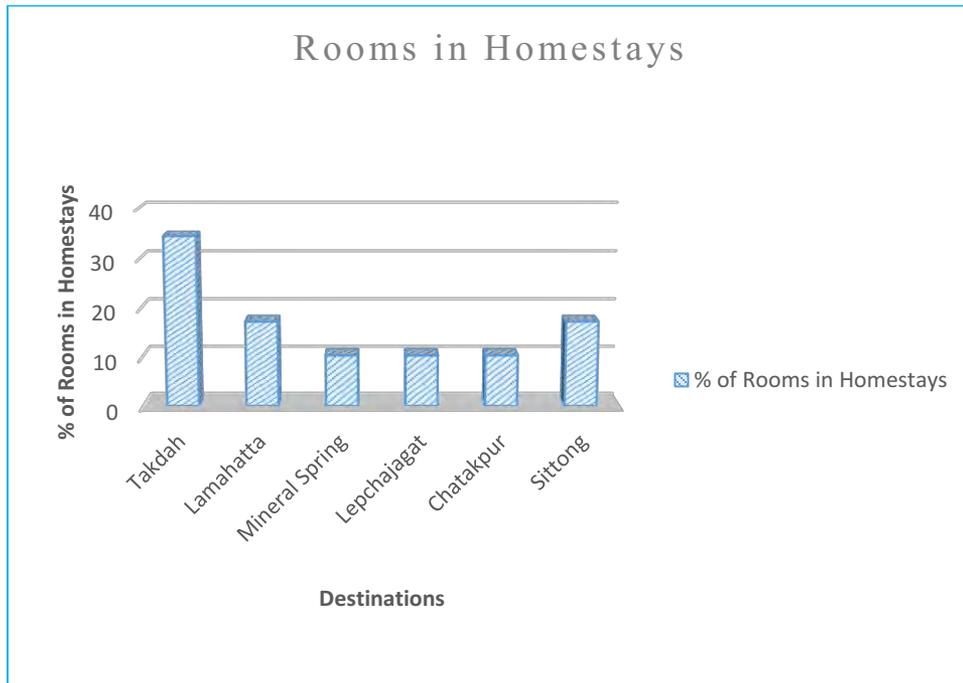
According to the findings, the number of homestays in Takdah is 10 (34.48%) which is more than any other rural tourism destination in Darjeeling. Since the area of Takdah is larger compared to other rural tourism destinations, the scope for building more homestays is bigger. Hence, the volume of arriving tourists from around the world is higher in Takdah, implying a higher inflow of revenue, which will eventually result in more employment for the residents. The other destinations such as Lamahatta have 17.24%, Sittong has 17.26% of total homestays, while Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat and Chatakpur have 10.34% each of total homestays.

Table 4.9.2: Number and Percentage of Rooms in Homestays

Sl. No.	Destinations	No. of Rooms in Homestays	% of Rooms in Homestays
1	Takdah	68	37.99
2	Lamahatta	31	17.32
3	Mineral Spring	19	10.61
4	Lepchajagat	21	11.73
5	Chatakpur	16	08.94
6	Sittong	24	13.41
	Total	179	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

Figure 4.9.2: Rooms in Homestays



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

Since the number of homestays in Takdah is more than the other rural tourism destinations in Darjeeling, the number of rooms to accommodate tourists is highest in Takdah. The availability of

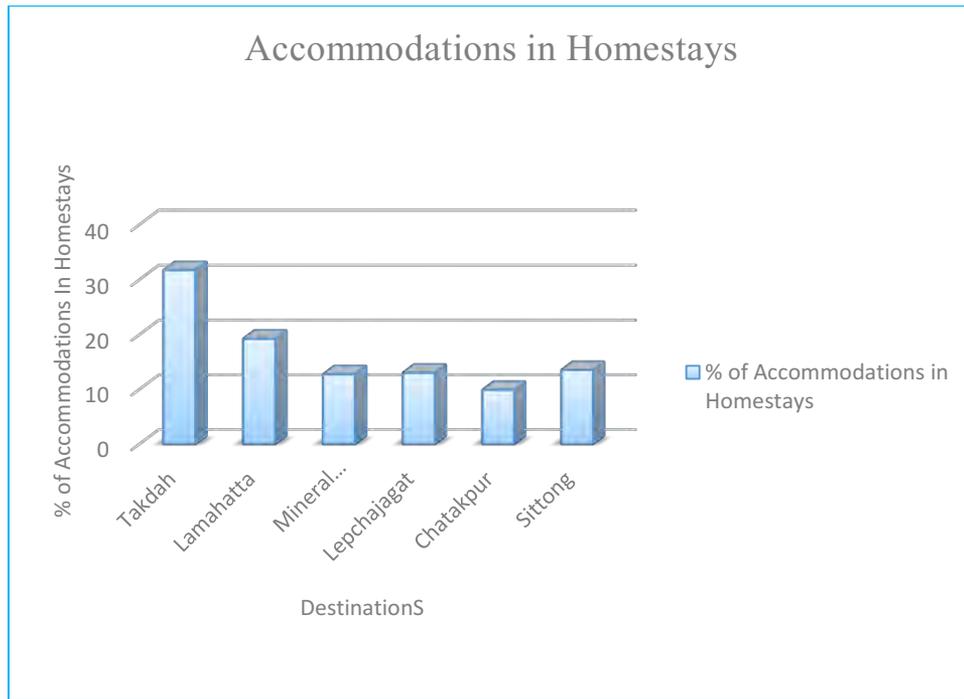
68 (37.99%) rooms indicates that Takdah has a much higher capacity to attract and accommodate tourists compared to other rural tourism destinations in the study area. The other destinations such as Lamahatta have 31 rooms, i.e. 17.33% of the total number of rooms in homestays while Mineral Spring has 10.61%, Lepchajagat 11.73%, Chatakpur only 8.94 % and Sittong has 13.41% of the total number of rooms in homestays of the study area.

Table 4.9.3: Number and Percentage of Accommodations in Homestays

Sl. No.	Destinations	No. of Accommodations in Homestays	% of Accommodations in Homestays
1	Takdah	122	31.69
2	Lamahatta	74	19.22
3	Mineral Spring	49	12.73
4	Lepchajagat	50	12.99
5	Chatakpur	38	09.87
6	Sittong	52	13.50
	Total	385	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 - 2017)

Figure 4.9.3: Accommodations in Homestays



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 - 2017)

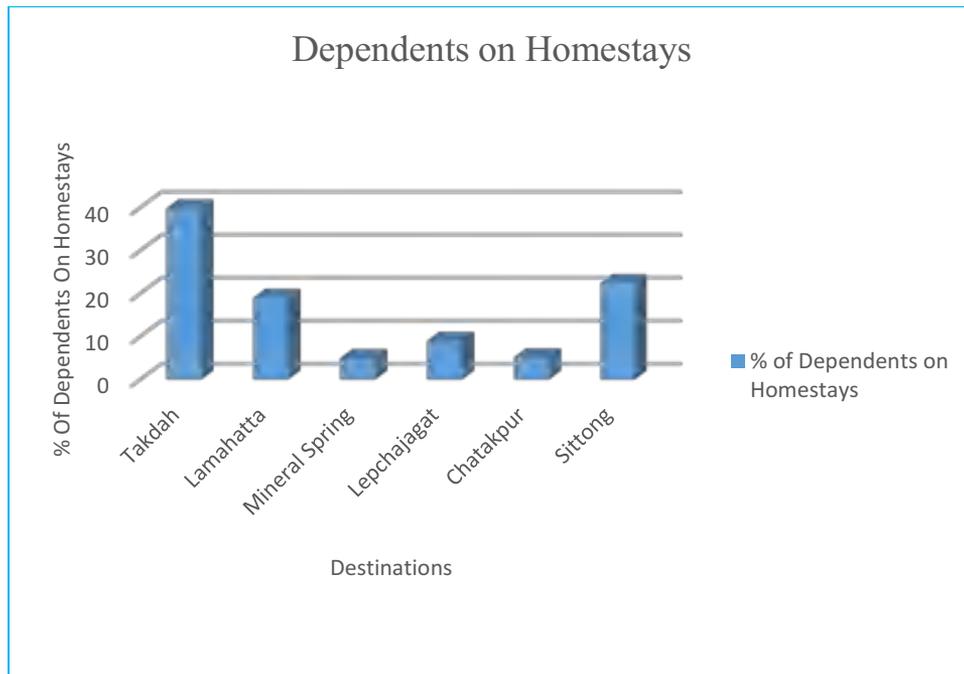
As the number of accommodations in rooms of homestays in Takdah is more than the other rural tourism destinations in the study area, the capacity to accommodate guests is more in Takdah. The availability to accommodate 122 (31.68%) persons indicates that Takdah has a high capacity to attract and accommodate a larger number of tourists compared to other rural tourism destinations. Other destinations such as Lamahatta have (74) 19.22% of total accommodations in of rooms in homestays in Darjeeling while Mineral Spring has 12.73%, Lepchajagat 12.99%, Chatakpur has only 9.87 % and Sittong 13.50% of total accommodations in rooms in homestays of Darjeeling.

Table 4.9.4 Number and Percentage of Members Dependent on Homestays

Sl. No.	Destinations	No. of Dependents of Homestays	% of Dependents of Homestays
1	Takdah	187	39.79
2	Lamahatta	89	18.94
3	Mineral Spring	23	04.89
4	Lepchajagat	42	08.94
5	Chatakpur	24	05.10
6	Sittong	105	22.34
	Total	470	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 - 2017)

Figure 4.9.4: Dependents on Homestays



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 - 2017)

According to the findings, it is noted that among the six destinations, Takdah homestays earn more and generate more employment opportunities for the locals compared to other destinations. The number of dependents including cooks, guides, gardeners, servants, room cleaners, caretakers, painters, etc. is more in Takdah. Around 187 (39.79%) of the total dependents earn their livelihood from the homestays of Takdah. The number of dependents in Lamahatta is 18.94%, in Mineral Spring it is 4.89%, Lepchajagat 8.94%, Chatakpur 05% and Sittong 22%.

4.10 Environmental, Social and Cultural Impact Assessment and Sustainability

4.10.1 Environmental Impact Assessment of the Rural Tourism Destinations

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) can be explained as the way toward recognizing, foreseeing, assessing and alleviating the biophysical, social, and other applicable impacts in terms of air and water quality, noise pollution, disturbance of eco-system, depletion of resources, modification of flora and fauna, loss of wildlife habitat, deforestation, solid waste littering, socio-economic and health environment.

The rating scale for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been the values ranging from 1 to 10 which is as follows:

1 to 5.0 – Low

5.1 to 7.0 – Moderate

7.1 to 10 – Good

Table 4.10.1: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Sittong	Chatak	Lepcha	Mineral	Lama	Takdah	Destinations
Moderate	Pur Good	Jagat Low	Spring Good	Hatta Moderate	Moderate	Air quality
Moderate	Good	Low	Good	Moderate	Moderate	Water Quality
Moderate	Good	Low	Good	Moderate	Moderate	Noise Pollution
Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Disturbance of ecosystem
Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	(Biological environment)
Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High	Depletion of resources
Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Modification of flora and fauna
Moderate	Low	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Loss of wildlife habitats
Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Deforestation
Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Solid waste and littering
Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Socio-economic and health environment

(Source: Field Survey, 2014-2017)

The Environmental Impact Assessment has shown moderate influence residents and tourists on the environment in all the selected rural tourism destinations namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral

Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong. The pollution by vehicles in the destination has moderately influenced the air and water quality. Tourists have been able to maintain noise thereby controlling noise pollution. Proper disposal systems and good sanitation helped residents to moderately influence the environment. All six rural tourism destinations have maintained a positive relationship with the environment, putting little strain on it and preserving the environment.

4.10.2 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SIA)

Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SIA) is necessary to ensure socio-economic viability and consistency in the long run.

The rating scale for Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SIA) has been the values ranging from 1 to 10 which is as follows:

1 to 5.0 – Low

5.1 to 7.0 – Moderate

7.1 to 10 – Good

Table 4.10.2: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

Sittong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Chatakpur	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Lepchajagat	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Mineral Spring	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Lamahatta	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Takdah	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Destinations	Employment	Increase in the value of local property	Improvement in Education	Infrastructure development	Improvement in Standard of Living	Increase in Income Level	Flow of Foreign Capital												

(Source: Field Survey, 2014-2017)

The Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SIA) has shown a positive impact of rural tourism on the local community, the owners and the tourists. It had a moderate impact on the livelihood of

the people. From a socio-economic perspective, it was seen the income generated by rural tourism helps local governments and local communities improve physical infrastructure, which in turn strengthens the overall local economy. It was noticed that families who had no known source of income were able to maintain a decent livelihood through rural tourism, while those who already had a sustainable source of income could significantly increase their income. With regards to the six rural tourism destinations: Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong, it has been noted that women and youth are engaged more in rural tourism activities as they work as cooks, guides, drivers and managers in the host family. According to them, the standard of annual income generated by rural tourism is gradually increasing every year. Subsequently, more and more members of the local community showed their interest and they actively participated in rural tourism projects which made the initiative an important source of livelihood.

Tourism activities in rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya have been able to increase the per capita salary of the owners and the local community, thereby improving the financial capital for infrastructural advancement.

Rural tourism has been able to ensure social contact between the owners, residents and tourists. Both the hosts and the tourists are benefitted from rural tourism due to social exchange. Rural tourism additionally impacts nearby networks when the income created from it is used to improve the social framework like schools and colleges, human services establishments, technical institutions, libraries, and so on.

4.10.3 Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA)

Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) is necessary to observe the cultural impact of rural tourism on cultural exchange between the hosts including the local community and the tourists. Local societies and customary lifestyles might be debilitated and even devastated; however, the effect of tourism is high in neighbourhood life convention and social uniqueness. In another manner, contacts may bring unwanted social impacts on the tourism industry in regions where expectations for everyday comforts may make social turmoil. As tourist interacts with people of a particular place he visits, a social exchange of culture takes place (Bukhart and Medlik, 1974).

The rating scale for Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) has been the values ranging from 1 to 10 which is as follows:

1 to 5.0 – Low

5.1 to 7.0 – Moderate

7.1 to 10 – Good

Table 4.10.3 Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA)

Destinations	Change in attitude and culture of local youths	Impact of foreign culture and tradition	Development of ideas, custom, knowledge and skills	Preservation of Cultural identity	Revival of traditional arts	Changes in arts, crafts and festivals
Sittong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Chatakpur	Good	Good	Good	Low	Low	Moderate
Lepchajagat	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Mineral Spring	Good	Good	Good	Low	Low	Moderate
Lamahatta	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate
Takdah	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

The Cultural Impact Assessment revealed that rural tourism had a moderate impact of rural tourism on hosts and tourists regarding cultural exchange. The local, as well as foreign tourists, have been able to bring a change in the attitude and behaviour of local communities in all the six rural tourism

destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. Both the locals and the tourists were influenced by each other's cultural traditions, languages and ideas. The locals have been able to exchange and preserve their culture.

4.11 Sustainable measures adopted by the owners of homestays at the tourist destinations

- Preventing the use of chemical fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, toilet fresheners, phenyl and disinfectants by the rural tourism destination's authority.
- Checking of water usage regularly.
- Checking of toilet water regularly.
- Construction of proper drainage system.
- Use of bio-degradable bins.
- Using plastics as little as possible.
- Saving energy using alternative sources of energy such as solar energy.
- Use of rechargeable materials.
- Sustainable activities are carried out to sustain the environment.
- Preservation of culture, heritage and environment.

4.16 Conclusion

Finally, it can be concluded that the establishment of tourism has benefitted the socio-economic development of all the selected rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. Rural tourism has succeeded in creating jobs, incomes, cultural development, social benefits and environmental development and awareness. Rural tourism has been able to maintain its viability as far as socio-economic development is concerned. It has flourished in all the selected destinations. To ensure long-term viability, the socio-economic advantages of rural tourism, initiatives must be shared with the local population. Rural tourism development is possible through careful planning and

implementation of projects with strong governmental initiatives, tourism officials and the public. In the future, rural tourism will continue to be a lucrative way of life if all the measures are followed properly.

References

- Ahamed M. (2018). "Rural Tourism as a Sustainable Development Alternative: An Analysis with Special Reference to Ballavpur Danga near Santiniketan, West Bengal", *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 2018
- Alipour, S. K. S., Varaki, V. E. (2013). "Tourism and Its Role in Sustainable Rural Development", *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 7(2), 2013
- Bhutia, S. (2015). "Sustainable Tourism Development in Darjeeling Hills of West Bengal, India: Issues & Challenges", *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, Volume 15, Issue 3, 2015.
- Bukhart J., Medlik S. (1974) *Tourism: Past, Present and Future*, The University of Michigan, Heinemann Publisher, Michigan.
- Dragulanescu, V. I., Drutu, M. (2012). "Rural Tourism for Local Economic Development", *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, Volume 2, Issue 1, 2012
- Eusebio, C., Kastenholz, E., Breda, Z. (2014). "Tourism and Sustainable Development of Rural Destinations: A Stakeholders' View", *Revista Portuguesa de Estudos Regionais*, 2014
- Haven-Tang, C. and Jones, E. (2012). "Local leadership for rural tourism development: A case study of Adventa, Monmouthshire, UK", *Tourism Management Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2012
- Hazarika, B. (2016). "Rural Tourism and Sustainable Livelihoods: A Case Study of Majuli Island of Assam", *International Journal of Scientific Research Publications*, Volume 6, Issue 6, 2016
- Joshi R. and Dhyani P. P. (2009). *Environmental Sustainability and Tourism Implications of Trend Synergies of Tourism in Sikkim Himalayas*, *Current Science*, 97(1), July (2009).

- Kantar, S., Svrznjak, K. (2017). "Development of Sustainable Rural Tourism", *The Central European Journal of Regional Development and Tourism*, Volume 9, Issue 1, 2017
- Kantharia A. R., Sonaviya D. R., Tandel B. N. (2017). "Review on Mitigation and Control Techniques of Noise Pollution", *ResearchGate*, Vol. 1. Issue 1, 2017
- Kashyap, H. (2014). "Economic Development through Tourism – A Case Study of Home Stay scheme of Himachal Pradesh", *Global Journal of Finance and Management*, Volume 6, Number 4, 2014
- Kazana, V., Kazaklis, A. (2009). "Exploring Quality of Life Concerns in the Context of Sustainable Rural Development at the Local Level: A Greek Case Study", *Regional Environmental Change*, 2009
- Kumar, S., Vetrivel, K. (2012). "Role of Indian Government to Protect the Environment Sustainability – An Overview", *Academicia* Vol. 2, Issue 8 (August 2012)
- Manivannan S., Thilgam K. V. and Khola O.P.S. (2017). "Soil and Water Conservation in India: Strategies and Research Challenges", *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2017
- Manoj, K. P. (2016). "Impact of Rural Tourism on the Environment and Society: Evidence from Kumbalangi in Kerala, India", *Internal Journal of Advance Research in Computer Science and Management Studies*, Volume 4, Issue 2, 2016
- Meena, Shivraj (2015). "Rural Tourism Impact, Challenges and Opportunities in Rajasthan", *The Journal of Bengal Geographer*, Vol. IV, No. IV, 2015
- Meyer F. D., Meyer N. (2015). "The Role and Impact of Tourism on Local Economic Development: A Comparative Study", *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*, Volume 21, 2015

Richards, G., Hall, D. (2000). *Tourism and Sustainable Community Development*, Routledge,
London.

Chapter V

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIOURAL AND FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF TOURISTS

5.1 Introduction

Tourists at a particular destination display demographic, behavioural as well as functional characteristics that influence the tourism industry. Tourists' impressions determine the success of rural tourism. Tourists' nature, the standard of living, and behavioural changes are revealed by factors such as their origin, gender, age, education, occupational structure, earnings, and economic status, as well as the purpose of their visit, frequencies of visit, length of stay, accompanying persons, and means of transport, residents' perceptions, and numerous possible facilities.

5.2 Profile of Tourists visiting the Study Area

According to the Tourist Commission (1995), the tourists visiting the rural areas usually have the characteristics such as good education, needs that are more specific, significant interest in environmental concerns, wellbeing and preference towards specialized products.

Data related to tourists' behaviour also contribute to the rapid development of the destinations. A general survey was conducted with the various elements of the specified study region to examine the functioning qualities of the tourists. The primary data was gathered through interviews and detailed questionnaires. This was done with the tourists' as well as stakeholders' prior consent. A random sampling method was adopted in some situations to identify respondents who could provide detailed information about the tourists' behaviour and character and tourism sector as well. Six different rural tourism destination were chosen for the planned study based on the region's geographic location, demographic, social, economic, cultural, religious, and environmental significance. These selected areas were Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring and Lepchajagat from

Darjeeling subdivision and Chatakpur and Sittong from Kurseong subdivision. About 420 tourists considering 70 each from different study areas were personally interviewed to collect information about their demographic and socio-economic profile.

5.2.1 Origins of the Tourists

The origin of the tourists is necessary to evaluate the qualities and lifestyle they are possessing from different urban areas, cities, metropolitan to smaller areas particularly rural. According to the study, the majority of tourists, 76.42 percent, are from West Bengal, the state where they were raised. This means that a lot of tourists are national visitors who choose Darjeeling because of its convenient access, stunning scenery, and pleasant climate. National tourists comprise the majority in five of the six locations, except for Mineral Spring, which is rather costly. In Mineral Spring, the average daily cost is Rs. 5,000, while the average cost in other locations is Rs. 1,200. Foreign tourists account for about 9% of all visitors.

In various degrees, internal as well as overseas tourists visit Darjeeling's rural tourism destinations. The origins of tourists from West Bengal include places like Kolkata, Howrah, Chandannagore, Coochbehar, Krishnanagar, Hooghly, Durgapur, Kalyani, Malda, North 24 Parganas, Kharagpur, Jalpaiguri, Siliguri, Darjeeling, etc. The places from other parts of India include Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai, Bihar, etc. The international visitors usually hail from various European countries, e.g. Belgium, Germany, Denmark, England, France, and Switzerland and also from the USA, and Canada.

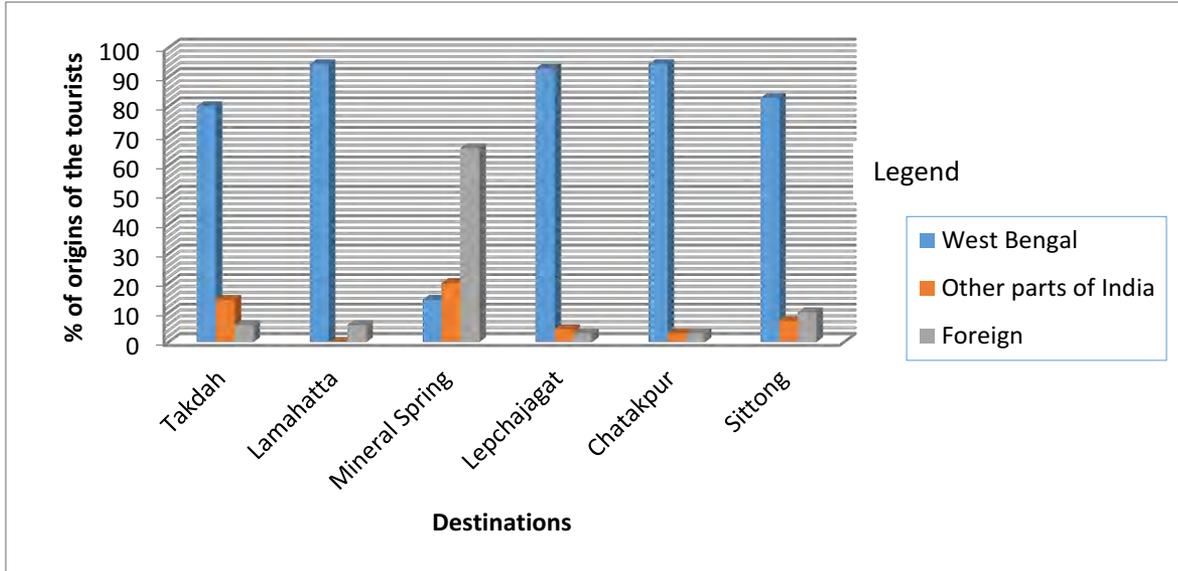
Table 5.2.1: Place of Origin of the Tourists

Destinations	Origins of the Tourists			% of Origins of the Tourists		
	West Bengal	Other parts of India	Foreign	West Bengal	Other parts of India	Foreign
Takdah	56	10	4	80.00	14.28	5.72
Lamahatta	66	0	4	94.28	0.00	5.72
Mineral Spring	10	14	46	14.28	20.00	65.72
Lepchajagat	65	3	2	92.85	4.29	2.86
Chatakpur	66	2	2	94.28	2.86	2.86
Sittong	58	5	7	82.85	7.14	10.01

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=420

Figure 5.2.1: Place of Origin of the Tourists



(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2017)

N=420

80 %, 14.28 %, and 5.72 % of the 70 tourists who visited Takdah came from West Bengal, other areas of India, and other nationalities, respectively. There were 66 tourists from West Bengal out of 70 (94.28 %) who visited Lamahatta, but none from other areas of India and only 4 (5.72 %) from abroad. The number of tourists from West Bengal is large because of unprecedented heat during summers in their home towns and easy accessibility in rural areas of Darjeeling which drives them to spots like Takdah, Lamahatta and Sittong in Darjeeling, which has a cool and comfortable climate, magnificent terrain, and tranquil surroundings. In Mineral Spring, things are a little different. 14%), 20 % and 66% of the 70 tourists who visited Mineral Spring were from West Bengal, other areas of India, and other nationalities respectively. Mineral Spring has a surprisingly high number of foreign tourists due to its pure nature and higher-quality homestays. The domestic tourists are less due to the high cost of the stay. Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong too have a higher number of tourists coming from different parts of West Bengal i.e. 92.85%, 94.28% and 82.85% respectively. The numbers of tourists coming from other parts of India at

Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong are 4.29%, 2.86%, 7.14% respectively. The number of incoming foreign tourists has remained low i.e. only 2.86%, 2.86% and 10.01% at Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong respectively.

5.2.2 Gender of the Tourists

Considering gender, the difference between male and female visitors has been observed to be modest. The table below represents the different forms of gender in the study area.

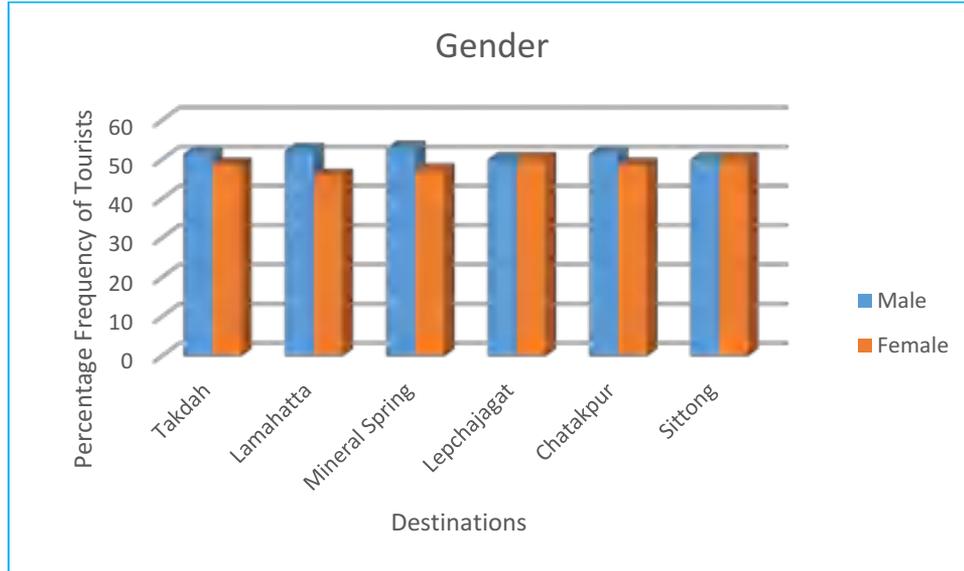
Table 5.2.2: Gender of the Tourists

Destinations	Gender					% of Gender				
	M	F	Members from the same family	Only male groups	Only female groups	M	F	Members from the same family	Only male groups	Only female groups
Takdah	36	34	19	16	13	51.42	48.58	27.14	22.85	18.57
Lamahatta	38	32	10	14	18	54.28	45.72	13.88	20.00	25.71
Mineral Spring	37	33	12	16	10	52.85	47.15	17.14	22.85	14.28
Lepchajagat	35	35	3	38	26	50.00	50.00	4.28	54.28	37.14
Chatakpur	36	34	14	10	12	51.42	48.58	20.00	14.28	17.14
Sittong	35	35	17	13	15	50.00	50.00	24.28	18.57	21.42

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.2: Gender of the Tourists



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Male tourists arriving in rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling have been somewhat more numerous, according to the survey. Out of 420 tourists surveyed, 217 i.e. 51.66% were male and 203 i.e. 49.44% were female. Takdah had 51.42% male and 48.58% female tourists whereas Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur had 54.28%, 52.85%, 50%, 51.42%, 50% male and 45.72%, 47.15%, 50%, 48.58%, 50% female visitors respectively.

5.2.3 Occupational Structure of the Tourists

The tourists' occupational or employment structure defines their socio-economic status. It impacts individuals' profit and income levels, as well as their ability to travel to diverse and unique locations and benefits at respective offices and associations. It establishes the tourist's ability to explore different tourism places, ranging from reasonable to expensive, based on their vocation, remuneration, and earnings. Some vocations allow tourists to roam during their leisure time, while others keep tourists bound to their profession. Government employees who function as tourists can explore with their entire family yearly. Entrepreneurs and self-employed people who generate

profits can tour with a portion of their profits. To unwind, a retired individual frequently travels to calm rural areas.

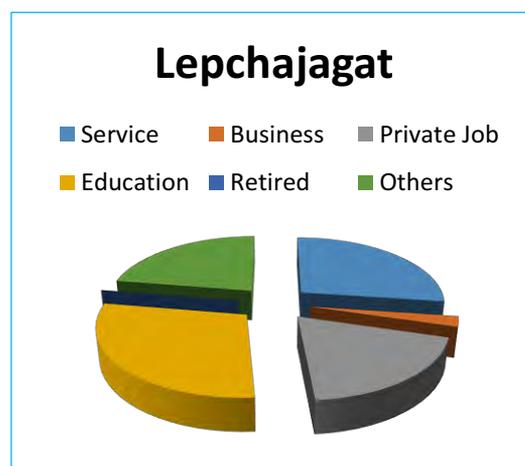
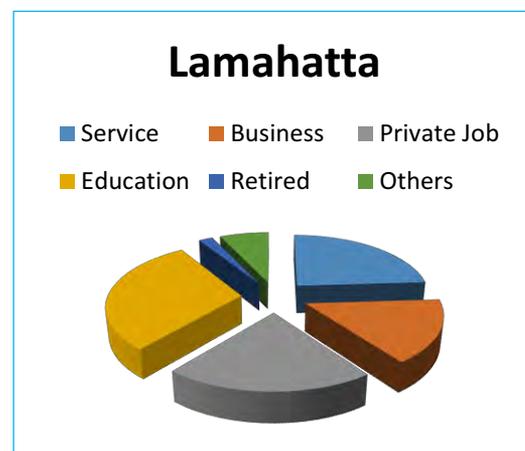
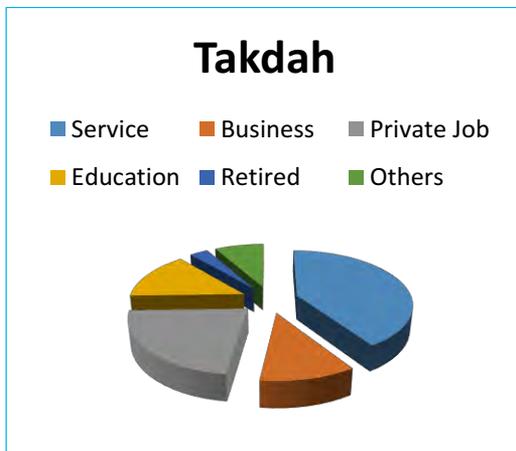
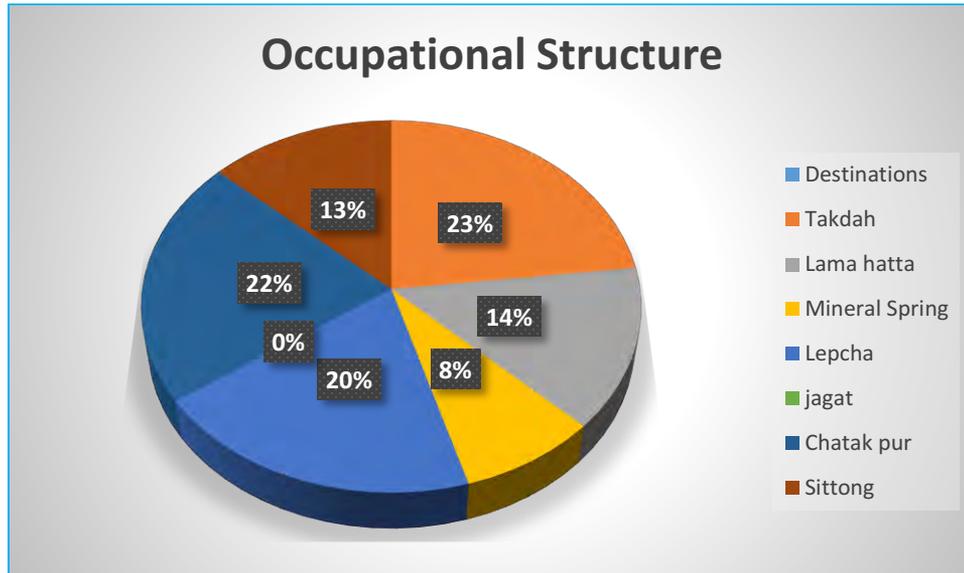
Table 5.2.3: Occupational Structure of tourists visiting select destinations

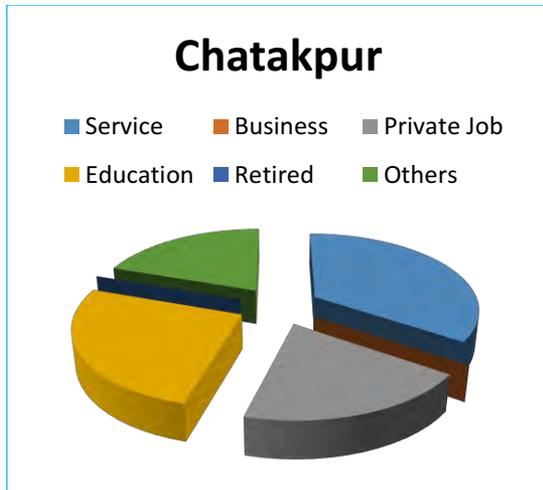
Destinations	Occupational Structure						Occupational Structure (%)					
	Service	Business	Private Job	Education	Retired	Others	Service	Business	Private Job	Education	Retired	Others
Takdah	28	08	16	10	2	6	40.00	11.43	22.86	14.29	2.85	8.57
Lamahatta	17	11	15	21	1	5	24.29	15.71	21.43	30.00	1.43	7.14
Mineral Spring	10	15	22	18	2	3	14.29	21.43	31.43	25.71	2.85	4.29
Lepcha jagat	24	02	17	25	0	2	34.29	2.85	24.29	35.72	0	2.85
Chatak pur	26	00	15	20	0	9	37.14	0	21.43	28.57	0	12.86
Sittong	16	04	34	6	0	10	22.86	5.71	48.57	8.57	0	14.28
Total	121	40	119	100	5	35	28.81	9.52	28.34	23.81	1.19	8.33

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.3: Occupational Structure





(Source: Field Survey, 2014 -2017)

N=420

The overall occupational structure of the tourists reveals that 29% are engaged in govt. service, 9% in business, 28% in private jobs, 25% in education, only 1% retired and 8% engaged in other activities. The data reveal that the Occupational Structure of tourists at Takdah is dominated by service (40%). Other tourists were engaged in private jobs (22.85%), education (18.57%), business (11.42%), others (8.5%) and retired (1.42%). The occupational structure at Lamahatta is dominated by education (30%), followed by business (2.85%), service (24.8%), job (21.42%), private (15.71%), others (7.14%) and retired (1.42%). The occupational structure at Mineral Spring is dominated by people in education (25.71%) followed by service, private job (31.42%), business (21.42%), (14.28%), others (4.28%) and retired (2.85%). The occupational structure at Lepchajagat too is dominated by education (35.71%), followed by service (34.28%), private job (24.28%), business (3.85%), and others (2.85%). The occupational structure at Chatakpur too is dominated by service (37.14%), education (28.57%), private job (21.42%), and others (12.85%). The occupational structure of the tourists at Sittong is dominated by private jobs (48.57%) followed by service (22.85%), others (14.28%), education (8.57%), and business (5.71%).

5.2.4 Marital Status of the Tourists

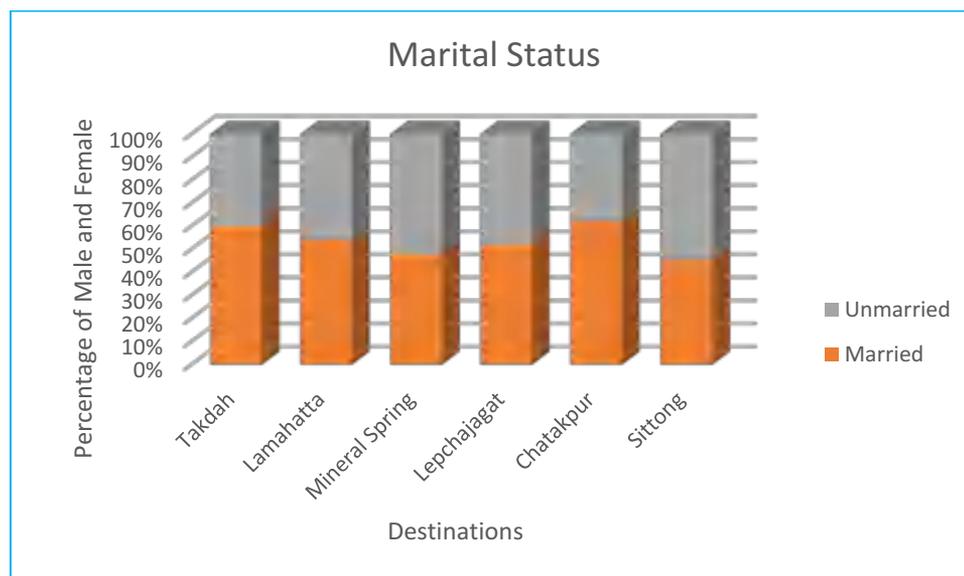
Tourists' marital status reveals their preference for spending their quality time individually, with companions, co-workers, or with their spouses.

Table 5.2.4: Marital Status

Destinations	Married	Unmarried	% of Married	% of Unmarried
1. Takdah	42	28	60.00	40.00
2. Lamahatta	38	32	54.00	46.00
3. Mineral Spring	34	36	48.00	52.00
4. Lepchajagat	36	34	52.00	48.00
5. Chatakpur	44	26	62.00	38.00
6. Sittong	32	38	45.00	55.00

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

Figure 5.2.4: Marital Status



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

At Takdah, 60 percent of tourists were married and 40% were single, according to the survey. At Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, respectively, 54.00 %, 48.00 %, 52.00 %, 62.00 %, and 45.00 % of tourists were married. At Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, respectively, 40.00 percent, 46.00 percent, 52.00 percent, 48.00 percent, 38.00 percent, and 45.00 percent of tourists were unmarried. With over 60.00 % of husbands and wives, Takdah and Chatakpur have the highest proportion of married people.

5.2.5 Purpose of Visit

The purpose of a tourist's visit varies from one individual to another. Various individuals possess multiple motives for visiting various locations. Some people enjoy nature, several prefer peace, some enjoy bird watching, and others enjoy photography, and so on. The intent of a tour is crucial when evaluating various aspects of tourism in various locations.

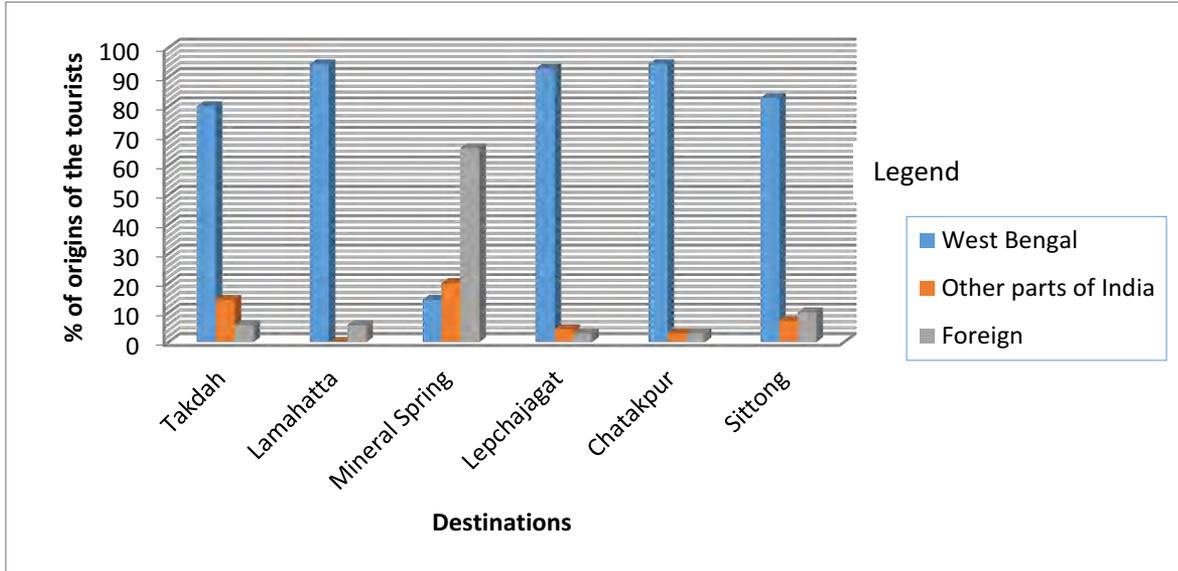
Table 5.2.5: Purpose of Visit

Destinations	Purpose of Visit			Purpose of Visit (%)		
	Nature Observation	Peace	Others	Nature Observation	Peace	Others
1. Takdah	32	30	8	45.71	42.86	11.43
2. Lamahatta	16	38	16	22.86	54.28	22.86
3. Mineral Spring	21	40	9	30.00	57.14	12.86
4. Lepchajagat	32	22	16	45.71	31.43	22.86
5. Chatakpur	41	18	11	58.57	25.71	15.72
6. Sittong	24	34	12	34.29	48.57	17.14

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.1: Place of Origin of the Tourists



(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2017)

N=420

80 %, 14.28 %, and 5.72 % of the 70 tourists who visited Takdah came from West Bengal, other areas of India, and other nationalities, respectively. There were 66 tourists from West Bengal out of 70 (94.28 %) who visited Lamahatta, but none from other areas of India and only 4 (5.72 %) from abroad. The number of tourists from West Bengal is large because of unprecedented heat during summers in their home towns and easy accessibility in rural areas of Darjeeling which drives them to spots like Takdah, Lamahatta and Sittong in Darjeeling, which has a cool and comfortable climate, magnificent terrain, and tranquil surroundings. In Mineral Spring, things are a little different. 14%), 20 % and 66% of the 70 tourists who visited Mineral Spring were from West Bengal, other areas of India, and other nationalities respectively. Mineral Spring has a surprisingly high number of foreign tourists due to its pure nature and higher-quality homestays. The domestic tourists are less due to the high cost of the stay. Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong too have a higher number of tourists coming from different parts of West Bengal i.e. 92.85%, 94.28% and 82.85% respectively. The numbers of tourists coming from other parts of India at

Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong are 4.29%, 2.86%, 7.14% respectively. The number of incoming foreign tourists has remained low i.e. only 2.86%, 2.86% and 10.01% at Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong respectively.

5.2.2 Gender of the Tourists

Considering gender, the difference between male and female visitors has been observed to be modest. The table below represents the different forms of gender in the study area.

Table 5.2.2: Gender of the Tourists

Destinations	Gender					% of Gender				
	M	F	Members from the same family	Only male groups	Only female groups	M	F	Members from the same family	Only male groups	Only female groups
Takdah	36	34	19	16	13	51.42	48.58	27.14	22.85	18.57
Lamahatta	38	32	10	14	18	54.28	45.72	13.88	20.00	25.71
Mineral Spring	37	33	12	16	10	52.85	47.15	17.14	22.85	14.28
Lepchajagat	35	35	3	38	26	50.00	50.00	4.28	54.28	37.14
Chatakpur	36	34	14	10	12	51.42	48.58	20.00	14.28	17.14
Sittong	35	35	17	13	15	50.00	50.00	24.28	18.57	21.42

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

5.2.4 Marital Status of the Tourists

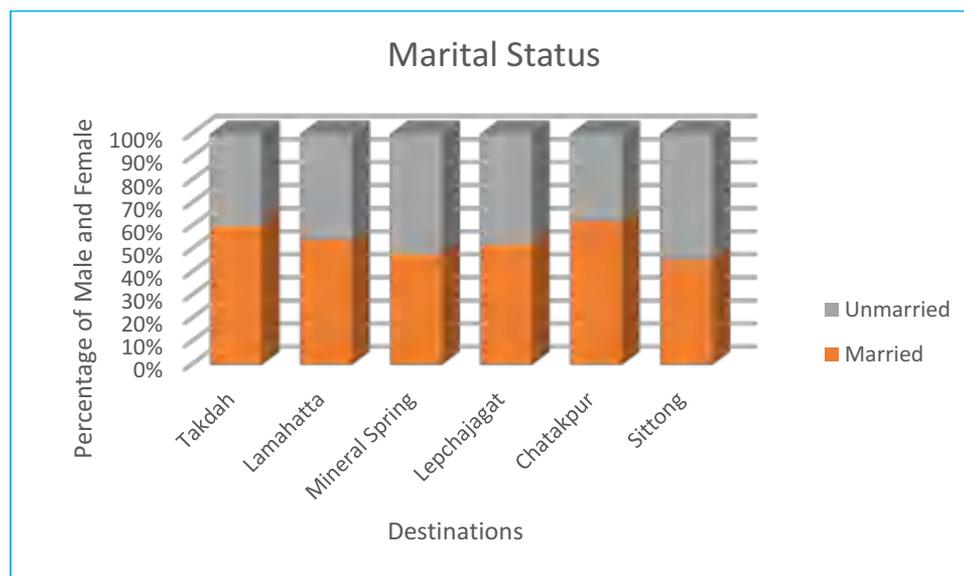
Tourists' marital status reveals their preference for spending their quality time individually, with companions, co-workers, or with their spouses.

Table 5.2.4: Marital Status

Destinations	Married	Unmarried	% of Married	% of Unmarried
1.Takdah	42	28	60.00	40.00
2. Lamahatta	38	32	54.00	46.00
3. Mineral Spring	34	36	48.00	52.00
4. Lepchajagat	36	34	52.00	48.00
5. Chatakpur	44	26	62.00	38.00
6.Sittong	32	38	45.00	55.00

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

Figure 5.2.4: Marital Status



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

At Takdah, 60 percent of tourists were married and 40% were single, according to the survey. At Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, respectively, 54.00 %, 48.00 %, 52.00 %, 62.00 %, and 45.00 % of tourists were married. At Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, respectively, 40.00 percent, 46.00 percent, 52.00 percent, 48.00 percent, 38.00 percent, and 45.00 percent of tourists were unmarried. With over 60.00 % of husbands and wives, Takdah and Chatakpur have the highest proportion of married people.

5.2.5 Purpose of Visit

The purpose of a tourist's visit varies from one individual to another. Various individuals possess multiple motives for visiting various locations. Some people enjoy nature, several prefer peace, some enjoy bird watching, and others enjoy photography, and so on. The intent of a tour is crucial when evaluating various aspects of tourism in various locations.

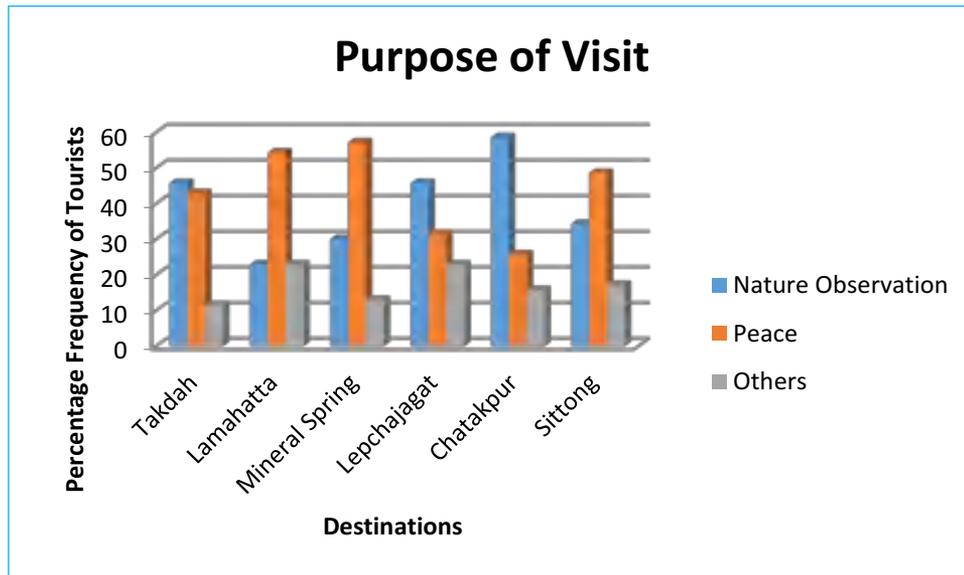
Table 5.2.5: Purpose of Visit

Destinations	Purpose of Visit			Purpose of Visit (%)		
	Nature Observation	Peace	Others	Nature Observation	Peace	Others
1. Takdah	32	30	8	45.71	42.86	11.43
2. Lamahatta	16	38	16	22.86	54.28	22.86
3. Mineral Spring	21	40	9	30.00	57.14	12.86
4. Lepchajagat	32	22	16	45.71	31.43	22.86
5. Chatakpur	41	18	11	58.57	25.71	15.72
6. Sittong	24	34	12	34.29	48.57	17.14

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.5: Purpose of Visit



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

The table demonstrates that nature and tranquility enthusiasts make up the majority of visitors to Takdah, Lepchajagat, and Chatakpur. At Takdah, Lepchajagat, and Chatakpur, 45.71 %, 45.71 %, and 58.57 % prefer nature observation, respectively, whereas 54.28 %, 57.14 %, and 48.57 % prefer a calm environment devoid of congestion and vibration at Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, and Sittong.

5.2.6 Economic Status of the Tourists

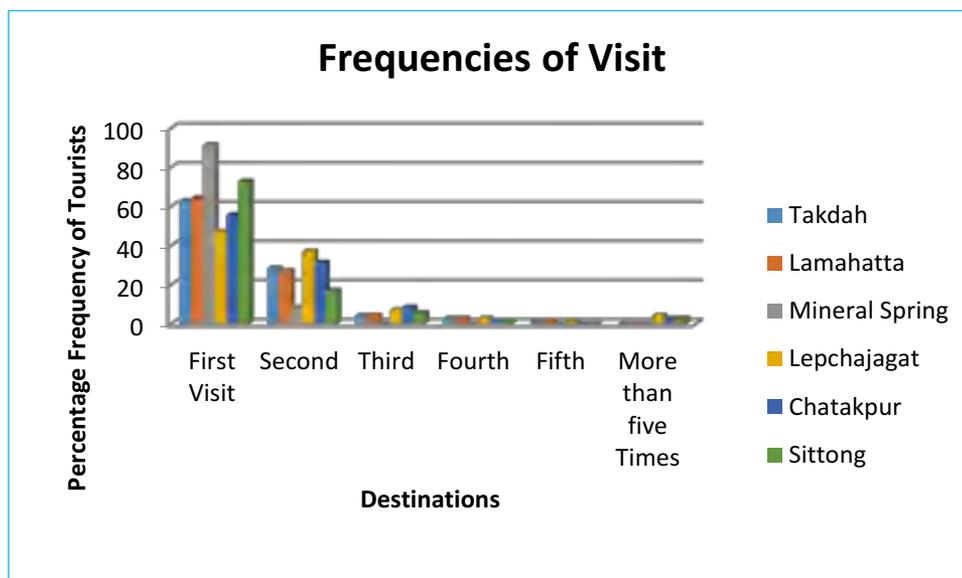
Tourists' economic condition impacts whether they prefer to visit inexpensive or expensive destinations, relying on their earnings. The more their earnings, the more expensive the venues they travel and stay in overtime. The average monthly income of the tourists visiting the different rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya ranges from less than Rs. 15,000 to more than Rs. 75,000. Few jobless visitors, most of whom are dependents too travel with their relatives to enjoy the destination's beauty and tranquillity.

Destinations	% of Frequencies					
	First Visit	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	More than five Times
Takdah	62.86	28.57	4.28	2.86	1.43	0
Lamahatta	64.29	27.14	4.28	2.86	1.43	0
Mineral Spring	91.43	8.57	0	0	0	0
Lepchajagat	47.14	37.14	7.14	2.86	1.43	4.29
Chatakpur	55.71	31.43	8.57	1.43	0	2.86
Sittong	72.86	17.14	5.71	1.43	0	2.86

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.7: Frequencies of Tourists



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2018)

N=420

The findings show that all the rural tourism destinations were attractive and possessed good hospitality whereby most of the tourists visited the homestays more than once. 62.86% in Takdah, 64.29% in Lamahatta, 91.43% in Mineral Spring, 47.14% in Lepchajagat, 55.71% and 72.86%

tourists in Sittong visited the destinations for the first time; 28.57% in Takdah, 27.14% in Lamahatta, 8.57% in Mineral Spring, 37.14% in Lepchajagat, 31.43% and 17.14% tourists in Sittong visited the destinations for the second time; 4.28% tourists each in Takdah and Lamahatta, none (0%) in Mineral Spring, 7.14% in Lepchajagat, 8.57% in Chatakpur and 5.71% in Sittong visited the destinations for the third time; 2.86% tourists each in Takdah, Lamahatta and Lepchajagat, none (0%) and 1.43% each in Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for the fourth time; 1.43% tourists each in Takdah, Lamahatta and Lepchajagat, and none (0%) in Mineral Spring, Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for the fifth time; no tourists in Takdah, Lamahatta and Mineral Spring, 4.29% in Lepchajagat, 2.86 % tourists each in Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for more than five times.

5.3 Satisfaction level of tourists

The satisfaction level of tourists differs from one tourist destination to another since every destination has its quality of service, tourist products, different facilities, infrastructure and so on (Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2013). Various aspects that contribute to tourist satisfaction were characterized by different scholars. Quality of service, security measures, carefulness (Norlida, et al., 2011), meals and drinks (Tak, et al., 2007), physical infrastructure (Yeong, et al., 2010), and so forth are some of the prevalent aspects.

5.3.1 Methodology for acquiring information on the satisfaction level of tourists

The satisfaction level of a considerable number of tourists both national as well as foreign has been analyzed with the various facilities they enjoyed at all the rural tourism destinations such as accommodation, food, service, infrastructure, transportation, the behaviour of the local people, scenic view, peaceful environment, safety, cleanliness, drinking water, hot water for a bath, timely

tea and snacks, etc. In the study area altogether 420 tourists were interviewed regarding facilities and their satisfaction levels were measured with the help of a 5-point Likert's Scale such as:

- i) Very satisfactory
- ii) Satisfactory
- iii) Neutral
- iv) Unsatisfactory
- v) Very unsatisfactory

Data were collected from all six tourist destinations to calculate the opinions of all the tourists. Numerical values were given from 10 to -10 to obtain the satisfaction of the tourists. Thereafter opinions were converted to numerical values such as:

Very satisfactory: 10

Satisfactory: 5

Neutral: 0

Unsatisfactory: -5

Very unsatisfactory: -10

In the table, the factor-wise suitable coefficient is given. The component' mean values are obtained by adding the tourists' responses and dividing the total number of respondents classified by this category. Multiplying these averages by the corresponding frequencies gives complete satisfaction, and dividing by the total frequencies of the respective factor gives the satisfaction index for that particular factor. The following formula is used to calculate the satisfaction index:

$$S_i = \sum (W_i * N_{Wi}) / N$$

Where S_i = Satisfaction Index for a particular parameter (i)

W_i = Weightage given for parameter (i)

NW_i = Number of respondents giving that weightage

N = Total number of respondents for that particular factor for all levels of tourist satisfaction.

Eventually, the ranks are given to these satisfaction indices.

Table 5.3.1.1 Factor-wise Level of Satisfaction

Factors	Very Satisfactory (10)	Satisfactory (5)	Neutral (0)	Un-satisfactory (-5)	Very Un-satisfactory (-10)	Total
Accommodation	128	204	85	2	1	420
Transportation	32	243	84	43	18	420
Food	80	245	75	18	2	420
Services/Attitude of people / Culture	35	276	102	7	0	420
About Place	167	184	69	0	0	420
Shopping	54	62	301	3	0	420
Parking	185	206	29	0	0	420
Cleanliness	87	124	206	3	0	420
Drinking water	89	123	204	4	0	420
Safety	172	184	64	0	0	420
Average	102.9	185.1	121.9	8.0	2.1	420
%	24.5	44.07	29.03	1.90	0.5	100

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from primary data)

Table 5.3.1.2 Satisfaction Index with Ranks

Factors	Very Satisfactory (10)	Satisfactory (5)	Neutral (0)	Unsatisfactory (-5)	Very Unsatisfactory (-10)	Total	Satisfaction Index	Rank
Accommodation	128	204	85	2	1	420	5.428571	4
Transportation	32	243	84	43	18	420	2.714286	9
Food	80	245	75	18	2	420	4.559524	5
Services/Attitude of people/ Culture	35	276	102	7	0	420	4.035714	6
About Place	167	184	69	0	0	420	6.166667	3
Shopping	54	62	301	3	0	420	1.988095	10
Parking	185	206	29	0	0	420	6.857143	1
Cleanliness	87	124	206	3	0	420	3.511905	8
Drinking water	89	123	204	4	0	420	3.535714	7
Safety	172	184	64	0	0	420	6.285714	2

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from primary data)

The table indicates that tourists give a lot of importance to parking facility as it ranks top in terms of satisfaction of tourists; the satisfaction index for parking is 6.8. Because many tourists travel with their vehicle, parking facility is a significant indicator to judge tourist satisfaction. Accordingly, tourists are pleased with the level of security, the elegance of tourist attractions, and food and accommodation. The satisfaction index for safety ranked 2nd with a score of 6.2, while tourist places ranked 3rd with 6.1, accommodation ranked 4th with 5.4 and food ranked 5th scoring 4.5. Tourists were moderate about the attitude of the people, drinking water, and cleanliness. The

satisfaction index for the attitude of people ranked 6th scoring 4.0 while drinking water ranked 7th with 3.53 and cleanliness ranked 8th with a score of 3.51. The tourists were not satisfied with the transportation and shopping experience. The poor road condition and difficult accessibility caused a low satisfaction index for transportation i.e. 2.7 and thus it ranked 9th. The satisfaction index for shopping ranked 10th or the lowest with a score of 1.9.

The places having their parking lot attracted more tourists. Other facilities such as safety, scenic attractions, especially nature, landscapes, viewpoints attracted many tourists. The accommodation and love for local food also attracted tourists from different parts of India and abroad. Most of the tourists faced accommodation problems during peak season. The existing homestays need to expand and new homestays should emerge and operate with more rooms to accommodate the increasing number of tourists.

5.4 Conclusion

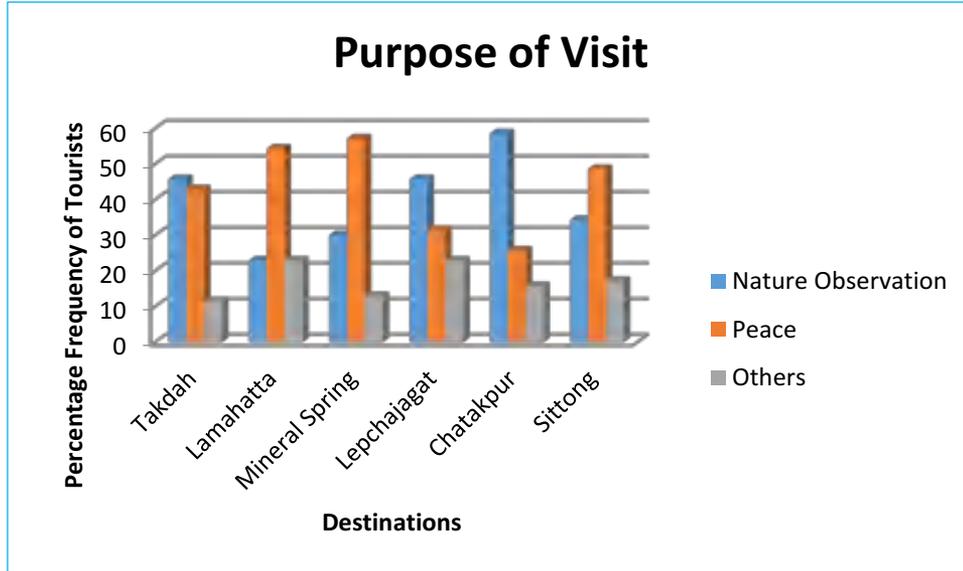
In terms of satisfaction factors of the existing rural tourism destinations in Darjeeling Himalaya, it has been observed that the tourists prefer to visit places where drinking water is available adequately. They prefer to experience different places with different cultural behaviours. Since Darjeeling Hills face a water crisis, the drinking water supply needs to be well structured and resources should be well taken care of. Local people should be aware of a clean environment and work together to keep their villages clean. In rural areas of Darjeeling Himalaya, the development of infrastructure is a critical feature for the growth of tourism. The majority of rural tourism destinations lack proper and sufficient infrastructure. The state of the roads and traffic control are both deplorable. It is necessary to expand the basic infrastructure to attract more tourists.

References

- Asbollah Z. A., Hassan N., Yusoff, M. Y. S., Idris, H. (2017). “The Tourist Behaviour In Different Environments: A Literature Review”, *Planning Malaysia: Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners*, Volume 15, Issue 1 (2017).
- Barbieri C., Mahoney, E. (2010). “Cultural Tourism Behaviour and Preferences among the Live-performing Arts Audience: an Application of the Univorous–Omnivorous Framework”, *International Journal of Tourism Research*”, Volume 12 (2010).
- Budeanu, A. (2007). “Sustainable Tourist Behaviour – A Discussion of Opportunities for Change”, *International Journal of Consumer Studies* (2007).
- Krishan K. K., (2001). *Managing Tourist Destination*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.
- Krishan K. K., Mohinder, C. (2007). *Basics of Tourism, Theory, Operation and Practice*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.
- Kunjuraman, V., Hussin, R. (2013). “Satisfaction of Domestic Tourists with the Homestay Programme in Mesilou Village, Kundasang, Sabah”, Proceedings of the 3rd Regional Conference on Tourism Research (RCTR), Langkawi, Malaysia, (October, 2013).
- Mihaela, R. P. (2014). “Customer Satisfaction in Tourism How to Measure It?” *Cactus Tourism Journal*, Vol. 10, Issue 2 (2014).
- Norlida, et al. (2011). “Satisfaction and Loyalty of Domestic Tourists towards the Kapas Island Marine Park”, *Journal of Tropical Marine Ecosystem (EKOMAR)*, Vol. 2, No.1.
- Sadilek, T. (2015). “Visitors Satisfaction Measurement In Czech Tourism”, *Actaun*, Volume 63, Number 5 (2015).
- Tak, et al. (2007). “Tourist Satisfaction, Recommendation and Revisiting in Singapore”, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 28, No. 4.

Yeong, et al. (2010). “The Relationship Between Food-related Personality Traits, Satisfaction and Loyalty among Visitors Attending Food Events and Festivals”, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Volume 2, No. 2

Figure 5.2.5: Purpose of Visit



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

The table demonstrates that nature and tranquility enthusiasts make up the majority of visitors to Takdah, Lepchajagat, and Chatakpur. At Takdah, Lepchajagat, and Chatakpur, 45.71 %, 45.71 %, and 58.57 % prefer nature observation, respectively, whereas 54.28 %, 57.14 %, and 48.57 % prefer a calm environment devoid of congestion and vibration at Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, and Sittong.

5.2.6 Economic Status of the Tourists

Tourists' economic condition impacts whether they prefer to visit inexpensive or expensive destinations, relying on their earnings. The more their earnings, the more expensive the venues they travel and stay in overtime. The average monthly income of the tourists visiting the different rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya ranges from less than Rs. 15,000 to more than Rs. 75,000. Few jobless visitors, most of whom are dependents too travel with their relatives to enjoy the destination's beauty and tranquillity.

Table - 5.2.6: Economic Status

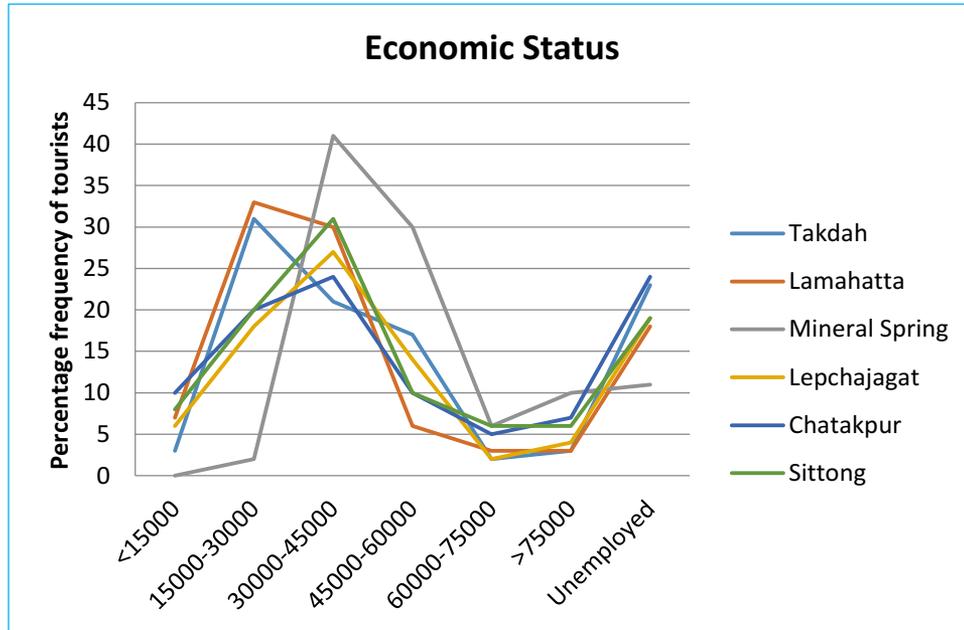
Destinations	Income in Rs.						
	<15000	15000-30000	30000-45000	45000-60000	60000-75000	>75000	Unemployed
Takdah	2	22	15	12	1	2	16
Lamahatta	5	23	21	4	2	2	13
Mineral Spring	0	1	29	21	4	7	8
Lepchajagat	4	13	19	10	1	3	20
Chatakpur	7	14	17	7	5	0	20
Sittong	6	14	22	7	4	4	13

Destinations	% of Income in Rs.						
	<15000	15000-30000	30000-45000	45000-60000	60000-75000	>75000	Unemployed
Takdah	2.86	31.43	21.43	17.14	1.43	2.86	22.85
Lamahatta	7.14	32.86	30.00	5.71	2.86	2.86	18.57
Mineral Spring	0	1.43	41.43	30.00	5.71	10.00	11.43
Lepchajagat	5.71	18.57	27.14	14.28	1.43	4.29	28.58
Chatakpur	10.00	20.00	24.28	10.00	7.14	0	28.58
Sittong	8.57	20.00	31.44	10.00	5.71	5.71	18.57

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.6: Economic Status (Average monthly income in Rs.)



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

The majority of visitors to Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong are in a fair to good financial situation. Out of 420 respondents (70 each from six destinations) from the above-noted destinations, 2.86%, 7.14%, 0%, 5.71%, 10.00% and 8.57% tourists respectively have earnings less than Rs.15,000, 31.43%, 32.86%, 1.43%, 18.57%, 20.00% and 20.00% tourists have earnings between Rs.15,000 to Rs.30,000, 21.43%, 30.00%, 41.43%, 27.14%, 24.28% and 31.44% between Rs.30,000 to Rs.45,000, 17.14%, 5.71%, 30.00%, 14.28%, 10.00% and 10.00% between Rs.45,000 to Rs.60,000, 1.43%, 2.86%, 5.71%, 1.43%, 7.14% and 5.71% between Rs.60,000 to Rs.75,000, 2.86%, 2.86%, 10.00%, 4.29%, 0% and 5.71% more than Rs.75,000 and 22.85%, 18.57%, 11.43%, 28.58%, 29.58% and 18.57% were unemployed.

5.2.7 Frequencies of Visit

The frequency of visits by the tourists gives an idea about the acclaim of explicit or commonplace rural tourism destinations. It aids in determining the strength of a tourist's passion for nature, tranquillity, and other types of amenities experienced at the same location. The feasibility and suitability of a location to attract visitors regularly can be determined by the number of people who visit it. Rather than relying on a specific tourism destination, tourists tend to explore new and improved destinations. The frequency with which visitors explore a specific place in the rural region indicates the tourists' attraction in a specific destination that appeals to them.

Table - 5.2.7: Frequencies of Visit by the Tourists

Destinations	Frequencies					
	First Visit	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	More than five times
Takdah	44	20	3	2	1	0
Lamahatta	45	19	3	2	1	0
Mineral Spring	64	6	0	0	0	0
Lepchajagat	33	26	5	2	1	3
Chatakpur	39	22	6	1	0	2
Sittong	51	12	4	1	0	2

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

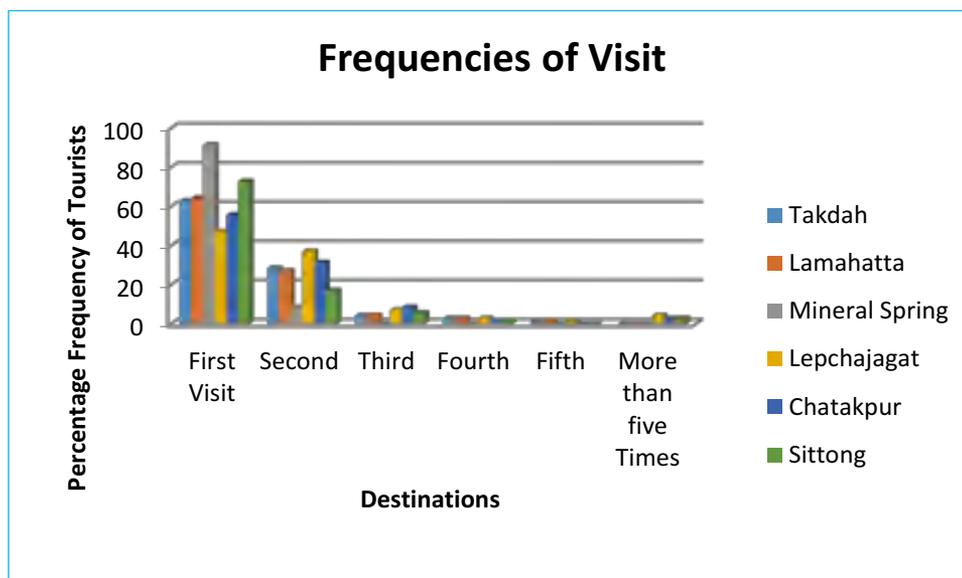
N=420

Destinations	% of Frequencies					
	First Visit	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	More than five Times
Takdah	62.86	28.57	4.28	2.86	1.43	0
Lamahatta	64.29	27.14	4.28	2.86	1.43	0
Mineral Spring	91.43	8.57	0	0	0	0
Lepchajagat	47.14	37.14	7.14	2.86	1.43	4.29
Chatakpur	55.71	31.43	8.57	1.43	0	2.86
Sittong	72.86	17.14	5.71	1.43	0	2.86

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.7: Frequencies of Tourists



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2018)

N=420

The findings show that all the rural tourism destinations were attractive and possessed good hospitality whereby most of the tourists visited the homestays more than once. 62.86% in Takdah, 64.29% in Lamahatta, 91.43% in Mineral Spring, 47.14% in Lepchajagat, 55.71% and 72.86%

tourists in Sittong visited the destinations for the first time; 28.57% in Takdah, 27.14% in Lamahatta, 8.57% in Mineral Spring, 37.14% in Lepchajagat, 31.43% and 17.14% tourists in Sittong visited the destinations for the second time; 4.28% tourists each in Takdah and Lamahatta, none (0%) in Mineral Spring, 7.14% in Lepchajagat, 8.57% in Chatakpur and 5.71% in Sittong visited the destinations for the third time; 2.86% tourists each in Takdah, Lamahatta and Lepchajagat, none (0%) and 1.43% each in Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for the fourth time; 1.43% tourists each in Takdah, Lamahatta and Lepchajagat, and none (0%) in Mineral Spring, Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for the fifth time; no tourists in Takdah, Lamahatta and Mineral Spring, 4.29% in Lepchajagat, 2.86 % tourists each in Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for more than five times.

5.3 Satisfaction level of tourists

The satisfaction level of tourists differs from one tourist destination to another since every destination has its quality of service, tourist products, different facilities, infrastructure and so on (Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2013). Various aspects that contribute to tourist satisfaction were characterized by different scholars. Quality of service, security measures, carefulness (Norlida, et al., 2011), meals and drinks (Tak, et al., 2007), physical infrastructure (Yeong, et al., 2010), and so forth are some of the prevalent aspects.

5.3.1 Methodology for acquiring information on the satisfaction level of tourists

The satisfaction level of a considerable number of tourists both national as well as foreign has been analyzed with the various facilities they enjoyed at all the rural tourism destinations such as accommodation, food, service, infrastructure, transportation, the behaviour of the local people, scenic view, peaceful environment, safety, cleanliness, drinking water, hot water for a bath, timely

tea and snacks, etc. In the study area altogether 420 tourists were interviewed regarding facilities and their satisfaction levels were measured with the help of a 5-point Likert's Scale such as:

- i) Very satisfactory
- ii) Satisfactory
- iii) Neutral
- iv) Unsatisfactory
- v) Very unsatisfactory

Data were collected from all six tourist destinations to calculate the opinions of all the tourists. Numerical values were given from 10 to -10 to obtain the satisfaction of the tourists. Thereafter opinions were converted to numerical values such as:

Very satisfactory: 10

Satisfactory: 5

Neutral: 0

Unsatisfactory: -5

Very unsatisfactory: -10

In the table, the factor-wise suitable coefficient is given. The component' mean values are obtained by adding the tourists' responses and dividing the total number of respondents classified by this category. Multiplying these averages by the corresponding frequencies gives complete satisfaction, and dividing by the total frequencies of the respective factor gives the satisfaction index for that particular factor. The following formula is used to calculate the satisfaction index:

$$S_i = \sum (W_i * N_{Wi}) / N$$

Where S_i = Satisfaction Index for a particular parameter (i)

W_i = Weightage given for parameter (i)

NW_i = Number of respondents giving that weightage

N = Total number of respondents for that particular factor for all levels of tourist satisfaction.

Eventually, the ranks are given to these satisfaction indices.

Table 5.3.1.1 Factor-wise Level of Satisfaction

Factors	Very Satisfactory (10)	Satisfactory (5)	Neutral (0)	Un-satisfactory (-5)	Very Un-satisfactory (-10)	Total
Accommodation	128	204	85	2	1	420
Transportation	32	243	84	43	18	420
Food	80	245	75	18	2	420
Services/Attitude of people / Culture	35	276	102	7	0	420
About Place	167	184	69	0	0	420
Shopping	54	62	301	3	0	420
Parking	185	206	29	0	0	420
Cleanliness	87	124	206	3	0	420
Drinking water	89	123	204	4	0	420
Safety	172	184	64	0	0	420
Average	102.9	185.1	121.9	8.0	2.1	420
%	24.5	44.07	29.03	1.90	0.5	100

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from primary data)

Table 5.3.1.2 Satisfaction Index with Ranks

Factors	Very Satisfactory (10)	Satisfactory (5)	Neutral (0)	Unsatisfactory (-5)	Very Unsatisfactory (-10)	Total	Satisfaction Index	Rank
Accommodation	128	204	85	2	1	420	5.428571	4
Transportation	32	243	84	43	18	420	2.714286	9
Food	80	245	75	18	2	420	4.559524	5
Services/Attitude of people/ Culture	35	276	102	7	0	420	4.035714	6
About Place	167	184	69	0	0	420	6.166667	3
Shopping	54	62	301	3	0	420	1.988095	10
Parking	185	206	29	0	0	420	6.857143	1
Cleanliness	87	124	206	3	0	420	3.511905	8
Drinking water	89	123	204	4	0	420	3.535714	7
Safety	172	184	64	0	0	420	6.285714	2

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from primary data)

The table indicates that tourists give a lot of importance to parking facility as it ranks top in terms of satisfaction of tourists; the satisfaction index for parking is 6.8. Because many tourists travel with their vehicle, parking facility is a significant indicator to judge tourist satisfaction. Accordingly, tourists are pleased with the level of security, the elegance of tourist attractions, and food and accommodation. The satisfaction index for safety ranked 2nd with a score of 6.2, while tourist places ranked 3rd with 6.1, accommodation ranked 4th with 5.4 and food ranked 5th scoring 4.5. Tourists were moderate about the attitude of the people, drinking water, and cleanliness. The

satisfaction index for the attitude of people ranked 6th scoring 4.0 while drinking water ranked 7th with 3.53 and cleanliness ranked 8th with a score of 3.51. The tourists were not satisfied with the transportation and shopping experience. The poor road condition and difficult accessibility caused a low satisfaction index for transportation i.e. 2.7 and thus it ranked 9th. The satisfaction index for shopping ranked 10th or the lowest with a score of 1.9.

The places having their parking lot attracted more tourists. Other facilities such as safety, scenic attractions, especially nature, landscapes, viewpoints attracted many tourists. The accommodation and love for local food also attracted tourists from different parts of India and abroad. Most of the tourists faced accommodation problems during peak season. The existing homestays need to expand and new homestays should emerge and operate with more rooms to accommodate the increasing number of tourists.

5.4 Conclusion

In terms of satisfaction factors of the existing rural tourism destinations in Darjeeling Himalaya, it has been observed that the tourists prefer to visit places where drinking water is available adequately. They prefer to experience different places with different cultural behaviours. Since Darjeeling Hills face a water crisis, the drinking water supply needs to be well structured and resources should be well taken care of. Local people should be aware of a clean environment and work together to keep their villages clean. In rural areas of Darjeeling Himalaya, the development of infrastructure is a critical feature for the growth of tourism. The majority of rural tourism destinations lack proper and sufficient infrastructure. The state of the roads and traffic control are both deplorable. It is necessary to expand the basic infrastructure to attract more tourists.

References

- Asbollah Z. A., Hassan N., Yusoff, M. Y. S., Idris, H. (2017). “The Tourist Behaviour In Different Environments: A Literature Review”, *Planning Malaysia: Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners*, Volume 15, Issue 1 (2017).
- Barbieri C., Mahoney, E. (2010). “Cultural Tourism Behaviour and Preferences among the Live-performing Arts Audience: an Application of the Univorous–Omnivorous Framework”, *International Journal of Tourism Research*”, Volume 12 (2010).
- Budeanu, A. (2007). “Sustainable Tourist Behaviour – A Discussion of Opportunities for Change”, *International Journal of Consumer Studies* (2007).
- Krishan K. K., (2001). *Managing Tourist Destination*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.
- Krishan K. K., Mohinder, C. (2007). *Basics of Tourism, Theory, Operation and Practice*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.
- Kunjuraman, V., Hussin, R. (2013). “Satisfaction of Domestic Tourists with the Homestay Programme in Mesilou Village, Kundasang, Sabah”, Proceedings of the 3rd Regional Conference on Tourism Research (RCTR), Langkawi, Malaysia, (October, 2013).
- Mihaela, R. P. (2014). “Customer Satisfaction in Tourism How to Measure It?” *Cactus Tourism Journal*, Vol. 10, Issue 2 (2014).
- Norlida, et al. (2011). “Satisfaction and Loyalty of Domestic Tourists towards the Kapas Island Marine Park”, *Journal of Tropical Marine Ecosystem (EKOMAR)*, Vol. 2, No.1.
- Sadilek, T. (2015). “Visitors Satisfaction Measurement In Czech Tourism”, *Actaun*, Volume 63, Number 5 (2015).
- Tak, et al. (2007). “Tourist Satisfaction, Recommendation and Revisiting in Singapore”, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 28, No. 4.

Yeong, et al. (2010). “The Relationship Between Food-related Personality Traits, Satisfaction and Loyalty among Visitors Attending Food Events and Festivals”, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Volume 2, No. 2

Chapter V

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIOURAL AND FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF TOURISTS

5.1 Introduction

Tourists at a particular destination display demographic, behavioural as well as functional characteristics that influence the tourism industry. Tourists' impressions determine the success of rural tourism. Tourists' nature, the standard of living, and behavioural changes are revealed by factors such as their origin, gender, age, education, occupational structure, earnings, and economic status, as well as the purpose of their visit, frequencies of visit, length of stay, accompanying persons, and means of transport, residents' perceptions, and numerous possible facilities.

5.2 Profile of Tourists visiting the Study Area

According to the Tourist Commission (1995), the tourists visiting the rural areas usually have the characteristics such as good education, needs that are more specific, significant interest in environmental concerns, wellbeing and preference towards specialized products.

Data related to tourists' behaviour also contribute to the rapid development of the destinations. A general survey was conducted with the various elements of the specified study region to examine the functioning qualities of the tourists. The primary data was gathered through interviews and detailed questionnaires. This was done with the tourists' as well as stakeholders' prior consent. A random sampling method was adopted in some situations to identify respondents who could provide detailed information about the tourists' behaviour and character and tourism sector as well. Six different rural tourism destination were chosen for the planned study based on the region's geographic location, demographic, social, economic, cultural, religious, and environmental significance. These selected areas were Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring and Lepchajagat from

Darjeeling subdivision and Chatakpur and Sittong from Kurseong subdivision. About 420 tourists considering 70 each from different study areas were personally interviewed to collect information about their demographic and socio-economic profile.

5.2.1 Origins of the Tourists

The origin of the tourists is necessary to evaluate the qualities and lifestyle they are possessing from different urban areas, cities, metropolitan to smaller areas particularly rural. According to the study, the majority of tourists, 76.42 percent, are from West Bengal, the state where they were raised. This means that a lot of tourists are national visitors who choose Darjeeling because of its convenient access, stunning scenery, and pleasant climate. National tourists comprise the majority in five of the six locations, except for Mineral Spring, which is rather costly. In Mineral Spring, the average daily cost is Rs. 5,000, while the average cost in other locations is Rs. 1,200. Foreign tourists account for about 9% of all visitors.

In various degrees, internal as well as overseas tourists visit Darjeeling's rural tourism destinations. The origins of tourists from West Bengal include places like Kolkata, Howrah, Chandannagore, Coochbehar, Krishnanagar, Hooghly, Durgapur, Kalyani, Malda, North 24 Parganas, Kharagpur, Jalpaiguri, Siliguri, Darjeeling, etc. The places from other parts of India include Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai, Bihar, etc. The international visitors usually hail from various European countries, e.g. Belgium, Germany, Denmark, England, France, and Switzerland and also from the USA, and Canada.

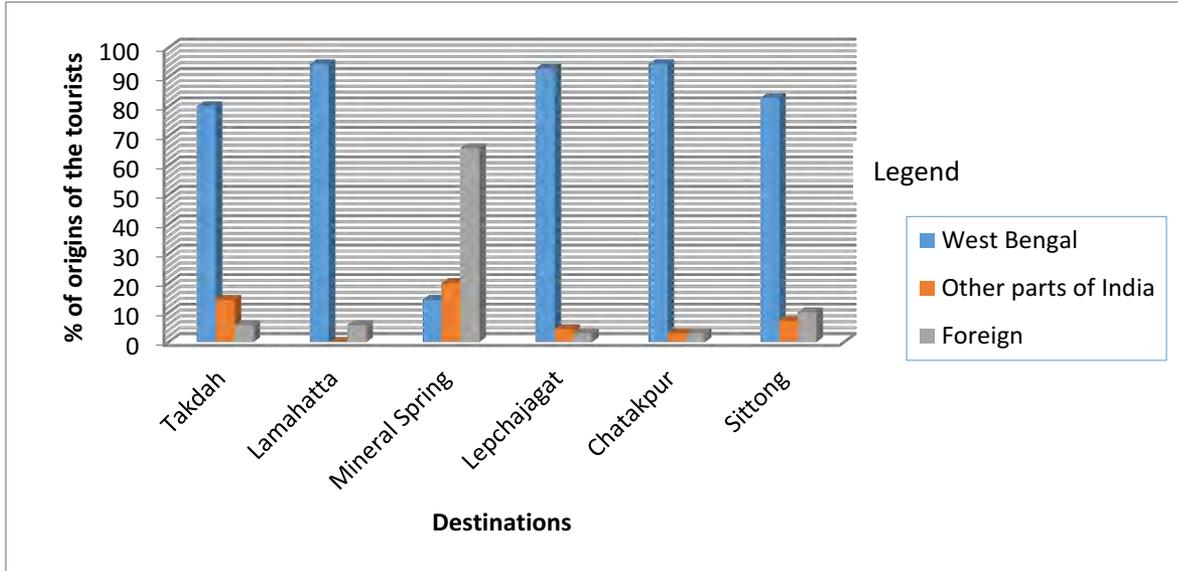
Table 5.2.1: Place of Origin of the Tourists

Destinations	Origins of the Tourists			% of Origins of the Tourists		
	West Bengal	Other parts of India	Foreign	West Bengal	Other parts of India	Foreign
Takdah	56	10	4	80.00	14.28	5.72
Lamahatta	66	0	4	94.28	0.00	5.72
Mineral Spring	10	14	46	14.28	20.00	65.72
Lepchajagat	65	3	2	92.85	4.29	2.86
Chatakpur	66	2	2	94.28	2.86	2.86
Sittong	58	5	7	82.85	7.14	10.01

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=420

Figure 5.2.1: Place of Origin of the Tourists



(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2017)

N=420

80 %, 14.28 %, and 5.72 % of the 70 tourists who visited Takdah came from West Bengal, other areas of India, and other nationalities, respectively. There were 66 tourists from West Bengal out of 70 (94.28 %) who visited Lamahatta, but none from other areas of India and only 4 (5.72 %) from abroad. The number of tourists from West Bengal is large because of unprecedented heat during summers in their home towns and easy accessibility in rural areas of Darjeeling which drives them to spots like Takdah, Lamahatta and Sittong in Darjeeling, which has a cool and comfortable climate, magnificent terrain, and tranquil surroundings. In Mineral Spring, things are a little different. 14%), 20 % and 66% of the 70 tourists who visited Mineral Spring were from West Bengal, other areas of India, and other nationalities respectively. Mineral Spring has a surprisingly high number of foreign tourists due to its pure nature and higher-quality homestays. The domestic tourists are less due to the high cost of the stay. Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong too have a higher number of tourists coming from different parts of West Bengal i.e. 92.85%, 94.28% and 82.85% respectively. The numbers of tourists coming from other parts of India at

Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong are 4.29%, 2.86%, 7.14% respectively. The number of incoming foreign tourists has remained low i.e. only 2.86%, 2.86% and 10.01% at Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong respectively.

5.2.2 Gender of the Tourists

Considering gender, the difference between male and female visitors has been observed to be modest. The table below represents the different forms of gender in the study area.

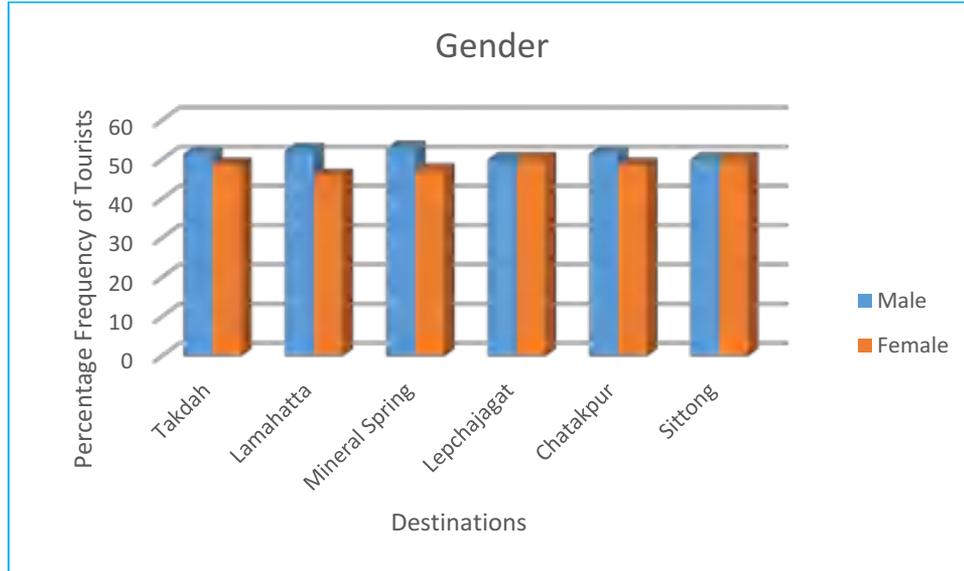
Table 5.2.2: Gender of the Tourists

Destinations	Gender					% of Gender				
	M	F	Members from the same family	Only male groups	Only female groups	M	F	Members from the same family	Only male groups	Only female groups
Takdah	36	34	19	16	13	51.42	48.58	27.14	22.85	18.57
Lamahatta	38	32	10	14	18	54.28	45.72	13.88	20.00	25.71
Mineral Spring	37	33	12	16	10	52.85	47.15	17.14	22.85	14.28
Lepchajagat	35	35	3	38	26	50.00	50.00	4.28	54.28	37.14
Chatakpur	36	34	14	10	12	51.42	48.58	20.00	14.28	17.14
Sittong	35	35	17	13	15	50.00	50.00	24.28	18.57	21.42

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.2: Gender of the Tourists



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Male tourists arriving in rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling have been somewhat more numerous, according to the survey. Out of 420 tourists surveyed, 217 i.e. 51.66% were male and 203 i.e. 49.44% were female. Takdah had 51.42% male and 48.58% female tourists whereas Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur had 54.28%, 52.85%, 50%, 51.42%, 50% male and 45.72%, 47.15%, 50%, 48.58%, 50% female visitors respectively.

5.2.3 Occupational Structure of the Tourists

The tourists' occupational or employment structure defines their socio-economic status. It impacts individuals' profit and income levels, as well as their ability to travel to diverse and unique locations and benefits at respective offices and associations. It establishes the tourist's ability to explore different tourism places, ranging from reasonable to expensive, based on their vocation, remuneration, and earnings. Some vocations allow tourists to roam during their leisure time, while others keep tourists bound to their profession. Government employees who function as tourists can explore with their entire family yearly. Entrepreneurs and self-employed people who generate

profits can tour with a portion of their profits. To unwind, a retired individual frequently travels to calm rural areas.

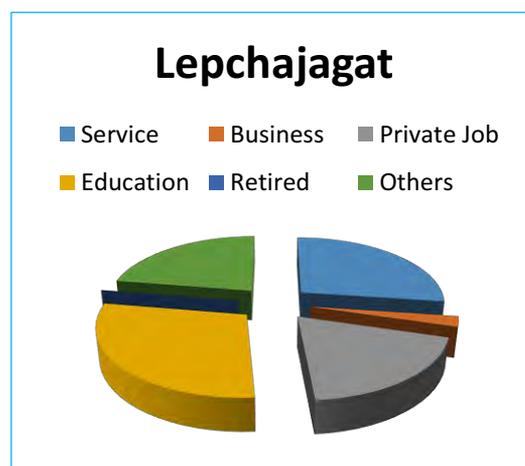
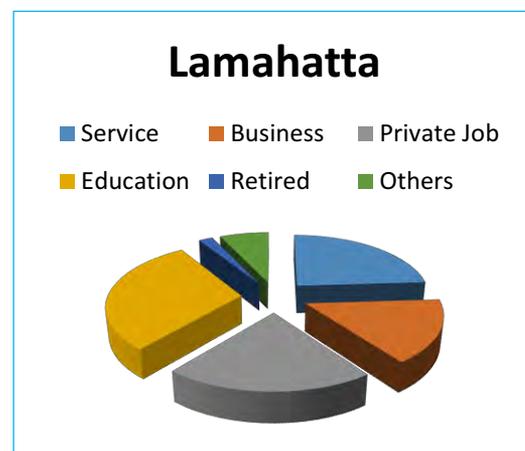
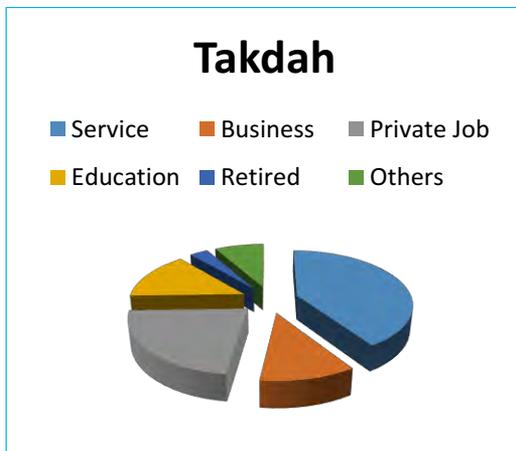
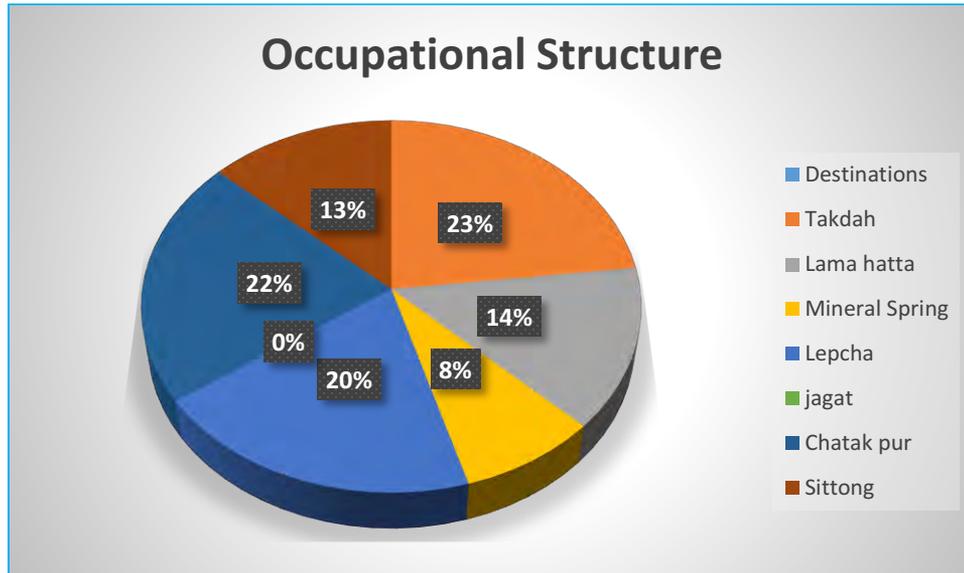
Table 5.2.3: Occupational Structure of tourists visiting select destinations

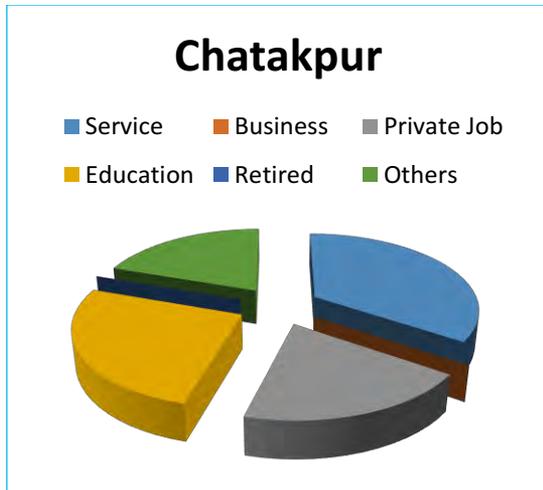
Destinations	Occupational Structure						Occupational Structure (%)					
	Service	Business	Private Job	Education	Retired	Others	Service	Business	Private Job	Education	Retired	Others
Takdah	28	08	16	10	2	6	40.00	11.43	22.86	14.29	2.85	8.57
Lamahatta	17	11	15	21	1	5	24.29	15.71	21.43	30.00	1.43	7.14
Mineral Spring	10	15	22	18	2	3	14.29	21.43	31.43	25.71	2.85	4.29
Lepcha jagat	24	02	17	25	0	2	34.29	2.85	24.29	35.72	0	2.85
Chatak pur	26	00	15	20	0	9	37.14	0	21.43	28.57	0	12.86
Sittong	16	04	34	6	0	10	22.86	5.71	48.57	8.57	0	14.28
Total	121	40	119	100	5	35	28.81	9.52	28.34	23.81	1.19	8.33

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.3: Occupational Structure





(Source: Field Survey, 2014 -2017)

N=420

The overall occupational structure of the tourists reveals that 29% are engaged in govt. service, 9% in business, 28% in private jobs, 25% in education, only 1% retired and 8% engaged in other activities. The data reveal that the Occupational Structure of tourists at Takdah is dominated by service (40%). Other tourists were engaged in private jobs (22.85%), education (18.57%), business (11.42%), others (8.5%) and retired (1.42%). The occupational structure at Lamahatta is dominated by education (30%), followed by business (2.85%), service (24.8%), job (21.42%), private (15.71%), others (7.14%) and retired (1.42%). The occupational structure at Mineral Spring is dominated by people in education (25.71%) followed by service, private job (31.42%), business (21.42%), (14.28%), others (4.28%) and retired (2.85%). The occupational structure at Lepchajagat too is dominated by education (35.71%), followed by service (34.28%), private job (24.28%), business (3.85%), and others (2.85%). The occupational structure at Chatakpur too is dominated by service (37.14%), education (28.57%), private job (21.42%), and others (12.85%). The occupational structure of the tourists at Sittong is dominated by private jobs (48.57%) followed by service (22.85%), others (14.28%), education (8.57%), and business (5.71%).

5.2.4 Marital Status of the Tourists

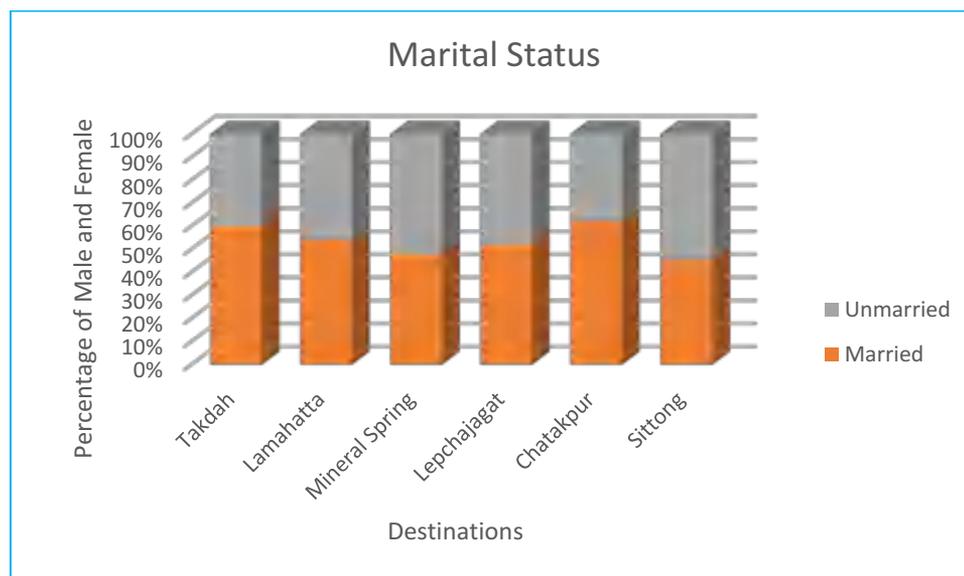
Tourists' marital status reveals their preference for spending their quality time individually, with companions, co-workers, or with their spouses.

Table 5.2.4: Marital Status

Destinations	Married	Unmarried	% of Married	% of Unmarried
1.Takdah	42	28	60.00	40.00
2. Lamahatta	38	32	54.00	46.00
3. Mineral Spring	34	36	48.00	52.00
4. Lepchajagat	36	34	52.00	48.00
5. Chatakpur	44	26	62.00	38.00
6.Sittong	32	38	45.00	55.00

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

Figure 5.2.4: Marital Status



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

At Takdah, 60 percent of tourists were married and 40% were single, according to the survey. At Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, respectively, 54.00 %, 48.00 %, 52.00 %, 62.00 %, and 45.00 % of tourists were married. At Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, respectively, 40.00 percent, 46.00 percent, 52.00 percent, 48.00 percent, 38.00 percent, and 45.00 percent of tourists were unmarried. With over 60.00 % of husbands and wives, Takdah and Chatakpur have the highest proportion of married people.

5.2.5 Purpose of Visit

The purpose of a tourist's visit varies from one individual to another. Various individuals possess multiple motives for visiting various locations. Some people enjoy nature, several prefer peace, some enjoy bird watching, and others enjoy photography, and so on. The intent of a tour is crucial when evaluating various aspects of tourism in various locations.

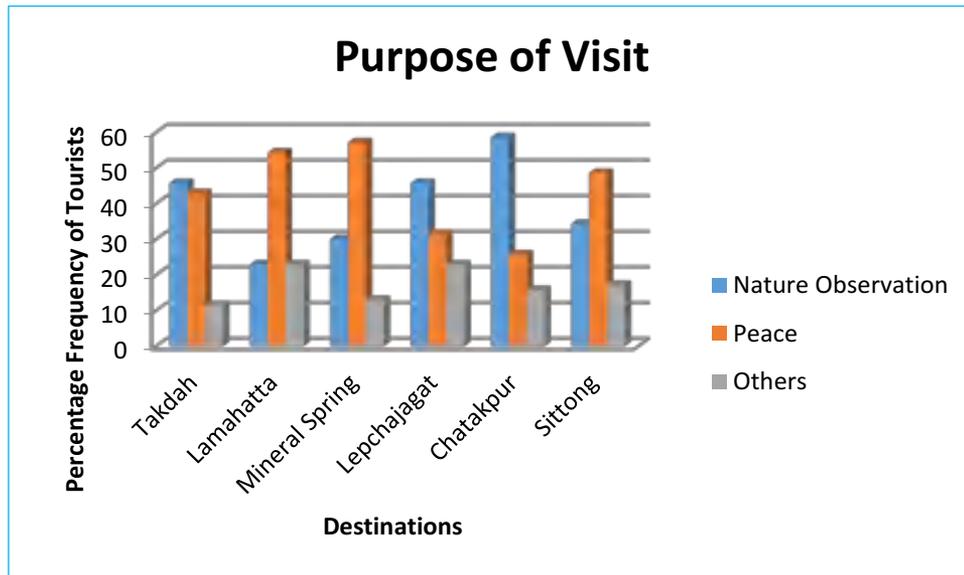
Table 5.2.5: Purpose of Visit

Destinations	Purpose of Visit			Purpose of Visit (%)		
	Nature Observation	Peace	Others	Nature Observation	Peace	Others
1. Takdah	32	30	8	45.71	42.86	11.43
2. Lamahatta	16	38	16	22.86	54.28	22.86
3. Mineral Spring	21	40	9	30.00	57.14	12.86
4. Lepchajagat	32	22	16	45.71	31.43	22.86
5. Chatakpur	41	18	11	58.57	25.71	15.72
6. Sittong	24	34	12	34.29	48.57	17.14

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.5: Purpose of Visit



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

The table demonstrates that nature and tranquility enthusiasts make up the majority of visitors to Takdah, Lepchajagat, and Chatakpur. At Takdah, Lepchajagat, and Chatakpur, 45.71 %, 45.71 %, and 58.57 % prefer nature observation, respectively, whereas 54.28 %, 57.14 %, and 48.57 % prefer a calm environment devoid of congestion and vibration at Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, and Sittong.

5.2.6 Economic Status of the Tourists

Tourists' economic condition impacts whether they prefer to visit inexpensive or expensive destinations, relying on their earnings. The more their earnings, the more expensive the venues they travel and stay in overtime. The average monthly income of the tourists visiting the different rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya ranges from less than Rs. 15,000 to more than Rs. 75,000. Few jobless visitors, most of whom are dependents too travel with their relatives to enjoy the destination's beauty and tranquillity.

Table - 5.2.6: Economic Status

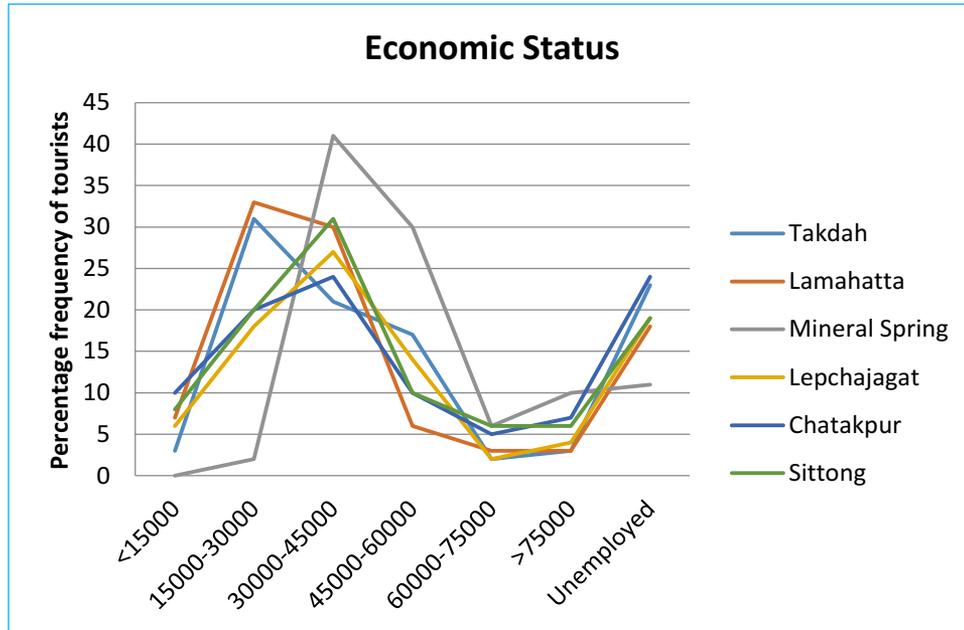
Destinations	Income in Rs.						
	<15000	15000-30000	30000-45000	45000-60000	60000-75000	>75000	Unemployed
Takdah	2	22	15	12	1	2	16
Lamahatta	5	23	21	4	2	2	13
Mineral Spring	0	1	29	21	4	7	8
Lepchajagat	4	13	19	10	1	3	20
Chatakpur	7	14	17	7	5	0	20
Sittong	6	14	22	7	4	4	13

Destinations	% of Income in Rs.						
	<15000	15000-30000	30000-45000	45000-60000	60000-75000	>75000	Unemployed
Takdah	2.86	31.43	21.43	17.14	1.43	2.86	22.85
Lamahatta	7.14	32.86	30.00	5.71	2.86	2.86	18.57
Mineral Spring	0	1.43	41.43	30.00	5.71	10.00	11.43
Lepchajagat	5.71	18.57	27.14	14.28	1.43	4.29	28.58
Chatakpur	10.00	20.00	24.28	10.00	7.14	0	28.58
Sittong	8.57	20.00	31.44	10.00	5.71	5.71	18.57

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.6: Economic Status (Average monthly income in Rs.)



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

The majority of visitors to Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong are in a fair to good financial situation. Out of 420 respondents (70 each from six destinations) from the above-noted destinations, 2.86%, 7.14%, 0%, 5.71%, 10.00% and 8.57% tourists respectively have earnings less than Rs.15,000, 31.43%, 32.86%, 1.43%, 18.57%, 20.00% and 20.00% tourists have earnings between Rs.15,000 to Rs.30,000, 21.43%, 30.00%, 41.43%, 27.14%, 24.28% and 31.44% between Rs.30,000 to Rs.45,000, 17.14%, 5.71%, 30.00%, 14.28%, 10.00% and 10.00% between Rs.45,000 to Rs.60,000, 1.43%, 2.86%, 5.71%, 1.43%, 7.14% and 5.71% between Rs.60,000 to Rs.75,000, 2.86%, 2.86%, 10.00%, 4.29%, 0% and 5.71% more than Rs.75,000 and 22.85%, 18.57%, 11.43%, 28.58%, 29.58% and 18.57% were unemployed.

5.2.7 Frequencies of Visit

The frequency of visits by the tourists gives an idea about the acclaim of explicit or commonplace rural tourism destinations. It aids in determining the strength of a tourist's passion for nature, tranquillity, and other types of amenities experienced at the same location. The feasibility and suitability of a location to attract visitors regularly can be determined by the number of people who visit it. Rather than relying on a specific tourism destination, tourists tend to explore new and improved destinations. The frequency with which visitors explore a specific place in the rural region indicates the tourists' attraction in a specific destination that appeals to them.

Table - 5.2.7: Frequencies of Visit by the Tourists

Destinations	Frequencies					
	First Visit	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	More than five times
Takdah	44	20	3	2	1	0
Lamahatta	45	19	3	2	1	0
Mineral Spring	64	6	0	0	0	0
Lepchajagat	33	26	5	2	1	3
Chatakpur	39	22	6	1	0	2
Sittong	51	12	4	1	0	2

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

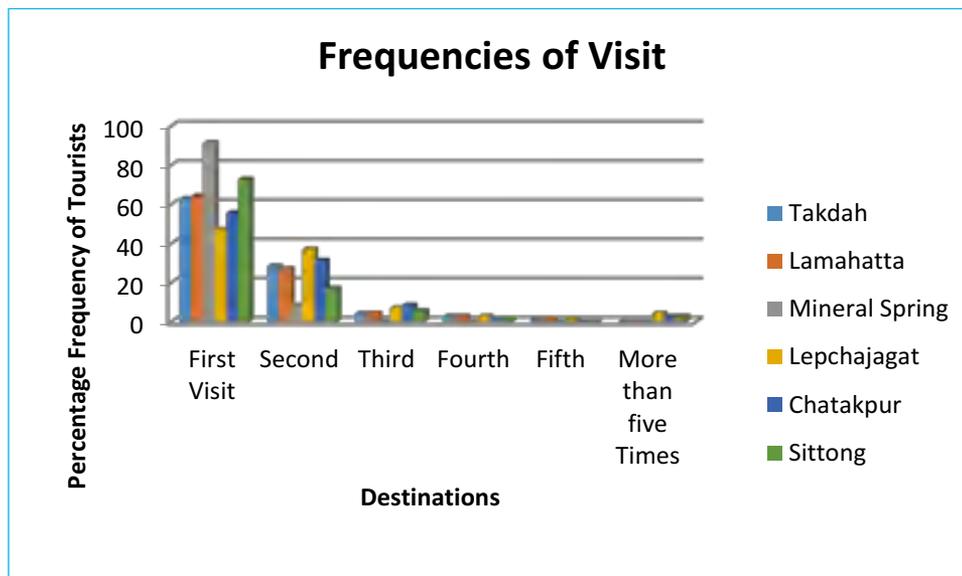
N=420

Destinations	% of Frequencies					
	First Visit	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	More than five Times
Takdah	62.86	28.57	4.28	2.86	1.43	0
Lamahatta	64.29	27.14	4.28	2.86	1.43	0
Mineral Spring	91.43	8.57	0	0	0	0
Lepchajagat	47.14	37.14	7.14	2.86	1.43	4.29
Chatakpur	55.71	31.43	8.57	1.43	0	2.86
Sittong	72.86	17.14	5.71	1.43	0	2.86

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Figure 5.2.7: Frequencies of Tourists



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2018)

N=420

The findings show that all the rural tourism destinations were attractive and possessed good hospitality whereby most of the tourists visited the homestays more than once. 62.86% in Takdah, 64.29% in Lamahatta, 91.43% in Mineral Spring, 47.14% in Lepchajagat, 55.71% and 72.86%

tourists in Sittong visited the destinations for the first time; 28.57% in Takdah, 27.14% in Lamahatta, 8.57% in Mineral Spring, 37.14% in Lepchajagat, 31.43% and 17.14% tourists in Sittong visited the destinations for the second time; 4.28% tourists each in Takdah and Lamahatta, none (0%) in Mineral Spring, 7.14% in Lepchajagat, 8.57% in Chatakpur and 5.71% in Sittong visited the destinations for the third time; 2.86% tourists each in Takdah, Lamahatta and Lepchajagat, none (0%) and 1.43% each in Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for the fourth time; 1.43% tourists each in Takdah, Lamahatta and Lepchajagat, and none (0%) in Mineral Spring, Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for the fifth time; no tourists in Takdah, Lamahatta and Mineral Spring, 4.29% in Lepchajagat, 2.86 % tourists each in Chatakpur and Sittong visited the destinations for more than five times.

5.3 Satisfaction level of tourists

The satisfaction level of tourists differs from one tourist destination to another since every destination has its quality of service, tourist products, different facilities, infrastructure and so on (Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2013). Various aspects that contribute to tourist satisfaction were characterized by different scholars. Quality of service, security measures, carefulness (Norlida, et al., 2011), meals and drinks (Tak, et al., 2007), physical infrastructure (Yeong, et al., 2010), and so forth are some of the prevalent aspects.

5.3.1 Methodology for acquiring information on the satisfaction level of tourists

The satisfaction level of a considerable number of tourists both national as well as foreign has been analyzed with the various facilities they enjoyed at all the rural tourism destinations such as accommodation, food, service, infrastructure, transportation, the behaviour of the local people, scenic view, peaceful environment, safety, cleanliness, drinking water, hot water for a bath, timely

tea and snacks, etc. In the study area altogether 420 tourists were interviewed regarding facilities and their satisfaction levels were measured with the help of a 5-point Likert's Scale such as:

- i) Very satisfactory
- ii) Satisfactory
- iii) Neutral
- iv) Unsatisfactory
- v) Very unsatisfactory

Data were collected from all six tourist destinations to calculate the opinions of all the tourists. Numerical values were given from 10 to -10 to obtain the satisfaction of the tourists. Thereafter opinions were converted to numerical values such as:

Very satisfactory: 10

Satisfactory: 5

Neutral: 0

Unsatisfactory: -5

Very unsatisfactory: -10

In the table, the factor-wise suitable coefficient is given. The component' mean values are obtained by adding the tourists' responses and dividing the total number of respondents classified by this category. Multiplying these averages by the corresponding frequencies gives complete satisfaction, and dividing by the total frequencies of the respective factor gives the satisfaction index for that particular factor. The following formula is used to calculate the satisfaction index:

$$S_i = \sum (W_i * N_{Wi}) / N$$

Where S_i = Satisfaction Index for a particular parameter (i)

W_i = Weightage given for parameter (i)

NW_i = Number of respondents giving that weightage

N = Total number of respondents for that particular factor for all levels of tourist satisfaction.

Eventually, the ranks are given to these satisfaction indices.

Table 5.3.1.1 Factor-wise Level of Satisfaction

Factors	Very Satisfactory (10)	Satisfactory (5)	Neutral (0)	Un-satisfactory (-5)	Very Un-satisfactory (-10)	Total
Accommodation	128	204	85	2	1	420
Transportation	32	243	84	43	18	420
Food	80	245	75	18	2	420
Services/Attitude of people / Culture	35	276	102	7	0	420
About Place	167	184	69	0	0	420
Shopping	54	62	301	3	0	420
Parking	185	206	29	0	0	420
Cleanliness	87	124	206	3	0	420
Drinking water	89	123	204	4	0	420
Safety	172	184	64	0	0	420
Average	102.9	185.1	121.9	8.0	2.1	420
%	24.5	44.07	29.03	1.90	0.5	100

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from primary data)

Table 5.3.1.2 Satisfaction Index with Ranks

Factors	Very Satisfactory (10)	Satisfactory (5)	Neutral (0)	Unsatisfactory (-5)	Very Unsatisfactory (-10)	Total	Satisfaction Index	Rank
Accommodation	128	204	85	2	1	420	5.428571	4
Transportation	32	243	84	43	18	420	2.714286	9
Food	80	245	75	18	2	420	4.559524	5
Services/Attitude of people/ Culture	35	276	102	7	0	420	4.035714	6
About Place	167	184	69	0	0	420	6.166667	3
Shopping	54	62	301	3	0	420	1.988095	10
Parking	185	206	29	0	0	420	6.857143	1
Cleanliness	87	124	206	3	0	420	3.511905	8
Drinking water	89	123	204	4	0	420	3.535714	7
Safety	172	184	64	0	0	420	6.285714	2

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from primary data)

The table indicates that tourists give a lot of importance to parking facility as it ranks top in terms of satisfaction of tourists; the satisfaction index for parking is 6.8. Because many tourists travel with their vehicle, parking facility is a significant indicator to judge tourist satisfaction. Accordingly, tourists are pleased with the level of security, the elegance of tourist attractions, and food and accommodation. The satisfaction index for safety ranked 2nd with a score of 6.2, while tourist places ranked 3rd with 6.1, accommodation ranked 4th with 5.4 and food ranked 5th scoring 4.5. Tourists were moderate about the attitude of the people, drinking water, and cleanliness. The

satisfaction index for the attitude of people ranked 6th scoring 4.0 while drinking water ranked 7th with 3.53 and cleanliness ranked 8th with a score of 3.51. The tourists were not satisfied with the transportation and shopping experience. The poor road condition and difficult accessibility caused a low satisfaction index for transportation i.e. 2.7 and thus it ranked 9th. The satisfaction index for shopping ranked 10th or the lowest with a score of 1.9.

The places having their parking lot attracted more tourists. Other facilities such as safety, scenic attractions, especially nature, landscapes, viewpoints attracted many tourists. The accommodation and love for local food also attracted tourists from different parts of India and abroad. Most of the tourists faced accommodation problems during peak season. The existing homestays need to expand and new homestays should emerge and operate with more rooms to accommodate the increasing number of tourists.

5.4 Conclusion

In terms of satisfaction factors of the existing rural tourism destinations in Darjeeling Himalaya, it has been observed that the tourists prefer to visit places where drinking water is available adequately. They prefer to experience different places with different cultural behaviours. Since Darjeeling Hills face a water crisis, the drinking water supply needs to be well structured and resources should be well taken care of. Local people should be aware of a clean environment and work together to keep their villages clean. In rural areas of Darjeeling Himalaya, the development of infrastructure is a critical feature for the growth of tourism. The majority of rural tourism destinations lack proper and sufficient infrastructure. The state of the roads and traffic control are both deplorable. It is necessary to expand the basic infrastructure to attract more tourists.

References

- Asbollah Z. A., Hassan N., Yusoff, M. Y. S., Idris, H. (2017). “The Tourist Behaviour In Different Environments: A Literature Review”, *Planning Malaysia: Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners*, Volume 15, Issue 1 (2017).
- Barbieri C., Mahoney, E. (2010). “Cultural Tourism Behaviour and Preferences among the Live-performing Arts Audience: an Application of the Univorous–Omnivorous Framework”, *International Journal of Tourism Research*”, Volume 12 (2010).
- Budeanu, A. (2007). “Sustainable Tourist Behaviour – A Discussion of Opportunities for Change”, *International Journal of Consumer Studies* (2007).
- Krishan K. K., (2001). *Managing Tourist Destination*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.
- Krishan K. K., Mohinder, C. (2007). *Basics of Tourism, Theory, Operation and Practice*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.
- Kunjuraman, V., Hussin, R. (2013). “Satisfaction of Domestic Tourists with the Homestay Programme in Mesilou Village, Kundasang, Sabah”, Proceedings of the 3rd Regional Conference on Tourism Research (RCTR), Langkawi, Malaysia, (October, 2013).
- Mihaela, R. P. (2014). “Customer Satisfaction in Tourism How to Measure It?” *Cactus Tourism Journal*, Vol. 10, Issue 2 (2014).
- Norlida, et al. (2011). “Satisfaction and Loyalty of Domestic Tourists towards the Kapas Island Marine Park”, *Journal of Tropical Marine Ecosystem (EKOMAR)*, Vol. 2, No.1.
- Sadilek, T. (2015). “Visitors Satisfaction Measurement In Czech Tourism”, *Actaun*, Volume 63, Number 5 (2015).
- Tak, et al. (2007). “Tourist Satisfaction, Recommendation and Revisiting in Singapore”, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 28, No. 4.

Chapter VI

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis and discussions to test the hypotheses are discussed in this chapter. Homestay owners, national and international tourists and the associated stakeholders were consulted in six Darjeeling Himalayan rural tourism destinations, namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, to obtain the necessary information, after which the data was analyzed and hypothesis testing was performed.

6. Hypothesis

6.1 Hypothesis: Rural tourism promotes the expansion of the service sector and creates new job opportunities.

Tourism based on rural service has been observed in the study area. As the service sector grew tourists multiplied in number. In general, infrastructure and hospitality sectors in rural areas of Darjeeling Himalaya were ill-developed, and therefore, tourist influx was small but as the sectors expanded, tourist influx increased.

In the six sites, the justification of the hypothesis has been shown with the help of two parameters – employment and influx of tourists. The independent variable is employment, which is represented on the x-axis, and the dependent variable is tourist influx, which is represented on the y axis. The scatter plots indicate a linear south-west to north-east trend, implying that as x increases, so does y. Tourist influx is positively dependent on employment.

The regression equation has been computed as $y = 7.4324 x + 7.08.2$ with $R^2 = 0.6118$, therefore the model significantly fits with a coefficient of determination of 61.18%.

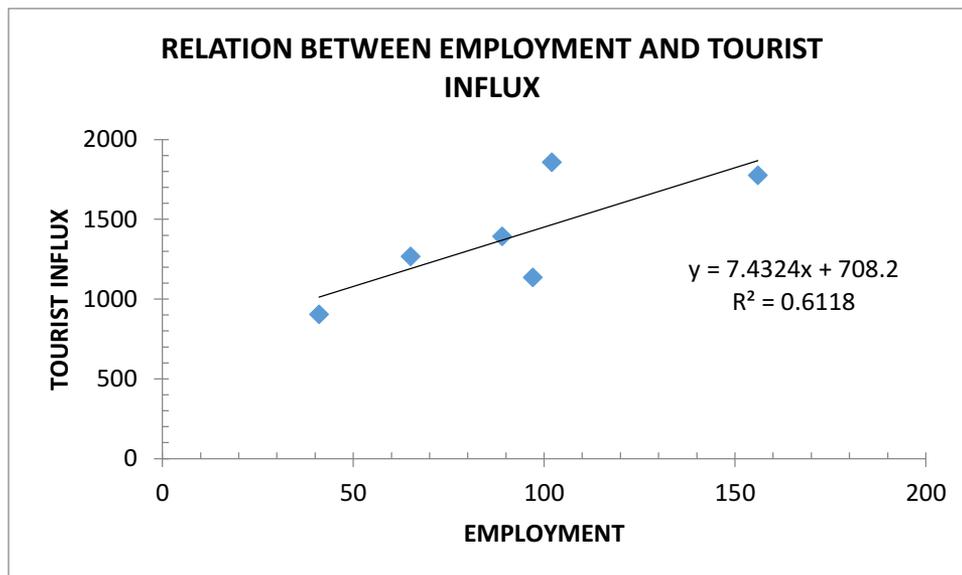
The correlation coefficient between the two variables is 0.78 can be considered as significantly moderate to strong.

Table – 6.1: Rural Tourism: Growth of Service Sectors

Rural Tourism		Growth of Service Sectors (2014 -2017)	
Sl. No.	Destinations	Employment in Service sectors	Influx of tourists in rural areas
1	Takdah	102	1857
2	Lamahatta	97	1136
3	Mineral Spring	65	1268
4	Lepchajagat	156	1777
5	Chatakpur	41	905
6	Sittong	89	1394

(Source: Field Survey, 2014-2017)

Figure 6.1: Rural Tourism: Growth of Service Sectors



(Source: Field Survey, 2014-2017)

6.2 Hypothesis based on Parameters of Rural Ecology related to Stakeholders

Stakeholders of the homestays have been assessed based on 14 attributes namely: 1. *service to provide pickup and drop at the nearest junction*, 2. *beauty along the journey way*, 3. *room service*, 4. *laundry*, 5. *emergency medicines/ambulance*, 6. *safety and security*, 7. *car parking*, 8. *drivers' room*, 9. *twenty-four hours water and electricity*, 10. *Coffee/tea/drinks*, 11. *Local guides*, 12. *local foods*, 13. *nature-based activities* and 14. *localized crafts items accessibility to the local store*.

Other attributes analyzed concern the *distance from Darjeeling station*, *time taken to reach from Darjeeling*, *nature of rooms available there* and *the type of room cleaning*. It is found that all the homestays are within 40 km of Darjeeling town and almost 85.71% of them can be reached within two hours which means 30 out of 35 are well connected. Of the 35 homestays, 33 are of the normal standard, only one provides executive rooms and another one provides tent stay. The rooms are usually cleaned every day or after the tourists check out.

The remaining parameters have been assessed based on the *services available or not*. The responses are taken in terms of binary numbers 'Yes' or 'No' that have been finally counted. The following table has been prepared based on empirical data:

Table 6.2.1 Responses by Stakeholders (Homestay Owners)

Y	N
20	15
35	0
6	29
7	28
28	7
29	6
35	0
35	0
30	5
33	2
28	7
10	25
6	29
16	19

(Source: Field Survey 2014 – 2017 and researcher’s compilation) (Y=Yes N=No)

6.2.2 Descriptive statistics of responses by stakeholders

Table 6.2.2 Descriptive Statistics of responses by stakeholders

	<i>Sample 1</i> (Y)	<i>Sample 2</i> (N)
Mean	22.71	12.29
Standard Error	3.08	3.08
Standard Deviation	11.53	11.53
Sample Variance	132.84	132.84
Kurtosis	-1.55	-1.55
Skewness	-0.47	0.47
Minimum	6	0
Maximum	35	29
Count	14	14

(Source: Field Survey 2014 – 2017 and researcher’s compilation)

The descriptive statistics have been computed with the help of SPSS and are presented in Table 7.3.2. Sample 1 is concerned with stakeholders’ responses as ‘Yes’ on availability of certain services and Sample 2 is concerned with stakeholders’ responses as ‘No’ on availability of certain services. The numbers of samples in both cases are the same, i.e. 14 each with varying minimum and maximum. Standard error of 3.08, a standard deviation of 11.53, sample variance of 132.84, kurtosis of -1.55, skewness of -0.47 in both samples 1 and 2. The total count of descriptive statistics of both samples 1 and 2 remain the same that is 14.

6.3 Hypothesis based on two sample means

There is no significant difference between the sample means of 1 and 2.

For the analysis of the significant difference between Sample Means – Sample 1 and Sample 2, two hypotheses have been developed. A ‘z’ test was used for this purpose. The following table represents the results:

Table 6.3 z-Test: Two-Sample for Means

	<i>Variable 1</i> <i>(Sample 1)</i>	<i>Variable 2</i> <i>(Sample 2)</i>
Mean	22.71	12.29
Known Variance	132.84	132.84
Observations	14	14
Z	2.394	
P(Z<=z) one-tail	0.008	
z Critical one-tail	1.645	
P(Z<=z) two-tail	0.017	
z Critical two-tail	1.960	

(Source: Field Survey 2014 – 2017 and researcher’s compilation)

Variable 1: Stakeholders’ responses as ‘Yes’ on availability of certain services as Sample 1

Variable 2: Stakeholders’ responses as ‘No’ on availability of certain services as Sample 2

The **null hypothesis (H)** states *that there is no significant difference between the sample means of 1 and 2.*

The **alternative hypothesis (Ho)** states that *there is a significant difference between the sample means of 1 and 2.*

The calculated value of $z = 2.394$

The value of z critical for a two-tailed test is 1.960

Therefore, z is greater than z critical.

As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This indicates a significant gap existed among the tourists' opinions regarding the services offered by the stakeholders.

6.4 Hypothesis based on Parameters of Rural Ecology related to Tourists

To assess rural ecology in the study area, scores were awarded to all the parameters by all the tourists. Based on the raw data, a total frequency distribution table has been prepared with a total frequency of 420. This is the total number of tourists interviewed in all the homestays. The total score has been divided into 5 classes:

20 – 30 = Very Satisfied

30 – 40 = Satisfied

40 – 50 = Neutral

50 – 60 = Not satisfied

60 – 70 = Absolutely unsatisfied

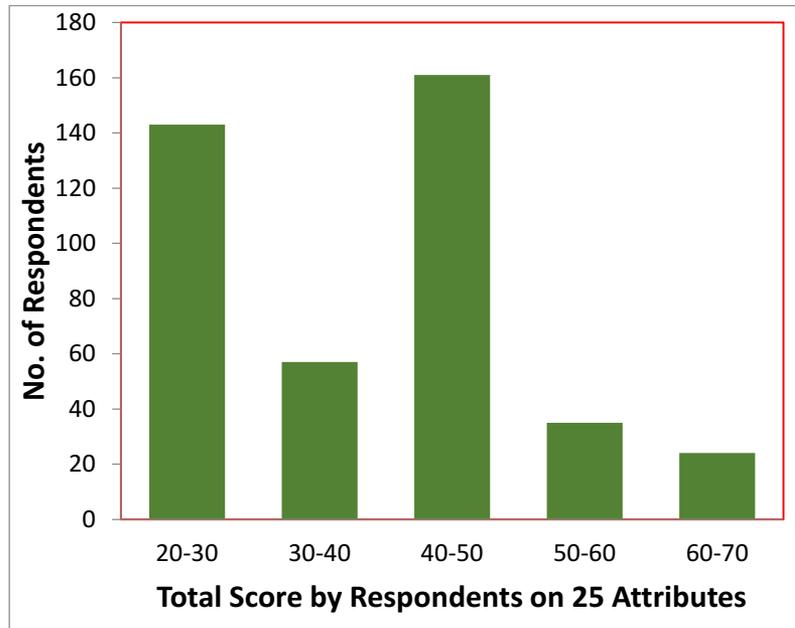
Table 6.4.1: Responses by Tourists

Class Interval	Frequency	% Frequency
20 – 30	143	34.05
30 – 40	57	13.57
40 – 50	161	38.33
50 – 60	35	8.33
60 – 70	24	5.71
Total	420	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017) N=420

The frequency distribution table shows that about 47% are satisfied and only 14% are not satisfied. Therefore, the hypothesis is that the services provided by the stakeholders for the tourists are mostly satisfactory and the homestays maintain that to ensure future visits by the tourists.

Figure 6.4.1: Responses by Tourists based on Satisfaction



(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

N=420

Another frequency distribution table has been prepared based on the total score by all tourists on attributes such as sense of conservation of electricity, sense of conservation of water, attitude towards plants, attitude towards pets, neatness, cleanliness, the volume of talking, fondness of tranquillity, fondness of serenity, fondness of solitude, fondness of enjoying nature, fondness of gurgling streams, fondness of diversity of plants, fondness of rough terrain, fondness of sunrise, fondness of sunset, fondness of starry nights, fondness of special feeling of the place, attitude towards place of stay i.e. location, attitude towards place of stay, i.e. time travel, attitude towards place of stay, i.e. nature of stay, attitude towards place of stay, i.e. nature of the road, attitude

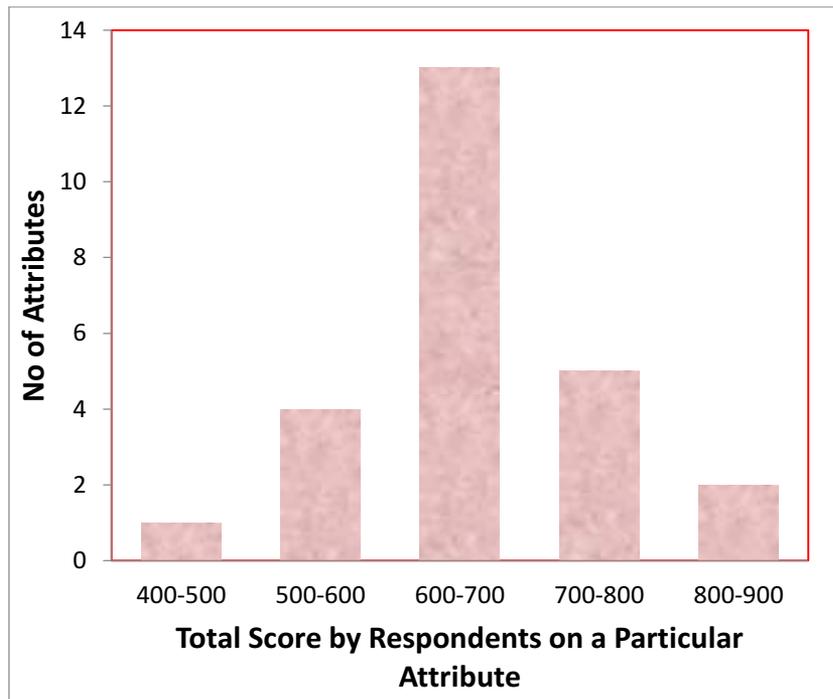
towards place of stay, i.e. internet connectivity, attitude towards place of stay, i.e. nature of the mobile phone, and attitude towards place of stay, i.e. idea of sustainability.

Table 6.4.2: Responses by Tourists based on Total Score

Class Interval	Frequency	% Frequency
400-500	1	4.00
500-600	4	16.00
600-700	13	52.00
700-800	5	20.00
800-900	2	8.00
Total	25	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2014 – 2017)

Figure 6.4.2: Responses by Tourists based on Total Score



The histogram shows almost a tail-shaped figure with two tails well defined. The attribute pertaining to the volume of talking or sound pollution scores the minimum which means that the homestays are located in a quiet place. About 16% of the tourists were ‘very satisfied’ with the attributes such as neatness, cleanliness, and special feelings. About 52% awarded ‘satisfactory’ points pertaining to the attributes such as sense of conservation of electricity, attitude towards plants, fondness of tranquillity, fondness of serenity, fondness of solitude, fondness of enjoying nature, fondness of diversity of plants, fondness of rough terrain, fondness of sunrise, fondness of sunset, fondness of starry nights, attitude towards place of stay in terms of internet connectivity and attitude towards place of stay in terms of nature of the mobile phone. These 13 variables recorded ‘neutral’ scores. Only two attributes namely fondness of gurgling streams and attitude towards place of stay in terms of road nature of road emerged ‘very unsatisfactory’. The attributes such as sense of conservation of water, attitude towards pets, and attitude towards place of stay: Location and attitude towards place of stay: time travel emerged as ‘unsatisfactory’. Thus, 72% of the attributes i.e. about 16 out of 25 are satisfactory to the tourists. Only 7 criteria came to be in the unsatisfactory category. Therefore, these 7 attributes are to be reassessed by either the homestay owners to make their stay more enjoyable. However, the hypothesis that most of the homestays provide most of the services at a satisfactory level is proven. This is also supported by the write-ups given in the feedback register of the homestays.

6.5 Hypothesis: *The growth of rural tourism areas has been steady over the years in the study.*

The study area’s development of rural tourism since its beginning has shown that the rural tourism growth has been consistent over time. The steady growth of rural tourism is proven by the increase

in the number of tourists, the number of homestays, and the availability and the number of accommodations in the study area.

6.5.1 Growth of tourists since 2008

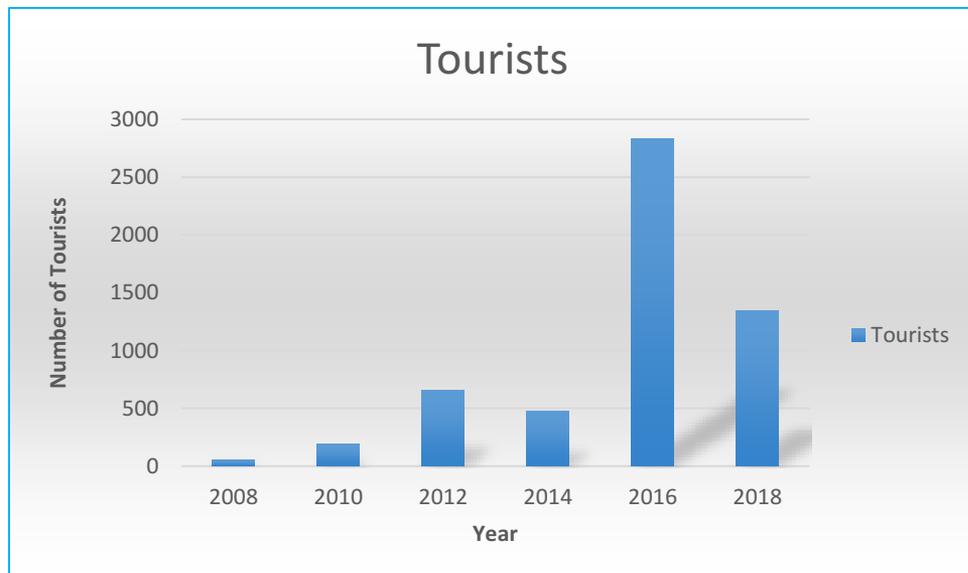
The growth of tourists in any area raises the economy, improves the socio-cultural conditions and ultimately leads to the development of the area.

Table -6.5.1: Growth of Tourists since 2008

Year	Tourists	Growth rate (%)
2008	59	
2010	192	225.42
2012	653	240.10
2014	479	-26.64
2016	2831	4.91
2018	1344	0.52

(Source: Compiled by the researcher from registers of homestays)

Figure -6.5.1: Growth of Tourists since 2008



(Source: Compiled by the researcher from registers of homestays)

Entire studied rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya reported a steady growth of tourists since 2008 except in the years 2013 and 2017 due to political movement. The number of tourists in rural destinations during the year 2008 was 59 which increased to 192 in 2010, 653 in 2012, 479 in 2014, 2831 in 2016 and 1344 in 2018. The inflow and growth of tourists in all the studied destinations boosted the economy of the study area.

6.5.2 Growth of Homestays since 2008

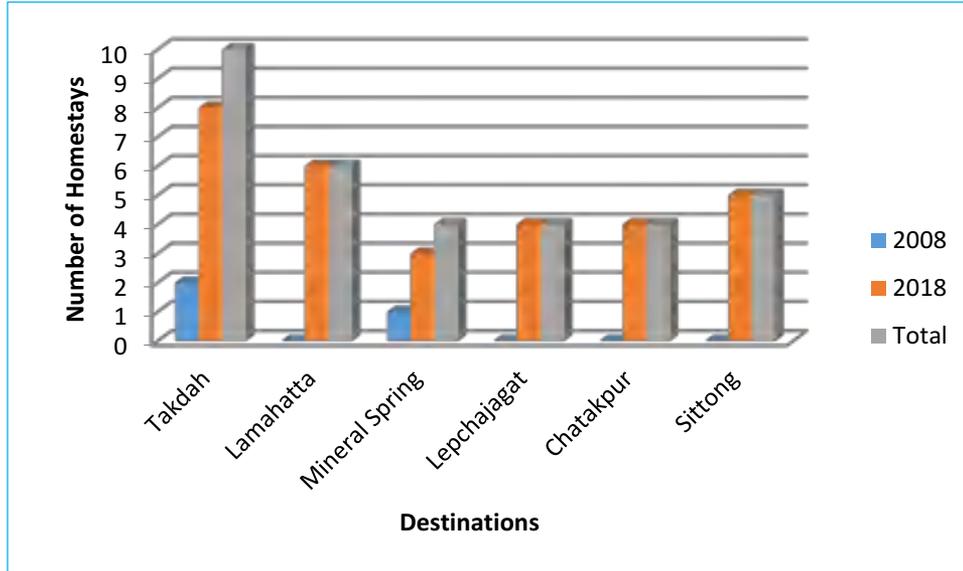
Of the six rural tourism destinations, only two, namely Takdah (2 homestays) and Mineral Spring (1 homestay) had homestays before 2008. By the year 2018, the rest of the destinations emerged with the total strength of 33 homestays. The growth of homestays in Takdah was the fastest which alone accounted for 10 homestays. The expansion of rural homestays resulted in increased infrastructure, earnings, employment, and general improvement of the rural surroundings.

Table 6.5.2: Growth of Homestays since 2008

Destinations	Year		Total	Growth Rate (%)
	2008	2018		
Takdah	2	8	10	125.00
Lamahatta	0	6	6	100.00
Mineral Spring	1	3	4	133.00
Lepchajagat	0	4	4	100.00
Chatakpur	0	4	4	100.00
Sittong	0	5	5	100.00

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

Figure 6.5.2: Growth of Homestays since 2008



(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

Takdah reported homestays' growth from 2 to 10 since 2008 with a growth rate of 125%, Lamahatta reported growth of 6 homestays from 0 with a 100% growth rate. Mineral Spring reported growth from 1 homestay to 3 homestays with a growth rate of 133%. Lepchajagat reported a growth of 4 homestays from 0 with a growth rate of 100%. Chatakpur too reported growth of 4 homestays from 0 with 100% growth rate while Sittong reported growth of 5 homestays from 0, i.e. 100% growth rate. The growth of homestays in all the rural tourism destinations has remained steady since its inception.

6.5.3 Growth of Accommodations

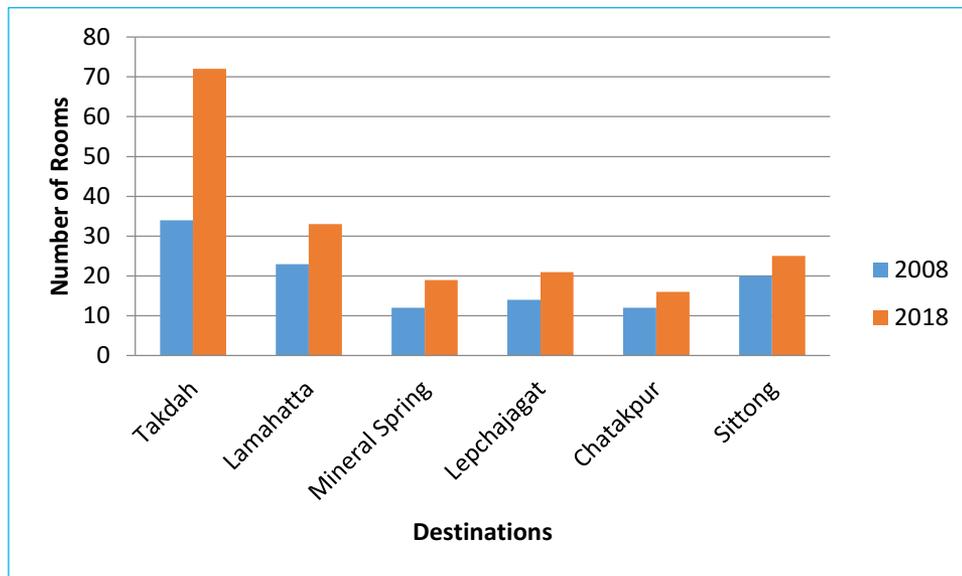
With the growth of homestays in all the rural tourism destinations, the growth of accommodation i.e. number of rooms and number of persons to be accommodated too has shown an increase.

Table 6.5.3.1: Growth of Accommodations

Destinations	Year					
	2008		2018		Growth rate (%)	Growth rate (%)
	Number of rooms	Number of Persons	Number of rooms	Number of Persons	Number of rooms	Number of Persons
Takdah	34	55	72	135	111.76	145.45
Lamahatta	23	49	33	79	43.47	61.22
Mineral Spring	12	24	19	49	58.33	104.16
Lepchajagat	14	26	21	50	50.00	92.31
Chatakpur	12	24	16	30	33.33	25.00
Sittong	20	40	25	54	25.00	35.00

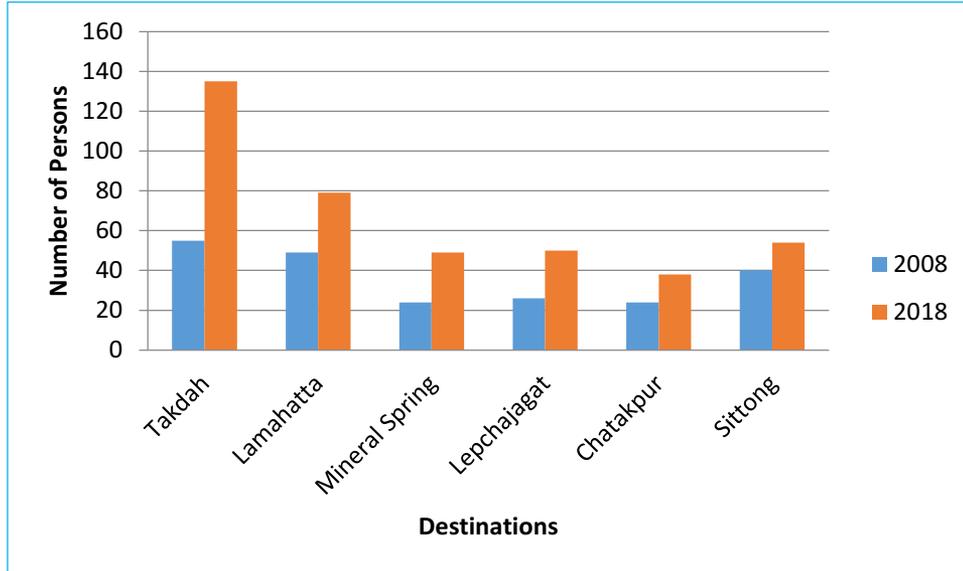
(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

Figure 6.5.3.1: Growth of Accommodations



(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field)

Figure 6.5.3.2: Growth of Accommodations



(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

At Takdah the accommodation’s capacity since 2008 increased from 34 rooms to 72 rooms with a growth rate of 111.76%. The capacity of accommodations in terms of persons increased from 55 to 135 with a growth rate of 145.45%. In this destination, the average size of homestay increased from 3.4 rooms and 5.5 persons to 7.2 rooms and 13.5 persons respectively. The capacity at Lamahatta increased from 23 rooms to 33 rooms with a growth rate of 43.47%. Accommodations increased from 49 persons to 79 persons with a growth rate of 61.22%. The average size of homestay in Lamahatta increased from 2.3 rooms and 4.9 persons to 3.3 rooms and 7.9 persons respectively. The capacity at Mineral Spring increased from 12 rooms to 19 rooms with a growth rate of 58.33%. Accommodations increased from 24 persons to 49 persons with a growth rate of 104.16%. The average size of homestay increased from 1.2 rooms and 2.4 persons to 1.9 rooms and 4.9 persons respectively. The capacity at Lepchajagat increased from 14 rooms to 21 rooms with a growth rate of 50.00%. Accommodations increased from 26 persons to 50 persons with a growth rate of 92.31%. In this destination, the average size of homestay increased from 1.4 rooms

and 2.6 persons to 2.1 rooms and 5.0 persons respectively. The capacity at Chatakpur increased from 12 rooms to 16 rooms with a growth rate of 33.33%. Accommodations increased from 24 persons to 30 persons with a growth rate of 25.00%. In Chatakpur the average size of homestay increased from 1.2 rooms and 2.4 persons to 1.6 rooms and 3.0 persons respectively. The capacity at Sittong increased from 20 rooms to 25 rooms with a growth rate of 25.00%. Accommodations increased from 40 persons to 54 persons with a growth rate of 35.00%. In this destination, the average size of homestay increased from 2.0 rooms and 4.0 persons to 2.5 rooms and 5.4 persons respectively. Thus, the growth of accommodations has been steady in all the rural tourism destinations of the study area.

The rural tourism's growth has been continuous and steady in the study area with minor fluctuations caused by political unrests of short duration. Hence, the hypothesis is proved with shreds of evidence.

6.6 Hypothesis: *Rural tourism has a great impact on the quality of life of the local people*

The quality of life can be described as an individual satisfaction with their living aspects in contrast to their desired existence. An individual's values and norms determine how an individual perceives his quality of life. The quality of working life is described as an integration of workplace strategies, techniques, and environment that promotes employees' job satisfaction. (Akranaviciute and Ruzevicius, 2007).

Tourists leave a distinctive imprint upon the service providers of the homestays by their characteristic attitude and behaviour. They are used to certain food habits, dress sense and language that influence the locals' quality of life. They interact with the people who work in the homestays as well as the locals in a specific way. To get a sense of an influence they're having, their

interactions with locals and service providers were represented with a 5-point Likert scale and then analyzed as follows:

1= Very Satisfactory

2= Satisfactory

3= Neutral

4= Unsatisfactory

5= Very Unsatisfactory

Takdah

Table 6.6.1 Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Takdah

Sl. No.	Homestay	Food Habit	Dress Habit	Language	Attitude towards local people	Attitude towards service providers	Total Score
1	Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Ecotourism	1	1	1	1	2	6
2	Abiraj Homestay	1	4	2	4	4	15
3	Anugrah Homestay	4	3	2	3	3	18
4	Gurung Guest Hous	2	4	1	2	2	11
5	Rai Resort	1	4	1	2	3	11
6	Shiwani Homestay	1	1	1	1	1	5
7	Norlah Homestay	1	4	1	4	3	13

8	Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay	1	2	3	2	2	10
9	Saino Heritage Guest House	4	4	1	4	3	16
10	Pradhan Homestay	1	1	1	2	2	7

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field)

'Very satisfactory' food habit of the tourists has been reported in Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Ecotourism, Abiraj Homestay, Rai Resort, Shiwani Homestay, Norlah Homestay, Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay, and Pradhan Homestay. Gurung Guest House reported the food habit as 'satisfactory'. 'Unsatisfactory' food habit has been reported in Anugrah Homestay, and Saino Heritage Guest House. 'Very satisfactory' dress habit has been reported in Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Ecotourism, Shiwani Homestay, and Pradhan Homestay. Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay reported the dress habit as 'satisfactory'. The Anugrah Homestay reported a dress habit as 'neutral'. However, most of the homestays namely Abiraj Homestay, Gurung Guest House, Rai Resort, Norlah Homestay, and Saino Heritage Guest House reported the dress habit as 'unsatisfactory'. Most of the homestays got the opportunity to learn new languages like Bengali, Hindi, French, Swedish, Dutch, and more foreign languages. 'Very satisfactory' language learning has been reported in Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Ecotourism, Gurung Guest House, Rai Resort, Shiwani Homestay, Norlah Homestay, Saino Heritage Guest House, and Pradhan Homestay. Abiraj Homestay and Anugrah Homestay reported 'satisfactory' language learning. Only Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay reported language learning as 'neutral'. Norlah Homestay, Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay, and Pradhan Homestay reported 'satisfactory' language learning. 'Very satisfactory' attitude toward local people has been reported in Shiwani Homestay. Gurung

Guest House, Rai Resort, Norlah Homestay, Tinchuley Gurung’s Homestay, and Pradhan Homestay reported a ‘satisfactory’ attitude toward local people. Blossom Ecotourism, Abiraj Homestay, and Anugrah Homestay reported the attitude toward local people as ‘neutral’. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported in Blossom Ecotourism and Shiwani Homestay. Gurung Guest House, Rai Resort, Tinchuley Gurung’s Homestay, and Pradhan Homestay reported a ‘satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers. Anugrah Homestay reported the attitude toward service providers as ‘neutral’. But Abiraj Homestay and Norlah Homestay reported the attitude toward service providers as ‘unsatisfactory’.

Lamahatta

Table 6.6.2 Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Lamahatta

Sl.No.	Homestay	Food Habit	Dress Habit	Language	Attitude towards local people	Attitude towards service providers	Total Score
1	Druk Homestay	1	4	1	2	1	9
2	Dukpa Homestay	1	4	2	2	3	12
3	Mountain View	1	1	2	2	3	9
4	Kanchen junga View	2	4	1	3	2	12
5	Everest Hut Resort	4	2	2	4	3	15
6	Private Lodge	4	4	3	3	3	17

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

‘Very satisfactory’ food habit of the tourists has been reported in Druk Homestay, Dukpa Homestay, and Mountain View. The Kanchenjunga View Homestay reported the food habit as ‘satisfactory’. ‘Unsatisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Everest Hut Resort and Private Lodge. ‘Very satisfactory’ dress habit has been reported in Mountain View. The Everest Hut Resort reported the dress habit as ‘satisfactory’. However, Druk Homestay, Dukpa Homestay, Kanchenjunga View, and Lodge reported dress habits as ‘unsatisfactory’. ‘Satisfactory’ language learning has been reported in Druk Homestay, Dukpa Homestay, and Mountain View. Kanchenjunga View and Private Lodge reported language as ‘neutral’. Everest Hut Resort reported ‘unsatisfactory’ language learning. ‘Satisfactory’ attitude toward local people has been reported in Druk Homestay, Dukpa Homestay, and Mountain View. Kanchenjunga View and Private Lodge reported attitudes toward local people as ‘neutral’. However, Everest Hut Resort reported an ‘unsatisfactory’ attitude toward local people. ‘Satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported in Druk Homestay, Dukpa Homestay, and Mountain View. Kanchenjunga View and Private Lodge reported attitudes toward service providers as ‘neutral’. Everest Hut Resort reported an ‘unsatisfactory’ attitude toward service providers.

Mineral Spring

Table 6.6.3 Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Mineral Spring

Sl.No	Homestay	Food Habit	Dress Habit	Language	Attitude towards local people	Attitude towards service providers	Total Score
1	Tathagata Farm	1	2	1	1	2	7
2	Gautam Paradise	1	1	1	1	2	6
3	Zimba Homestay	4	4	2	3	3	16
4	Humro Homestay	4	4	3	2	2	15

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

‘Very satisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Tathagata Farm and Gautam Paradise, while ‘Unsatisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Zimba Homestay and Humro Homestay. Only Gautam Paradise reported the dress habit as ‘very satisfactory’. Only Tathagata Farm reported the dress habit as ‘satisfactory’. Zimba Homestay and Humro Homestay reported the dress habit as very ‘unsatisfactory’. ‘Very satisfactory’ language learning has been reported in Tathagata Farm and Gautam Paradise. Zimba Homestay reported ‘satisfactory’ language learning. Humro Homestay reported language as neutral. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward local people has been reported in Tathagata Farm and Gautam Paradise. Only Humro Homestay reported the attitude toward local people as ‘unsatisfactory’. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported in Tathagata Farm, Gautam Paradise, and Zimba Homestay. Only Humro Homestay reported the attitude toward service providers as ‘unsatisfactory’.

Lepchajagat

Table 6.6.4 Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Lepchajagat

Sl. No	Homestay	Food Habit	Dress Habit	Language	Attitude towards local people	Attitude towards service providers	Total Score
1	Pakhrin Homestay	1	2	1	1	2	7
2	Kanchankanya Homestay	1	1	1	1	3	7
3	Salakha Homestay	4	4	2	2	2	14
4	Lepchajagat Homestay	1	2	2	2	2	9
5	Humro Homestay	4	4	2	2	1	9

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

‘Very satisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Pakhrin Homestay, Kanchankanya Homestay and Lepchajagat Homestay. Only Gurung Guest House reported the food habit as ‘satisfactory’. ‘Unsatisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Anugrah Homestay and Saino Heritage Guest House. ‘Very satisfactory’ dress habit has been reported only in Kanchankanya Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ dress habit has been reported in Pakhrin Homestay and Lepchajagat Homestay. ‘Unsatisfactory’ dress habit has been reported in Salakha Homestay and Humro Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ language learning has been reported in Kanchankanya Homestay and Pakhrin Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ language learning has been reported in Lepchajagat Homestay, Salakha Homestay, and Humro Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward local people has been reported in Kanchankanya Homestay and Pakhrin Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ attitude toward local

people has been reported in Lepchajagat Homestay, Salakha Homestay, and Humro Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported in Humro Homestay. Kanchankanya Homestay reported attitude toward service providers as ‘neutral’.

Chatakpur

Table – 6.6.5 Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Chatakpur

Sl. No.	Homestay	Food Habit	Dress Habit	Language	Attitude towards local people	Attitude towards service providers	Total Score
1	Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay	2	2	1	1	2	8
2	Sherpa Homestay	2	2	2	2	2	10
3	Tamang Homestay	4	4	2	2	3	15
4	Norbu Homestay	4	4	2	2	2	14
5	Humro Homestay	4	4	2	2	1	13

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

‘Satisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay and Sherpa Homestay. ‘Unsatisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Tamang Homestay, Norbu Homestay, and Humro Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ dress habit has been reported in Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay and Sherpa Homestay. ‘Unsatisfactory’ dress habit has been reported in Tamang Homestay, Norbu Homestay, and Humro Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ language learning has been reported only in Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ language learning has been reported in Sherpa Homestay, Tamang

Homestay, and Humro Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward local people has been reported only in Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay. A ‘satisfactory’ attitude toward local people has been reported in Sherpa Homestay, Tamang Homestay, and Humro Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported only in Humro Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported in Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay, Sherpa Homestay and Norbu Homestay. Tamang Homestay reported the tourists’ attitude toward service providers as ‘neutral’.

Sittong

Table 6.6.6 Tourist Behaviour and Adoption of Ideas: Sittong

Sl. No	Homestay	Food Habit	Dress Habit	Language	Attitude towards local people	Attitude towards service providers	Total Score
1	Pujan Homestay	1	1	1	2	2	8
2	Mukhia Homestay	4	4	2	3	3	18
3	Chhyalom kyong Homestay	4	4	1	3	2	18
4	Sittong Homestay	2	4	2	2	2	14
5	Hankim Homestay	1	1	2	1	1	7

(Source: Data compiled by the researcher from Field survey)

‘Very satisfactory’ food habit has been reported in Pujan Homestay and Hankim Homestay. Sittong Homestay reported the food habit as ‘satisfactory’. ‘Unsatisfactory’ food habit has been

reported in Mukhia Homestay and Chhyalomkyong Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ dress habit has been reported in Pujan Homestay and Hankim Homestay. ‘Unsatisfactory’ dress habit has been reported in Mukhia Homestay, Chhyalomkyong Homestay, and Sittong Homestay. ‘Very satisfactory’ language learning has been reported in Hankim Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ language learning has been reported in Pujan Homestay and Sittong Homestay. Mukhia Homestay and Chhyalomkyong Homestay reported language as ‘neutral’. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward local people has been reported in Hankim Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ attitude toward local people has been reported in Pujan Homestay, Chhyalomkyong Homestay, and Sittong Homestay. Mukhia Homestay reported the attitude toward local people as ‘neutral’. ‘Very satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported in Pujan Homestay and Hankim Homestay. ‘Satisfactory’ attitude toward service providers has been reported in Sittong Homestay. Mukhia Homestay and Chhyalomkyong Homestay reported service providers as ‘neutral’.

6.7 Conclusion

Thus, considering the parameters of food habit, dress habit, language and attitude towards local people and service providers, the overall impact of the tourists at different levels of satisfaction may be summarized as follows:

1. The first tier with ‘very satisfactory’ label was recorded by 13 of the 35 homestays, i.e., about 37.1% of the total, viz., the Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Ecotourism, Shiwani Homestay and Pradhan Homestay (Takdah), the Druk Homestay (Lamahatta), the Tathagata Farm and Gautam Paradise (Mineral Spring), the Pakhrin, Kanchankanya and Lepchajagat Homestay (Lepchajagat), the Dhanmaya Niwas (Chatakpur), and the Pakhrin Homestay, Pujan Homestay and the Hankim Homestay (Sittong).

2. The second tier with 'satisfactory' label was recorded in seven homestays, i.e., about 20.0% of the total, viz., the Gurung Guest House, Rai Resort, Norlah Homestay, Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay (Takdah), Dukpa Homestay and Mountain View (Lamahatta), and the Sherpa Homestay (Chatakpur).
3. 'Neutral' was the label for about 40.0% of the homestays (about 14 in total), viz., the Abiraj Homestay, Anugrah Homestay and Saino Heritage Guest House (Takdah), the Kanchenjunga View and Everest Hut Resort (Lamahatta), the Zimba Homestay and the Humro Homestay (Mineral Spring), the Salakha Homestay and Humro Homestay (Lepchajagat), the Tamang Homestay, Norbu Homestay, and Humro Homestay (Chatakpur), and the Mukhiya and Chhyalomkyong Homestay (Sittong).
4. Only one homestay i.e., about 2.9% of the total, viz., Private Lodge (Lamahatta) emerged as very 'unsatisfactory'.

The satisfaction index shows that tourists were very satisfied with all the aspects of quality of life provided by the homestays and locals, though some remained unsatisfied with some aspects as they could not match their preferences, for example, some were unsatisfied with food habits, services and attitude towards local people and they wanted some improvement in the services. But most of the tourists remained very satisfied with food habits, dress habits, language and attitude towards local people and service providers as they could taste new food items, experienced new dress habits, were impressed with attitude towards locals and very much satisfied with service providers. The significant influence on the people's quality of life was highly positive, as they were successful in improving their economy and living standards.

References

- Akranaviciute, D., Ruzevicious, J. (2007). "Quality of Life and its Components' Measurement", *Engineering Economics*, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- Hornquist, J. O. (1982). "The Concept of Quality of Life". *Scand J Soc Med* 9S2; Vol.10, No. 1

Chapter VII

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF RURAL TOURISM IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA

7.1 Introduction

Though rural tourism serves many rural communities and improves their standard of living, the obstacles that hosts, stakeholders and the residents face should not be overlooked. Building an excellent rural tourist destination necessitates a significant level of investment in terms of finance, skill, time and persistence. Tourism is a sector that is influenced by a variety of factors and faces numerous challenges. Rural tourism is described in a variety of ways (Lane, 1994), it is clear that most rural tourism destinations face similar challenges (Roberts and Hall, 2001). The fundamental challenge for stakeholders, hosts, policymakers and local communities would be to come up with creative solutions to ongoing issues, allowing for the restructuring and integration of changing economic frameworks to economies (Gannon, 2009).

7.2 Challenges of Rural Tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya

The hosts, stakeholders and the local communities of Darjeeling Himalaya's rural tourism sites, Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, encounter multiple challenges. The major challenges have been identified and broadly categorized as a) insufficient financial and economic support, b) lack of skill-oriented stakeholders, c) political unrest, d) short tourist season, e) inadequate capacity building facilities, f) lack of basic infrastructure, g) poor knowledge of preserving natural resources, h) language problem and i) lack of advertising.

a) Insufficient financial and economic support

The business of the tourism industry is subject to extreme fluctuations. Several hosts, stakeholders and the local community in the Darjeeling Himalaya's rural tourism areas, such as Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, lack adequate financings, such as a bank or cooperative loans. Initially, the hosts did not have sufficient capital to build homes, manage tourist attractions, and beautify the surroundings. The representatives of local residents from all of the Darjeeling Himalayas studied rural tourism destinations worked together to get funding from a variety of sources. The survey revealed that only 20% of the entrepreneurs received financial aid while the majority of the people i.e. 80% received no financial assistance to help manage their careers. Therefore people were hesitant to take the risk. Therefore, the government should take initiatives to encourage tourism and enhance rural infrastructure by providing financial assistance.

b) Lack of skill-oriented stakeholders:

The study reveals that most of the hosts and stakeholders involved in rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya facilities lack skill and education. The majority of them have only received primary school, indicating a lack of understanding that leads to inefficient and ineffective administration of rural tourism. As a result, the rise of rural tourism in the Darjeeling Himalaya has been constrained by a lack of skills, information, understanding, and efficient capacities.

c) Political unrest

Darjeeling Hills went through political unrest for a prolonged period that severely affected tourism in the Hills. Even during the field survey period, the area has been subjected to political unrest twice on the issue of demand for a separate state, i.e., Gorkhaland. Between 2013 and 2017, Darjeeling was wracked by mass agitation and long-term strikes (bandhs), which wreaked havoc

on tourism and the business. For over 3 months, the resorts, cottages, hotels and homestays were shuttered, preventing the owners from returning to their local homestays. “It was a tough time”, says the owner of Abiraj Homestay, Takdah and the owner of Hankhim Homestay, Sittong, emphasizing that the business of tourism is not simple. It necessitates significant suffering. It was difficult to re-establish the business following the strike. When Darjeeling as a whole experienced a loss, tourism suffered as well, and the revenue generation halted periodically.

d) Short tourist season in the Hills

Seasonal changes in tourism demand have numerous adverse effects on tourism destinations, stakeholders, hosts and the local residents. The Darjeeling hills’ short tourist season is an issue for travel operators. The tourist season lasts four to five months and is divided into two seasons: spring and autumn. The attraction of the spring season starts from March and ends in May whereas the attraction of the autumn season occurs between October and November. The remaining year is rainy and winter preventing tourists from visiting and thereby affecting the rural resident’s economic gains as the ecotourism sites and homestays remain shut. The government is concerned about tourism characteristics, so steps are being taken to boost tourism in all sectors (Rinzin, Vermeulen and Glasbergen, 2007). The local people, hosts and stakeholders from all tourist destinations in the study area suffer due to the short tourist season, which restricts their tourism activities.

e) Inadequate capacity building facilities

In Darjeeling Himalaya’s rural tourist sector, another significant difficulty confronting is the lack of capacity of residents as well as other pressure groups in terms of skills, knowledge and financial means. Most of the capacity-building facilities for rural tourism development are provided by NGOs to the private stakeholders, homestay owners which are short-term and largely

dependent on funding. To train the local stakeholders on a long-term and independent basis, the capacity-building programs must be local and community-related.

f) Lack of basic infrastructure

The poor road conditions, the poor transport and communication system (e.g. in Chatakpur rural tourism destination), lack of proper drainage (e.g. in Lamahatta), and so on, breaks down the link connecting potential rural locations and other recognized tourist sites isolating rural locations within the fringe of the tourism sector. The tourist industry cannot grow in an isolation, so it simply cannot afford to be removed from the rest of the business. As a result, establishing the basic infrastructure, particularly metalled roads and reliable transit, is a prerequisite for developing rural tourism locations.

g) Poor knowledge about preservation of natural resources

Lack of understanding about resource depletion, which causes loss of native vegetation, water contamination, biodiversity loss, and other issues, intensifies the problems of rural tourism growth. As a result, all hosts and local communities require an understanding of resources' utility and conservation. The majority of the rural tourism locations such as Takdah, Lepchajagat and Chatakpur are well endowed with natural resources but due to lack of knowledge, the hosts and the local community in these destinations could not utilize and manage the resources effectively. In rural areas, the process of knowledge building and natural resource preservation can have positive benefits concerning the provision of various opportunities in employment. If these resources are utilized properly with good skill and knowledge, it will lead to sustainable rural tourism development.

h) Language Problem

Since the rural people speak Nepali, the language problem in all the rural destinations of the study area is one of the obstacles in the path of development of rural tourism. Local people are handicapped due to a lack of proper knowledge of Bangla, Hindi, and English to communicate with tourists. Good knowledge of the main languages is, therefore, a prerequisite for the residents.

i) Lack of Advertisement

All rural tourism locations and their scenic splendour, as well as surrounding vacation spots in the Darjeeling Himalayas, are either under-advertised or under-emphasized in terms of communication and representations and information. The area remains undiscovered due to the lack of foreign and domestic visitors. Despite having exceptional tourism resources, several rural tourism areas in the Darjeeling Hills remain undiscovered to the outside world, decreasing the possibility of tourist influx.

7.3 SWOT (STRENGTH, WEAKNESS, OPPORTUNITY, AND THREAT) ANALYSIS

It is a crucial technique to properly diagnose any situation mostly the diagnosis of current status and potential of rural areas (Millan, Amador and Arjona, 2013). This strategy is justified by the fact that it may be utilized to create an effective plan that capitalizes on a company's and the stakeholders' strengths and opportunities while minimizing its weaknesses and threats. Capacity in tourism refers to the relative advantage a company and the stakeholders have in terms of skills, resources, generosity, market leadership, and the buyer-seller relationship. Contrary to this, weakness in tourism refers to a lack of assets, knowledge, capabilities and talents, or that prevents them from being used effectively. Weakness can be caused by a lack of premises, financial resources, management abilities, marketing skills, and branding. In rural tourism, insufficient infrastructure is the main drawback of rural areas. Opportunity refers to a favourable situation in

a business environment. Business opportunities can represent relationships with customers or suppliers, identifying a previously neglected market segment, technological changes, regulatory and competitive changes, and so on. In the case of rural tourism, opportunities mean talented elements. SWOT analysis can be implemented to analyze findings and determine appropriate strategies in rural tourism and tourism studies (Rahmani, Hajari and Hajiloo, 2013). SWOT analysis method can be used to analyze eco-rural tourism to make a comprehensive quantitative analysis on superiorities, weakness, opportunities and threat. (Shang, Sun and Xu, 2020).

7.3.1 SWOT Analysis of Rural Tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya

SWOT analysis shows that the right benefits of power and opportunities can greatly help the tourism industry of Darjeeling Himalaya. Effective and proper planning can eliminate vulnerabilities and threats in the development of tourism.

7.3.1.1 Strengths

- i) All of the rural tourism attractions in the Darjeeling Himalayas, namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur, and Sittong, are surrounded by magnificent sceneries, beautiful landscapes, natural beauty all around, flora and fauna, rivers and mountains, tranquillity and a bracing climate.
- ii) Presence of affordable homestays in all the rural tourism destinations, presence of floriculture, forest park in Takdah, presence of eco-park and a small lake in Lamahatta, orange garden, peaceful environment, organic farming, Yanku River, trekking trails, scenic beauty, and viewpoints in Mineral Spring, presence of rich flora and fauna, sunrise viewpoint and forest in Lepchajagat, presence of diverse flora and fauna, floriculture, organic farming, geological formations, forest treks, typical domesticated animals, cultural landscapes and cultural heritage

- in Chatakpur and presence of a picturesque landscape, beautiful environment, Orange Valley, Riyang river, sunrise viewpoint in Sittong are the major sources of attraction for the tourists.
- iii) Availability of good parking facilities, provision of safety and security to the tourists, good accommodations, good hospitality and good food especially local and organic, in all the studied homestays are the major sources of attractions for the tourists.
 - iv) A peaceful and nature-friendly environment, rich natural resources, unique cultural heritage, pollution-free environment and diversity of all the studied rural tourism destinations enhance the attraction of the places.
 - v) A clear view of the third highest peak in the world i.e. Kanchenjunga from homestays of Takdah- Tinchuley, Lamahatta, Lepchajagat and Chatakpur of Darjeeling Himalaya during autumn and spring is another reason for tourist attraction.
 - vi) Unique cultural attributes of different tribes (Lepcha, Bhutia, Sherpa, Tamang, Gurung, Rai, Limboo, etc.), local foods, food festivals, different festivals with nomenclatures as spring festivals, autumn festivals, etc. add new dimensions to the tourist destinations.
 - vii) The world's major heritage i.e. Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) is located in the Darjeeling district, which attracts many tourists from all over the world.
 - viii) Arrangement of facilities by homestays of all the rural tourism destinations for adventure travel and trekking in areas like Sandakphu and Phalut on Singalila Range are great advantages to the tourists.
 - ix) Improving infrastructure in all the studied rural tourism destinations leading to tourist visits.
 - x) Hundreds of acres of tea plantation villages allow tourists to walk freely and enjoy the scenic beauty in Darjeeling's tea garden mostly approachable from all the studied rural tourism destinations.

- xi) Easy access to Darjeeling from various parts of India as well as foreign countries via Siliguri (road transport), New Jalpaiguri (rail transport and Bagdogra (air transport).
- xii) Development of facilities and services related to tourism and tourist-friendly regulations.
- xiii) Availability of both skilled and semi-skilled workers in the tourism industry.
- xiv) The Padmaja Naidu Zoological Park, Singalila National Park, Senchal Wildlife Sanctuary, and Mahananda Bird Sanctuary are located within the Darjeeling Himalaya which are additional attractions.

7.3.1.2 Weaknesses

- i) Despite its enormous potential, the studied rural areas lack government funding and efficient policies for tourism's long-term development and promotion.
- ii) Lack of coordination between different stakeholders, tourism agencies, tourism agents, homestay owners, government authorities, and local people related to tourism.
- iii) The greatest hindrance in the development of most of the Darjeeling Himalaya's rural tourist areas is the poor infrastructure, mostly the poor condition of roads as in the case of Chatakpur which obstacles easy accessibility.
- iv) Traffic jams in almost all the main junctions of Darjeeling is a major problem with the lack of traffic control, especially during the peak season of tourist arrivals.
- v) Limited capacity or absence of a training centre for qualified tourist personnel. Lack of qualified personnel in the field of tourism. Lack of qualified guide.
- vi) There is a lack of public knowledge, promotion, awareness and advertisement about the economic, social, and cultural benefits of trained rural tourism experts among communities.

- vii) Within all the rural tourism locations except Mineral Spring, there is a dearth of proper guidance for capacity building and quality of services among the hosts, stakeholders and the local communities.
- viii) Scarce family accommodation in homestays of some rural tourist destinations such as Mineral Springs and Chatakpur.
- ix) Lack of promotional strategy.
- x) Political unrest and movements in the regions.
- xi) A growing trend among young people to seek easy money.
- xii) Inadequate campaigning by the State Department of Tourism and the Darjeeling Travel and Tourism Development Corporation to market and promote existing tourism products.
- xiii) Linguistic limitations of hosts and local communities.
- xiv) Except studied rural tourism destinations, lack of parking spaces around tourist attractions.
- xv) Limited facilities in rural areas such as banking and ATM facilities, internet facilities, etc.

7.3.1.3 Opportunities

- i) The convenient geographical location of the district within the administration of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA).
- ii) Growth in the number of homestays and involvement of more local people in different activities can improve the local economy.
- iii) The increasing demand for recreational resources at the local, national and international levels.

- iv) Most urban dwellers living in crowded areas prefer a stress-free environment for a short break. Darjeeling district can take advantage of these opportunities.
- v) The public's attention can be drawn to make attempts to safeguard natural elements such as landscape, vegetation, and wildlife, environment as well as cultural elements such as traditions, monuments, rituals and different art forms.
- vi) As a member of the tourism industry can bring glamour to the individual and therefore the sector becomes a good indicator of a good quality of life. The authorities, stakeholders and hosts of Darjeeling Himalaya can take advantage of these opportunities to improve its standard of living and promote its economy.
- vii) Opportunities for introduction and sustainability of different types of tourism such as rural tourism, heritage tourism, ecotourism, nature tourism, cultural tourism, and so on.
- viii) All rural areas have the opportunity to develop their economies and socialize, preserve their culture and environment and eventually lead to effective sustainable rural tourism.
- ix) Rural landscape, natural beauty, flora, and fauna are a resource in itself and they have international marketability. Darjeeling Himalaya has the potential to provide itself with a world tourism market.
- x) Improvement of basic infrastructures and improvement in road conditions and modes of transportation in all areas.

7.3.1.4 Threats

- i) Competition with other hill stations within the administration and in the country, especially with other beautiful countryside tourist destinations in neighbouring Sikkim. They provide excellent infrastructure and tourism resources and actively promote themselves as major tourist destinations.

- ii) Poor infrastructure management makes it difficult for tourists to get in and out of all the rural attractions.
- iii) The increasing political instability and agitation caused by the national ethnic crisis have caused fear psychosis and anxiety among tourists.
- iv) Environmental threats such as vulnerable areas, natural disasters, climate change, landslides, pollution and deforestation are the most common threats.

7.4 Conclusion

The review of SWOT analysis establishes that Darjeeling Himalaya is well endowed with beautiful and natural views, landscapes, scenic beauty, different varieties of flora and fauna, and a pleasant climate which create a favourable situation for tourism, but at the same time poor infrastructure, mostly poor roads and poor transportation are matters of concern in effective tourism management in the rural areas. There are opportunities for the district to enhance employment opportunities, develop its infrastructure, increase the inflow of tourists and raise the economy.

References

- Bernard, L. (1994). "What is rural tourism?" *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Volume 2, No. 1.
- Bhan, S. (2014). "Homestay Tourism in India: Opportunities and Challenges", *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Vol. 3 No. 2.
- Choudhury, K., Dutta, P., P, S. (2018)." Rural Tourism of North East India: Prospects and Challenges" *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, Volume 23, No. 2.
- Gannon, A. (2009). "Rural Tourism as a Factor in Rural Community Economic Development for Economies in Transition", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Volume 2, No. 1.
- Kumar, N. (2013). "Potential and Challenges of Rural Tourism in Punjab", *Indian Journal of Research*, Volume 2, No. 3.
- Lena-Marie, L., Harald, P., Michael, V. (2016): "Rural Tourism Development in Mountain Regions: Identifying Success Factors, Challenges and Potentials", *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Millan, G., Amador, L., Arjona, J. (2013). "Sustainable Rural Tourism in Andalusia: A SWOT Analysis", *International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics*, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- Rahmani, M., Hajari, B., Hajiloo, M. (2013). "Rural Tourism Development Strategies Using SWOT Analysis: Case Study", *Life Science Journal*, Vol. 10, Issue 4.
- Roberts, L., Hall D. (2001). *Rural Tourism and Recreation: Principles to Practice*, CABI Publishing, Oxon and New York.
- Shang, Y., Sun, Y., Xu, Ai. (2020). "Rural Ecotourism Planning and Design Based on SWOT Analysis", *International Journal of Low-Carbon Technologies*, Vol. 15, No. 1.

Sharma, P., Parkash, R. (2018). "Rural Tourism in India Challenges and Opportunities", *Scholarly Research Journal for Humanity Science and English Language*, Vol. 6, No. 26.

Chapter VIII

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and conclusions made following a thorough examination of rural tourism for sustainable development in the Darjeeling Himalaya have been discussed within this chapter. The study results are summarized in this chapter, together with suggestions for how to improve the situation and the framework for future research.

Rural tourism has the capability to encourage economic growth and tourism development serving as a tool for promoting sustainable development. It also provides an economically viable solution for the preservation of natural regions and enhancing local residents' living standards. As a result, rural tourism provides sustainable viability for rural communities.

A balanced relationship should be maintained between the activities of homestay owners, stakeholders, local communities, tourists, and the environment for the successful functioning of rural tourism. Rural tourism must be economically feasible, socially acceptable, and environmentally sustainable in order to be sustainable.

8.1 Summary of Chapters

Chapter I discusses the various approaches to tourism study, concept and understanding of tourism, various definitions of tourism, different types of tourism, concept, meaning and types of rural tourism, understanding of sustainable development, review and study of rural tourism in world, India, West Bengal and Darjeeling Himalaya in particular. The background of the study i.e. objectives, methodology and hypothesis is has been discussed in this chapter. After reviewing the published literature, reports and documents it was found that rural tourism began in India in the 1980s but it started flourishing during and after 1990s. It was perceived that rural tourism is happening all over the world and has created its own space. In terms of rural tourism in India, it is

well documented that a large number of national and international tourists flock to India's specifically Darjeeling Himalaya's rural tourism locations, primarily during the spring and autumn seasons, to experience tranquility and nature. It is understood that rural tourism is recognized as critical to any region's long-term prosperity. The research design is also presented in this chapter. It explains the research problem, objectives and hypotheses, importance and restrictions and different methodologies of the study.

Chapter II deals with the information about the study area, specifically the geographical features like physiography, climate, natural vegetation, drainage, geology and soil, the combination of which plays an important role in attracting tourists. It also deals with the history of Darjeeling during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial phases. It presents the demographic profile of the people of Darjeeling, their economy, language and culture which have great significance in tourism.

Chapter III presents the natural and anthropogenic potential of select rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. It has been found that most of the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya have great natural potential especially varied landscapes, scenic beauty, varied species of flora and fauna, views of sunrise and sunset from vantage points, gurgling streams, and pleasant climate as well as comprehensive anthropogenic potential such as ancient monasteries, bridges, orchard farming, organic farming, floriculture, eco-park, trekking sites, bird watching areas, etc. which attract global tourists as well as tourists from different corners of India.

Chapter IV examines rural tourism's role in achieving sustainable economic goals. The chapter also deals with socio-cultural and environmental goals. The economics of all rural tourism locations in the Darjeeling Himalaya has significantly improved as a result of the surge of local, national and international tourists. The socio-cultural exchange has taken place and protection and

preservation of the environment have been given more emphasis by all the hosts, stakeholders and tourists. The number of homestays, the number of rooms and tourist accommodation have increased significantly in all the studied rural tourism destinations. In all the studied destinations, rural tourism has succeeded in creating jobs, income, cultural development, social benefits, environmental development and awareness in a sustainable manner.

Chapter V presents the behavioural and functional aspects of tourists. Tourists' behavioural aspects such as origin, gender, marital status, education, occupational structure, the purpose of visit, frequencies, economic status, etc. have been studied to ascertain their specific impression upon rural tourism in the selected rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya, viz. Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong. Rural tourism in the study area has been influenced by tourists' behavioural aspects. It has been found that most of the tourists from India and abroad visit Darjeeling mostly for nature observation and for peace.

The satisfaction levels of the tourists too were analyzed based on facilities such as accommodation and parking facility, food, service, infrastructure, transportation, the behaviour of the local people, scenic view, peaceful environment, safety, cleanliness, availability of drinking water, hot water for the bath, timely tea and snacks, etc. It was discovered that the majority of tourists were contented with parking facilities in all of the study area's rural tourism locations. Similarly, they were well satisfied with the safety, beauty of tourist places, accommodation and food. However, they were not satisfied with transportation and shopping facilities.

Chapter VI deals with the testing of considered hypotheses. It has been found that the considered hypotheses have been proved positive. As per the hypotheses, it has been found that –

- ✓ *Rural tourism promotes the expansion of the service sector and creates new job opportunities,*

- ✓ *Rural tourism is unique in the study area,*
- ✓ *The rural tourism growth in the study area has been steady over the years,*
- ✓ *Rural tourism has a significant impact on the local population's quality of life.*

Chapter VII presents the challenges and opportunities in tourism. A SWOT analysis was conducted to determine the rural tourism industry's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Darjeeling Himalaya. It has been found that despite certain weaknesses and threats Darjeeling Himalaya has a considerable amount of strength and opportunities for tourism development in near future.

8.2 Findings

8.2.1 Findings based on Homestay Owners' and Stakeholders' feedback

Exceptional tourist influx

It was found that the arrivals of domestic tourists in the studied rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya, mostly Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong showed five times increase between 2008 and 2017, while foreign tourist arrivals doubled during the same period. Darjeeling is the most preferred hill station in West Bengal with the highest number of foreign and domestic visitors compared to other hill stations in India. During the peak season i.e. in autumn and spring, the number of tourists remains much higher than the accommodation. Darjeeling Himalaya has already faced the heat of influx due to an excessive number of tourists and as a result, the tourists are diverting from the city to the villages. All the rural tourism destinations have registered an upward trend in terms of popularity.

The steady growth of foreign tourist arrivals

The top foreign countries such as the U.S.A., United Kingdom, Germany, France, Denmark, Canada, Sweden, and Australia remain the leading source countries for foreign tourists to all the

tourist destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. The growth of tourist arrivals from France and Germany saw a steady increase from 2008 to 2017. Meeting friends and relatives is a very important motivation for the citizens of these countries to visit Darjeeling.

The steady growth of domestic tourist arrivals

All rural tourism destinations in the Darjeeling Himalaya attract domestic tourists from different parts of West Bengal, Delhi, Mumbai, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar due to their cultural proximity. They also attract tourists from other states, namely Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The flow of tourists from these states is steady.

Employment opportunities

The establishments of homestays, guest houses and cottages in rural areas of Darjeeling have created employment opportunities for the locals. Darjeeling Tourism Board is also creating employment opportunities for people in all rural tourism destinations in Darjeeling Himalayas. Most of the local community has been benefitted from the employment opportunities created by such homestays; the best instance is the employment opportunities given to 25 households by M.K. Pradhan, the owner of Darjeeling Blossom Homestay, Takdah. However, few people disagree in terms of employment opportunities for the people.

Livelihood opportunities and standard of living

Rural tourism in all the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya has given good livelihood opportunities not only for homestay owners but to the local community as well. The majority of the residents of rural tourism destinations got the opportunity to avail benefits from rural tourism which enhanced their living standards. From the homestay owners to the local community, the standard of living has improved considerably since the inception of rural tourism in their areas.

Social services and infrastructure

Rural tourism in all the destinations has provided good social services and developed a good infrastructure for the tourists. The majority of the respondents accord that the development of social amenities and infrastructure has increased due to rural tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya, though a few respondents disagree, while for some of the respondents it did not make any difference.

Local communities' active participation in rural tourism

Within the entire examined locations of Darjeeling Himalaya, particularly in Takdah, Mineral Spring, and Lepchajagat, the majority of local community people took advantage of the opportunity and actively participated in various rural tourism activities. A good understanding and active participation of local community members with the homestay owners and tourists have helped rural tourism to prosper in all the destinations. There is a close connection between the locality of the villages and the tourists which helped the growth of rural tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya. Community members have dealt with the impact of rural tourism better than any other tourism-related stakeholders.

Homestay owners and stakeholders' active participation in the preservation of Environment

Regardless of their location in the villages, both homestay owners and other stakeholders figured prominently in environmental protection. Dealing with environmental protection, all the stakeholders – the hosts, local community, different travel agents, showed active concern in all the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya.

8.2.2 Findings based on Tourist's feedback

Homestays as a tourist attraction

The concept of Homestays in rural areas is a developing idea that is getting popular with the rise in the arrival of tourists. Tourists are making the most of their stay in rural areas while encountering the life of a resident. The majority of the respondents feel that the idea of living with host families in the rural area rather than living in hotels has caught up and therefore, attracts lots of tourists in rural destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. Tourists in all the rural destinations feel that homestays, especially in peaceful and nature-friendly rural areas have inspired them to revisit.

Healthy understanding between homestay owners, stakeholders, and tourists

Rural tourism runs effectively if there is a healthy understanding between homestay owners, stakeholders and tourists. It has been found that in all the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya a healthy understanding and cooperation between homestay owners, stakeholders and tourists have developed. It has been noticed that due to rural tourism the homestay owners, stakeholders and tourists come in contact with each other and understand each other in a better way.

Friendly nature of residents

Apart from homestay owners, the residents are an important aspect of developing a good relationship and handling the tourists. The good behaviour of residents allows a healthy relationship and a socio-cultural exchange between them. It has been found that most of the residents in tourist destinations and most of the tourists develop good and friendly relations between them. The residents in all the rural tourism destinations of the study area are found to be cooperative and always ready to extend possible help to the people in need and particularly the guests.

The attraction of rural tourism

As rural areas provide peace, closeness to nature and environment, socio-cultural exchange, and exposure to rural livelihood, tourists get increasingly attracted to rural destinations to utilize their leisure. The intrinsic rustic character of the selected tourism destinations in Darjeeling Himalaya mostly Takdah and Chatakpur attract lots of urban tourists. Homestays, cottages, tent stays, in rural areas play important role in attracting visitors. The lived-in rural life experience has become a great means of tourist attraction. Rural tourism is thus, getting much popularity.

Healthy local foods

Almost all the homestays of the studied rural destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya namely Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur provide healthy and delicious local food, along with ethnic delicacies such as *gundruk*, *kinema*, *saag*, *mula ko achaar*, etc. to the tourists which allow tourist with a different taste. The majority of the tourists in all the rural locations opine that the local foods are delicious and healthy.

A safe place for travel

Darjeeling Himalaya is a well-known, safe and secure place to travel. The sober rural areas of Darjeeling are considered safe for tourists. The safety and security of tourists are taken good care of by all the members of homestays in all the rural destinations. Consequently, many tourists return with positive views regarding the safety of the rural areas of Darjeeling.

Well-informed guides

All the tourist destinations need good and knowledgeable persons to guide tourists through different villages, and short treks to different places. Some homestay owners and residents play the role of guides by taking the tourists to exotic rural places of Darjeeling Himalaya. Tourists

agreed that guides in all the rural areas were good, humble and knowledgeable, which made their travel more enjoyable.

High-quality accommodation facilities

All the homestays in rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling provide high-quality accommodation facilities to the tourists. Ample homestays and rooms are available in all the destinations, especially at Takdah, Lepchajagat and Sittong. Room capacities have been raised in all the destinations to accommodate more tourists with more facilities. Most of the homestays are equipped to provide a comfortable stay.

Well-connected transportation facilities and good communication

Except for Chatakpur, in all the studied rural tourism destinations, the communication and transportation facilities are reasonably good and the places are well connected. The majority of the tourists believe that the transportation facilities are good and they enjoyed their trip while a few tourists are unhappy with transportation facilities.

8.2.3 Findings based on impacts of Rural Tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya

Socio-economic impacts

It is seen from the study that the income generated by rural tourism has been instrumental in upgrading the local governments and local communities to improve physical infrastructure, thereby strengthening the local economy as a whole. Rural tourism and the well-being of local communities have also improved. Families who earlier had no known wellspring of income, now have the option to support a better livelihood through rural tourism, while those previously having a reasonable and sustainable source of income could increase their income significantly. The local community has been profited by it regardless of the social texture to deliver the activity suitable from a financial point of view and consistent in the long run. Regarding the six

rural tourist destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya namely: Takdah, Lamahatta, Mineral Spring, Lepchajagat, Chatakpur and Sittong, it has been seen that women and youths are more engaged in rural tourism activities as they work as a cook, guide, driver, receptionist, gardener and manager in the host family receiving good earnings and improving living standards.

As far as social impact is concerned, rural tourism has encouraged social interaction between tourists and local communities, which brought about mutual appreciation, understanding, forbearance, consciousness, learning, good relations, mutual admiration and empathy. The local community has subsequently benefitted from rural tourism in all the rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. Tourists from various parts of India and the world got an opportunity to learn about local traditions and customs. Further, the extravagance of the regular habitat and the ethnicity of the Darjeeling Himalaya are what draw in tourists to an area and it empowers the preservation of nearby traditions, works of art and painstaking work which confronted the threat of steady annihilation.

Cultural Impacts

Tourism has a significant cultural significance as it can augment people of groups of various races, nationalities and ethnicities and enrich cultural exchanges between the tourists and the host communities. This type of communication may have useful impacts, yet it may likewise be socially upsetting. It has been seen that significant cultural exchanges of language, knowledge, culture, traditions and customs have taken place between the residents and the tourists.

Though rural tourism has a significant cultural impact in the study area, at the same time, few host community members view that rural tourism may create hostility between residents and visitors.

Environmental Impacts

Rural tourism has significant impacts on the environment. Educated host communities, stakeholders, local communities and tourists may take good steps in environmental protection and spreading awareness among the people, whereas uneducated host communities and locals may lead to degradation of the environment.

8.3 Recommendations

- ✓ The policies, guidelines and rules for rural tourism should be changed to guarantee that biodiversity, lives and governance systems of communities should not be affected by tourism.
- ✓ The government and private organizations should grant financial assistance and necessary training programs and capacity building programs to the host community and the local community to develop their skills, enhance their communication skills and tourism management for effective dealing with different types of tourists; and adequate training must be guaranteed to the host communities as well to offer quality services to the tourists and hence, for the successful operation of rural tourism.
- ✓ The government, host communities, local communities and stakeholders and private organizations should take initiatives to keep rural tourism areas clean and hygienic. As garbage removal and its effective management are significant for advancing rural tourism, hence all the rural tourism destinations should be made plastic-free zone. Indeed, sufficient dustbins or naturally made bamboo dustbins, separate use of biodegradable and non-biodegradable garbage is highly recommended for all rural tourism destinations to keep the environment clean. The motto of all the rural tourism destinations should be a ‘clean and green area’.

- ✓ The various divisions of the public sector associated with tourism must team up and arrange their work and keep each other educated about their exercises and plans.
- ✓ During entry into the forest regions for untamed life watching or journeying, any plastic holders or plastic water jugs ought to be accounted and any slips ought to be punished vigorously.
- ✓ Numerous new potential zones reasonable for rural tourism ought to be opened to tourists so that pressure on the natural life territories will be decreased.
- ✓ Neighbourhood investment is to be energized by making it mandatory for the travel industry administrators in Darjeeling Himalaya to utilize at any rate a specific level of their workers from the nearby populace.
- ✓ Locally produced goods should be promoted among the tourists by all the rural tourism operators in Darjeeling Himalaya.
- ✓ The terrible state of roads in various rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya needs the critical consideration of the concerned specialists. Government should construct all-weather roads to improve transportation and to attract foreign tourists. The support work ought to be appropriately done like clockwork.
- ✓ Various kinds of pollution should be controlled in all the rural destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya. Policies should be enhanced for anti-littering.
- ✓ In rural tourism destinations, generally in forest villages such as Chatakpur, Lepchajagat and Lamahatta, an environmental fee could be charged from the tourists at the entry point which would provide revenue for environmental management.

- ✓ The promotion of rural tourism in all the rural destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya should be enhanced by developing different websites, magazines, Facebook pages, and videos on youtube.
- ✓ All the media platforms must be used to broadly highlight the natural and anthropogenic potentials of rural tourism in Darjeeling Himalaya.

8.4 Scope for Future Research

Sustainable development is necessary in every sphere of today's world and there are further scopes to explore this concept and its applications in the world's fastest-growing service industry, the tourism industry.

In order to evaluate the sustainable rural tourism programs adopted by local governments in the Darjeeling Himalayas, more study is needed. In addition, researchers have great potential to propose a sustainable rural tourism model for other destinations of similar nature in Darjeeling, Himalayas.

Dropout study paves the way for substantial planning and development of tourism for the Darjeeling Himalayas' long-term benefits and overall growth.

A multi-functional team of specialists should conduct an Integrated Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) based on a specific project to explore future tourist prospects and risks of the proposed tourism project.

The scope is left out for performing new pioneering research works to explore and develop several unexplored and virgin rural tourism destinations in Darjeeling Himalaya.

Bibliography

- Agarwal, A. C. (Eds.). (1977). *Darjeeling, Sikkim and Bhutan: A Travellers' Guide*. New Delhi: Nest and Wings.
- Aggarwal, P. (1999) *Tourism and Economic Growth and Development*, Mohit Publications, New Delhi.
- Ahamed M. (2018). "Rural Tourism as a Sustainable Development Alternative: An Analysis with Special Reference to Ballavpur Danga near Santiketan, West Bengal", *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 2018
- Alipour, S. K. S., Varaki, V. E. (2013). "Tourism and Its Role in Sustainable Rural Development", *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 7(2), 2013
- Aneja, P. (2006). "Sustainable Tourism Development Challenges Ahead". *Kurukshetra*, Vol. 12, No. 5.
- Asbollah Z. A., Hassan N., Yusoff, M. Y. S., Idris, H. (2017). "The Tourist Behaviour In Different Environments: A Literature Review", *Planning Malaysia: Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners*, Volume 15, Issue 1 (2017).
- Asmelash, G. A. (2015). "An Assessment of Potential Resources of Tourism Development in Ethiopia: The Case of Dejen Wereda". *African Journal of History and Culture*, Vol.7.
- Aytug, K. H., Mikaeili, M. (2016). "Evaluation of Hopa's Rural Tourism Potential in the Context of European Union Tourism Policy", *Elsevier*, Vol. 37, No. 1.
- Badan, B. S., Bhatt, H. (2006) *Sustainable Tourism*. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- Bande, U. (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Mountains". *Yojana*, Vol. 24, No.15 (August).

- Banerjee, K. A., De, B. (Eds.). (1980). *West Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta: Barun Dey.
- Barbieri C., Mahoney, E. (2010). “Cultural Tourism Behaviour and Preferences among the Live-performing Arts Audience: an Application of the Univorous–Omnivorous Framework”, *International Journal of Tourism Research*”, Volume 12 (2010).
- Batra, G.S., Chawla, A.S. (1994). *Tourism Management - A Global Perspective*. New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications.
- Bernard, L. (1994). “What is rural tourism?” *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Volume 2, Issue 1.
- Bhan, S. (2014). “Homestay Tourism in India: Opportunities and Challenges”, *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Vol. 3 Issue 2.
- Bhanja, K. C. (1993). *History of Darjeeling and the Sikkim Himalaya*. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.
- Bharathbhushan, E. K. (2005). “Sustainable Tourism Development”. *Kerala Calling*, Vol.50, No.16, October.
- Bhatia, A. K. (1991). *Tourism Development: Principles and Practices*. Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi.
- Bhattacharya, P. (2008). “Tourism Development in Northeast India: Changing Recreational Demand, Developmental Challenges and Issues associated with Sustainability”, *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research*, Vol. 3, No. 1
- Bhutia, S. (2015). “Sustainable Tourism Development in Darjeeling Hills of West Bengal, India: Issues & Challenges”, *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, Volume 15, Issue 3, 2015.
- Bojnec, S. (2010). “Rural Tourism, Rural Economy Diversification, and Sustainable Development”, *Academica Turistica*, Vol. 1. No. 1.

- Budeanu, A. (2007). "Sustainable Tourist Behaviour – A Discussion of Opportunities for Change", *International Journal of Consumer Studies* (2007).
- Bukhart J., Medlik S. (1974) *Tourism: Past, Present and Future*, the University of Michigan, Heinemann Publisher, Michigan.
- Caprihan, K. V., Kirthi, S. (2004). "Eco-Tourism in India". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol. 12, No.2 (Jan-June).
- Certan S. (2014). "Rural Tourism Potential of the Republic of Moldova". *Theoretical and Scientific Journal*.
- Chamy, A. (2001). "Accessible Sustainable Ecotourism: Necessary Market Adjustments in a New Age of Travel". Ecotoursonline.ca
- Chand, M., Bhushan, R. (2005). "Rural Tourism: A New Approach to Sustainability". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.9, No.2 (Jan-June).
- Chaturvedi, D. (2010). "Tourism in India: Ensuring Buoyancy and Sustainability". *Yojana*, Vol.13, No.8, May.
- Chawla, A.S., Batra, G.S. (1994). *Tourism Management - A Global Perspective*. New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications.
- Chettri, N. (1998). "Impact of Tourism on Biodiversity: A Case Study from the Sikkim Himalayas, India". *South Asian Perspectives in Eco-tourism and Conservation*, Gangtok: Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim.
- Choudhury, K., Dutta, P., P, S. (2018)." Rural Tourism of North East India: Prospects and Challenges" *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, Volume 23, Issue 2.

- D' Souza, R. (2009). "Rural Development through Rural Tourism", *Salesian Journal*, Kalpa Griha Publication, New Delhi.
- Dalia, A., Ruzevicious, J. (2007). "Quality of Life and Its Components' Measurement", Researchgate, 2007
- Das, N., Syiemlieh, H. J. (2004). "Eco-Tourism in Assam". *Yojana*, Vol.8, No.4 (July).
- Dash, J. A. (1947). *Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.
- Dashper, K. (2014). *Rural Tourism: An International Perspective*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, UK.
- De, B., Kusari, M. A. (1980). *West Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta, Superintendent of Printing.
- Dewan, D. B. (1991). *Education in the Darjeeling Hills: an historical survey, 1835 – 1985*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing House.
- Dewan, D. B. (2009). *Education today: A Darjeeling Hill Region*. Pedong, Kalimpong: Tender Bud's Academy.
- Dimitrovski, D. D. (2011). "Rural Tourism and Regional Development: Case study of Development of Rural Tourism in the Region of Gruza, Serbia", *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, Volume 14, No.1 (2011).
- Dordevic, Z. D., Susic, V., Janjic, I. (2019). "Perspectives of Development of Rural Tourism of the Republic Of Serbia", *Economic Themes*, Vol.1 No.1
- Dorji P., Kinley (2017). "Rural Tourism in Bhutan: A Tool to Achieve Gross National Happiness", *Journal of Hospitality Tourism*, Vol. 4, No. 2, March (2017)

- Dozey, E. C. (1989). *A concise history of the Darjeeling District since 1835*. Calcutta: Jetsum Publishing House.
- Dragulanescu, V. I., Drutu, M. (2012). “Rural Tourism for Local Economic Development”, *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2012
- Eusebio, C., Kastenholz, E., Breda, Z. (2014). “Tourism and Sustainable Development of Rural Destinations: A Stakeholders’ View”, *Revista Portuguesa de Estudos Regionais*, 2014
- Frederick, M. (1992). *Tourism as a Rural Economic Development Tool: An Exploration of the Literature*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
- Gale, T., Hill, J. (2009). *Ecotourism and Environmental Sustainability Principles and Practice*, Routledge Publication, (May 28, 2009), Bristol (U.K.).
- Gannon, A. (2009). “Rural Tourism as a Factor in Rural Community Economic Development for Economies in Transition”, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Volume 2, Issue 1.
- Gupta, S., Singh A. (2015). “Potential and Performance of Rural Tourism in India: Assessing Intra-State Variations”. *International Journal of Research in Management & Business Studies (IJRMBS)*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, (October).
- Gursoy D., Jurowski C., Uysal M. (2002). “Resident Attitudes: A Structural Modeling Approach”. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 1 No.1
- Gurung, N. (1971). *Darjeeling*. Kalimpong: Author.
- Hall, M., Alan, A. (1999). “Sustainable Tourism-A Geographical Perspective”. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 2, Issue 5.

- Haven-Tang, C. and Jones, E. (2012). "Local leadership for rural tourism development: A case study of Adventa, Monmouthshire, UK", *Tourism Management Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2012
- Hazarika, B. (2016). "Rural Tourism and Sustainable Livelihoods: A Case Study of Majuli Island of Assam", *International Journal of Scientific Research Publications*, Volume 6, Issue 6, 2016
- Henderson, et al. (2001). "Urban Environmental and Nature-Based Attractions: Green Tourism in Singapore". *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 26(3).
- Hooker, J. D. (1980). *Himalayan Journal*. New Delhi: Today and Tomorrow's Printers and Publishers.
- Hornquist, J. O. (1982). "The Concept of Quality of Life". *Scand J Soc Med* 9S2; Vol.10, No. 1
- Hunziker, W., Krapf, K. (1942). "General Tourist Theory". *The Outline of General Tourism Science*, Vol. 26, No. 3.
- Hutt, J. M. (1988). *Nepali: a National language and its literature*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.
- Ionel, B. (2013). "The Tourist Attractions - Factors of Rural Tourism Development In the Region Crisana?" *Academica Brancusi*, Issue 6.
- Irshad, H. (2010). *Rural Tourism - An Overview*, Agriculture and Rural Development, Government of Alberta, Rural Development Division, October 2010.
- Jagmohan, N. (1990). *Tourism and Travel*, Gitanjali Publishing House. New Delhi.
- Jain, S. (Eds). (1991). *Kalimpong: a guide and handbook of information*. Kalimpong: Samresh Jain.
- Jayapalan, N. (1984). *An Introduction to Tourism*. Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, Delhi (1984).

- Joshi R. and Dhyani P. P. (2009). *Environmental Sustainability and Tourism Implications of Trend Synergies of Tourism in Sikkim Himalayas*, Current Science, 97(1), July (2009).
- Kantar, S., Svrznjak, K. (2017). "Development of Sustainable Rural Tourism", *The Central European Journal of Regional Development and Tourism*, Volume 9, Issue 1, 2017
- Kantharia A. R., Sonaviya D. R., Tandel B. N. (2017). "Review on Mitigation and Control Techniques of Noise Pollution", *ResearchGate*, Vol. 1. Issue 1, 2017
- Karkee, P. (2006). *Public libraries of Kalimpong sub-division: a survey of present positions and solutions*. Unpublished MLISc. Dissertation. Jadavpur University, Kolkata.
- Kashyap, H. (2014). "Economic Development through Tourism – A Case Study of Home Stay scheme of Himachal Pradesh", *Global Journal of Finance and Management*, Volume 6, Number 4, 2014
- Katoch, A., Prashant, G. (2015). "Rural Tourism as a Medium for Local Development in Himachal Pradesh: The example of Villages around Dharamshala (Kangra)". *South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage*, Vol. 8, No.1.
- Kazana, V., Kazaklis, A. (2009). "Exploring Quality of Life Concerns in the Context of Sustainable Rural Development at the Local Level: A Greek Case Study", *Regional Environmental Change*, 2009
- Khawas, V. (2006). *Socio economic conditions of Tea Garden labourers in Darjeeling Hills*. New Delhi: Council for Social Development.
- Kohli, M. S. (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Himalayas". *Yojana*, Vol.24, No.15 (August).
- Krishan K. K., (2001). *Managing Tourist Destination*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.
- Krishan K. K., Mohinder, C. (2007). *Basics of Tourism, Theory, Operation and Practice*, Kanishka Publisher Distributor, New Delhi.

- Kumar, N. (2013). "Potential and Challenges of Rural Tourism in Punjab", *Indian Journal of Research*, Volume 2, Issue 3.
- Kumar, S., Sampad, M. (2007). "Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Development-A Case Study of Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary in Orissa". *SouthAsian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.7, No.2 (Jan-June).
- Kumar, S., Vetrivel, K. (2012). "Role of Indian Government to Protect the Environment Sustainability – An Overview", *Academicia* Vol. 2, Issue 8 (August, 2012)
- Kunjuraman, V., Hussin, R. (2013). "Satisfaction of Domestic Tourists with the Homestay Programme in Mesilou Village, Kundasang, Sabah", *Proceedings of the 3rd Regional Conference on Tourism Research (RCTR)*, Langkawi, Malaysia, (October, 2013).
- Lama, B. B. (2009). *The story of Darjeeling*. Kurseong: Nilima Yonzon Lama.
- Lane, B. (2009). "Rural Tourism: An Overview", *the SAGE Handbook of Tourism Studies*, (Ed. Tazim Jamal and Mike Robinson), SAGE Publications, Vol.1, No. 1.
- Lane, B. (2009). "What is Rural Tourism", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol. 2, Issue 1 (August 2009)
- Lena-Marie, L., Harald, P., Michael, V. (2016): "Rural Tourism Development in Mountain Regions: Identifying Success Factors, Challenges and Potentials", *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, Vol. 1, Issue 1.
- Lepp, A. (2007). "Residents' Attitudes towards Tourism in Bigodi village, Uganda". *Elsevier*, March (2007) Volume 8, No.8.
- Liu, J. C., Sheldon, P. J. and T. Var, (1987). "Resident perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism". *Annals of Tourism Research*.

- Liu, Z. (2003). "Sustainable Tourism Development: A Critique", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol. 11, No. 6
- Malek, A., Anand H. (1993). "Economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism in Socotra Island", *Southern Economist*, Vol.48, No.4.
- Mamun, A. A., Mitra, S. (2012). "A Methodology for Assessing Tourism Potential: Case Study Murshidabad District, West Bengal, India". *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Vol. 2, Issue 9, (September).
- Manivannan S., Thilgam K. V. and Khola O.P.S. (2017). "Soil and Water Conservation in India: Strategies and Research Challenges", *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2017
- Manoj, K. P. (2016). "Impact of Rural Tourism on the Environment and Society: Evidence from Kumbalangi in Kerala, India", *Internal Journal of Advance Research in Computer Science and Management Studies*, Vol. 4, Issue 2, 2016
- Manoj, K. P. (2016). "Impact of Rural Tourism on the Environment and Society: Evidence from Kumbalangi in Kerala, India", *International Journal of Advanced Research in Computer Science and Management*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (February 2016).
- Martin, S. R., McCool, S. F. (1992). "Attitude of Montana Residents towards Tourism Development". *Research Report 23*. Missoula. MT: The University of Montana, School of Forestry, Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research 21.
- Matei, D. F. (2014). "Cultural Tourism Potential, as Part of Rural Tourism Development in the North-East of Romania". *ScienceDirect*, (October).
- McIntosh, W. R., Goeldner, R. C. (1986). *Tourism: Principles, Practices, Philosophies*, Wiley Publisher.

- Meena, Shivraj (2015). "Rural Tourism Impact, Challenges and Opportunities in Rajasthan", *The Journal of Bengal Geographer*, Vol. IV, No. IV, 2015
- Meyer F. D., Meyer N. (2015). "The Role and Impact of Tourism on Local Economic Development: A Comparative Study", *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*", Volume 21, 2015
- Mihaela, R. P. (2014). "Customer Satisfaction in Tourism How to Measure It?" *Cactus Tourism Journal*, Vol. 10, Issue 2 (2014).
- Mili, N. (2012). "Rural Tourism Development: An Overview of Tourism in the Tipam Phakey Village of Naharkhatia in Dibrugarh District, Assam, India". *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Vol. 2. Issue 12.
- Millan, G., Amador, L., Arjona, J. (2013). "Sustainable Rural Tourism in Andalusia: A SWOT Analysis", *International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics*, Vol. 2, Issue 1.
- Mohanlal, K. G. (2007). "Ecotourism in Kerala". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.18, No.1 (July-Dec 2007).
- Moktan, R. (2004). *Sikkim Darjeeling Compendium of documents*. Kalimpong: Sumanalaya.
- Mousavi, S. S., Doratli, N., Mousavi, S.N., Moradiahari, F. (2016) "Defining Cultural Tourism", *International Conference on Civil, Architecture and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (December 2016).
- Munien, S. (2014). "Assessing Community Needs in Relation to Rural Tourism Potential in South Africa: A Case Study of Ndwedwe Municipality", *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Vol. 5(3)

- Murti, S. K., Kumar, S. (1989). *Tourists Activities Causing Depletion of Plant Wealth in Jammu & Kashmir, In: Impacts of Tourism on Mountain Environment*, (ed. S.C. Singh) Research India Publications, Meerut.
- Nomani, A., Khan, R. K. M. (2015). “Human Resource development in tourism Industry – An Analytical Framework”, *South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage (SAJTH)*, Vol. 8. No. 1.
- Nooripoor, et al. (2020). “The Role of Tourism in Rural Development: Evidence from Iran”, *Geo Journal*, Vol.1, No.1.
- Norlida, et al. (2011). “Satisfaction and Loyalty of Domestic Tourists towards the Kapas Island Marine Park”, *Journal of Tropical Marine Ecosystem (EKOMAR)*, Vol. 2, No.1.
- O’Malley, L. S. S. (1907). *Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling*. Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.
- Okech, et al. (2012). “Rural Tourism as a Sustainable Development Alternative: An Analysis with Special Reference to Luanda, Kenya”, *Cultur*, Vol. 3, No.1. (August, 2012).
- Panda, T. K., Mishra, S., Parida, B. B. (1992). *Tourism Management: the Socio-Economic and Ecological Perspective*. Hyderabad: Universities Press.
- Pandya, M.T., Oza, G. M. (1994). “Biodiversity for the Masses”. *Indian Forester*, Vol. 20, No1.
- Pearce, J. (1980). “Host Community Acceptance of Foreign Tourists: Strategic Considerations”, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 7, Issue 2.
- Perez, E. A., Nadal, J. R. (2005). “Host Community Perceptions: a Cluster Analysis”. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 32, No. 4.
- Pizam, A., Milman, A. (1986). “The Social Impacts of Tourism”, *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 11, No. 1

- Rahmani, M., Hajari, B., Hajiloo, M. (2013). "Rural Tourism Development Strategies Using SWOT Analysis: Case Study", *Life Science Journal*, Vol. 10, Issue 4.
- Rajan, J., Sabu, K. T., (2001). "Impact of Tourism on the Environment of Munnar". *Review of Social Sciences*, Vo. 1, No. 1.
- Rajoviv, G., Bulatovic, J. (2013). "Tourism Potential and Rural Tourism: A Case Study of the Municipality of Andrijevica". *International Letters of Natural Science*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Repetto, R. (1985). *The Global Possible: Resources, Development, and the New Century (World Resources Institute Book)*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London.
- Richards G. (2018). "Cultural Tourism: A review of Recent Research and Trends", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 36, No. 1.
- Richards, G., Hall, D. (2000). *Tourism and Sustainable Community Development*, Routledge, London.
- Richardson, J. I. and Fluker, M. (2004). *Understanding and Managing Tourism*. Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia.
- Roberts, L., Hall D. (2001). *Rural Tourism and Recreation: Principles to Practice*, CABI Publishing, Oxon and New York.
- Sadilek, T. (2015). "Visitors Satisfaction Measurement In Czech Tourism", *Actaun*, Volume 63, Number 5 (2015).
- Sankrityayan, R. (1950). *Darjeeling parichay*. Calcutta: Aadhunik Pustak Bhawan.
- Sethi, P. (2002). *Millennium Trends in Travel and Tourism*, Rajat Publications, Delhi.
- Shang, Y., Sun, Y., Xu, Ai. (2020). "Rural Ecotourism Planning and Design Based on SWOT Analysis", *International Journal of Low-Carbon Technologies*, Vol. 15, No. 1.

- Sharma, P., Parkash, R. (2018). "Rural Tourism in India Challenges and Opportunities", *Scholarly Research Journal for Humanity Science and English Language*, Vol. 6, No. 26.
- Sharma, V. (1985). "Tourism: It's Socio-Economic Importance". *Southern Economist*, Vol. 24, No.14.
- Sima, E. (2014). "Rural Tourism Potential as Part of Sustainable Development in Romania". *Globalization and National Identity. Studies on the Strategies of Intercultural Dialogue*.
- Singh, S. (1997). *Ecotourism and environmental conservation in India*, Rajat Publication, New Delhi.
- Spychala, A., Sylwia G. (2013). "What is Nature Tourism? Case Study of University Students". *Turyzm*, Vol.1, No.1.
- Stettner, A. C. (1993). "Community or Commodity? Sustainable Development in Mountain Resorts". *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 18, No. 1.
- Stojanovic, M., Stojanovic, D., Randelovic, D. (2010). "New Trends in Participation at Tourist Market under Conditions of Global Economic Crisis", *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Sunlu, U. (2003). "Environmental Impacts of Tourism", *CIHEAM*, Vol 1, No. 1
- Tak, et al. (2007). "Tourist Satisfaction, Recommendation and Revisiting in Singapore", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 28, No. 4.
- Tosun, C., Timothy, J. D. (2003). "Arguments for Community Participation in the Tourism Development Process", *The Journal of Tourism Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2.
- Upadhyay, P. (2016). "Envisaged for Sustainable Rural Development: Viability and Challenges of Rural Tourism in Nepal", *Repositioning*, Vol. 1, No. 1.

Var, T., Sheldon, P. J. and Liu, J. C. (1987). "Resident perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism". *Annals of Tourism Research*.

Yeong, et al. (2010). "The Relationship Between Food-related Personality Traits, Satisfaction and Loyalty among Visitors Attending Food Events and Festivals", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 2, No. 2

Ziffer, A. K. (1989). *Ecotourism: The Uneasy Alliance*, Conservation International, Ernst and Young, Washington D.C.

WEBSITES ACCESSED

<http://www.jstor.org>

<http://www.darjeeling.gov.in>

<http://www.bookings.edu/research/speeches>

Annexures

Questionnaire (Schedule) for Tourists

Dear Sir/Madam

It is our pleasure to have you here with us, I am collecting primary data for my Ph. D degree under The University of North Bengal on the topic “RURAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA”. I would appreciate your views on the different aspects covered in this questionnaire. Your personal information will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

(Part A)

1. Name:

2. Age:

3. Gender:

4. Marital Status:

5. Occupation:

Service: Business: Private Jobs: Education:
Retired: Others:

6. Origin:

7. Education:

8. Religion:

9. Language Spoken:

10. Economic Status:

Domestic Tourists		Foreign Tourists (Equivalent to INR)	
Less than 15000		Less than 15000	
15000 to 30000		15000 to 30000	
30000 to 45000		30000 to 45000	
45000 to 60000		45000 to 60000	
60000 to 75000		60000 to 75000	
More than 75000		More than 75000	

11. Travel Companion:
12. Purpose of Visit:
13. Period of Stay:
14. Frequency of Visit:
15. Per costing on fooding, lodging and guiding:
16. Information about the tourist place:
17. Mode of travel:
18. Food Preference: Veg Non-Veg
19. Services offered and taken:
20. Feedback:

(Part B)

Please indicate your level of satisfaction where 1 is Very satisfactory and 5 is Very Unsatisfactory

Sl. No.	Parameters	1	2	3	4	5
1	Accommodation					
2	Infrastructure (Transportation)					
3	Food					
4	Services/ Attitude of people / Culture					
5	About Place					
6	Service					
7	Parking					
8	Cleanliness					
9	Drinking water					
10	Safety					

(Part C)

Parameters of Rural Ecology

Please indicate your level of satisfaction where 1 is Very satisfactory and 5 is Very

Unsatisfactory

Sl. No.	Parameters	1	2	3	4	5
1	Sense of conservation of electricity					
2	Sense of conservation of water					
3	Attitude towards plants					
4	Attitude towards pets					
5	Neatness					
6	Cleanliness					
7	Volume of talking					
8	Fondness: Tranquillity					
9	Fondness: Serenity					
10	Fondness: Solitude					
11	Fondness: Enjoying nature					
12	Fondness: Gurgling jhoras					
13	Fondness: Diversity of plants					

14	Fondness: Rough terrain					
15	Fondness: Sunrise					
16	Fondness: Sunset					
17	Fondness: Starry nights					
18	Fondness: Special feeling of the place					
19	Attitude towards the place of stay: Location					
20	Attitude towards the place of stay: Travel time					
21	Attitude towards the place of stay: Nature of road					
22	Attitude towards the place of stay: Nature of internet connectivity					
23	Attitude towards the place of stay: Nature of mobile phone connectivity					
24	Attitude towards the place of stay: Idea of sustainability					

Questionnaire (Schedule) for Homestay Owners

Dear Sir/Madam

It is our pleasure to have you here with us; I am collecting primary data for my Ph. D degree under The University of North Bengal on the topic “RURAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA”. I would appreciate your views on the different aspects covered in this questionnaire. Your personal information will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

(Part A)

1. Homestays Name:
2. Name:
3. Age:
4. Gender:
5. Educational Qualification:
6. Started homestay in the year:
7. What inspired to open homestay?
8. Number of rooms available:
9. Room dimension:
10. Room type:
11. Toilet: Attached/ Non attached
12. Rent:
13. Advertisement type:
14. Best season:

15. Main attraction:
16. Facilities provided:
- Free internet service: Yes/ No
- Television: Yes/ No
- Barbeque: Yes/ No
- Bonfire: Yes/ No
- Timely tea/ coffee: Yes/ No
17. Whether 24-hour Electricity/ Water provided: Yes/ No
18. Whether local/ special foods provided? Yes/ No
- If yes please
- specify.....
19. Tourists origin:
20. Longest period of tourist stays:
21. Highest frequency of visit of tourist:
22. Longest stay of tourist in days:
23. Vehicles provided?
24. Whether Room service/ room cleaning/ laundry/ emergency medicines/ safety and security provided to the tourists. Yes/ No
25. Do you have Car parking area? Yes/ No
26. ATM service available? Yes/ No
27. Does the homestay have the access to the local market for handicrafts? Yes/ No
28. Does the homestay have driver's room? Yes/ No
29. Are the members of the family included in the homestay service? Yes/ No

30. Whether locals included? Yes/ No

If yes, please specify Cook/ Chef/ Driver/ Care taker/ Gardener/ Guide/ Others

31. Whether Homestay pays tax. Yes/No

32. Whether Homestay included in any association. Yes/No

If yes please mention the name of the association

33. Are you planning to extend the room? Yes/ No

34. Are you planning another homestay? Yes/ No

If yes please mention

35. Tourists feedback

Questionnaire (Schedule) for Respondents (Local Community)

Dear Sir/Madam

It is our pleasure to have you here with us; I am collecting primary data for my Ph. D degree under The University of North Bengal on the topic “RURAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DARJEELING HIMALAYA”. I would appreciate your views on the different aspects covered in this questionnaire. Your personal information will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

(Part A)

1. Name of the respondent:
2. Age:
3. Gender:
4. Marital Status:
5. Educational Qualification:
6. Occupation:
7. Number of members in the family:
8. Number of earning members in the family:
9. Family members engaged in Government job:
10. Family members engaged in private job:
11. Self Employed:
12. Agriculture:
13. Any Other:
14. Income of Household:

Less than 5000	
5000 to 10000	
10000 to 15000	
15000 to 20000	
More than 20000	

15. Number of Members engaged in Tourism industry (Homestay):

16. Income from tourism industry:

17. Do you run homestay by yourself?

18. Do you sell your agricultural products to homestays?

19. Benefits of rural tourism:

20. Perspective about rural tourism:

Economic:

.....
.....

Social:

.....
.....

Cultural:

.....
.....

Environmental:

.....
.....

21. Are the locals benefitted with the introduction of homestays/rural tourism in the area? If yes what are the benefits obtained?

Guide:

Cook:

Receptionist:

Driver:

Servants:

Others:

22. Do you use your own house for accommodating? Yes/No

23. Do you have any Eco Club or Society/NGO providing environmental awareness? Yes/No

24. Is there any loan facility available to open up tourism related business? Yes/ No

25. What are the basic community facilities available?

26. Does the community have a stake?

If yes please mention the

stake.....

27. Do you think a good relationship is important between host and tourist for the development of Darjeeling?

28. Are the people of the rural area aware of the environmental problems? Yes/No

29. What are the steps taken to preserve the environment by the locals?

30. What are the essential elements that the people of the rural area have added to enhance the sustainability of rural tourism in the area?

.....

.....

(Part B)

Please select your opinion on the impacts of rural tourism.

1= Strongly agree 2= Strongly disagree 3= Neutral 4= Disagree 5= Strongly disagree

Sl. No.	Rural Tourism Impacts (Positive Impacts) : Economic	1	2	3	4	5
1	Rural Tourism has created employment opportunities in your village					
2	Rural tourism has provided economic benefits for the local residents					
3	Rural tourism has increased the quality of life of the					
4	Rural tourism has developed infrastructure and has improved public services					
5	Rural tourism has increased shopping facilities					

Sl. No.	Rural Tourism Impacts (Negative Impacts) : Economic	1	2	3	4	5
1	Rural Tourism increases the price of goods and services					
2	Rural tourism the cost of living					
3	Rural tourism increases taxes.					

Sl. No.	Rural Tourism Impacts (Positive Impacts) : Socio- Cultural	1	2	3	4	5
1	Rural Tourism has developed cultural exchange between locals and the tourists					
2	Rural tourism has made your place more interesting for living					
3	Rural tourism has developed social interaction between the locals					
4	Rural tourism has improved cultural identity					
5	Rural tourism has improved skills, learning, knowledge of the locals					

Sl. No.	Rural Tourism Impacts (Negative Impacts) : Socio- Cultural	1	2	3	4	5
1	Rural Tourism disrupts the life of the local residents (noise, congestion, etc.)					
2	Rural tourism increases crimes, robberies, vandalism, etc.					
3	Rural tourism increases alcoholism, drug addiction, etc.					

Sl. No.	Rural Tourism Impacts (Positive Impacts) : Environmental	1	2	3	4	5
1	Rural Tourism enhances environmental protection and preservation					
2	Rural tourism allows sustainable use of natural resources					
3	Rural tourism has developed environmental awareness among the locals					

Sl. No.	Rural Tourism Impacts (Negative Impacts) : Environmental	1	2	3	4	5
1	Rural Tourism damages natural environment and landscapes					
2	Rural tourism increases littering					
3	Rural tourism over utilizes the natural resources					

Plates showing Natural and Structured Landscapes of different tourist destinations



Plate 3.5.1 Natural Landscape, Takdah



Plate 3.5.1 Structured Landscape (Floriculture), Takdah



Plate 3.5.2 Natural Landscape, Lamahatta

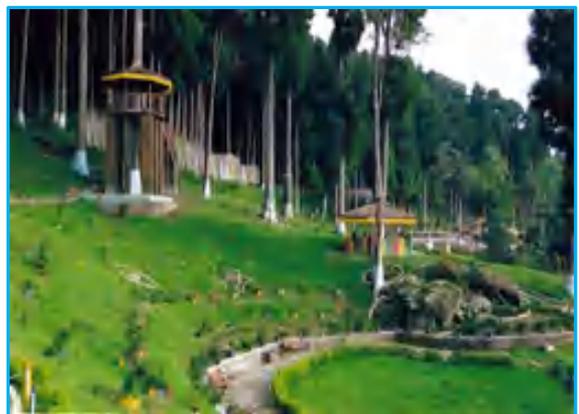


Plate 3.5.2 Structured Landscape (Eco-Park), Lamahatta



Plate 3.5.3 Natural Landscape, Mineral Spring



Plate 3.5.3 Structured Landscape, Mineral Spring



Plate 3.5.4 Natural Landscape, Lepchajagat



Plate 3.5.4 Structured Landscape (Sunrise View Point), Lepchajagat



Plate 3.5.5 Natural Landscape, Chatakpur



Plate 3.5.5 Structured Landscape (View Point), Chatakpur



Plate 3.5.6 Natural Landscape, Sittong



Plate 3.5.6 Structured Landscape (Ahal Dara), Sittong

Plates showing Rural Tourism in different rural destinations of Darjeeling Himalaya



Plate 6.4.1 Shiwani Homestay, Takdah



Plate 6.8.1 Swimming pool, Takdah



Plate 6.4.1 Abiraj Homestay, Takdah



Plate 6.8.1 Traditional Kitchen (Chula)



Plate 6.8.1 Buddhiraj Rai (driver)



Plate 6.8.1 Bengali tourists at Abiraj Homestay



Plate 6.4.2 Druk Homestay, Lamahatta



Plate 6.4.2 Mount View Homestay, Lamahatta

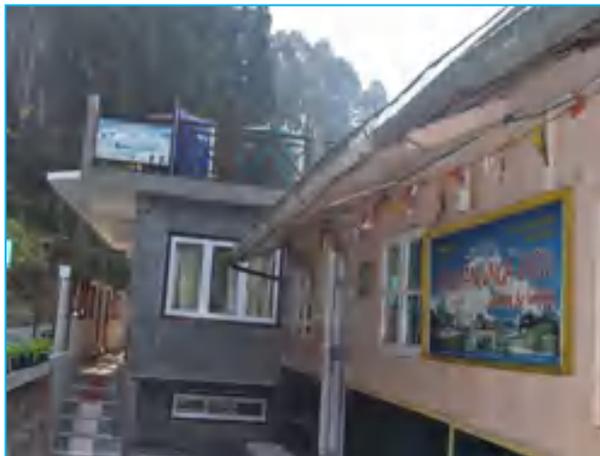


Plate 6.4.2 Kanchanjunga View Homestay, Lamahatta



Plate 6.8.2 Menu Board at Kanchanjunga Homestay



Plate 6.8.2 Rooms at Kanchanjunga Homestay



Plate 6.8.2 Western toilet at Kanchanjunga Homestay



Plate 6.4.3 (Tathagata farm, Mineral Spring)



Plate 6.8.3 Tent Stay, Mineral Spring



Plate 6.8.3 Traditional Kitchen (Chula), Mineral Spring



Plate 6.8.3 Tea Garden, Mineral Spring



Plate 6.8.3 Plucked and dried Tea Leaves



Plate 6.8.3 Round Chilli (Dalley Khorsaani)



Plate 6.8.3 Tree tomato (Ruk tamaatar)



Plate 6.8.3 Cardamom (Elaichi)



Plate 6.8.3 Foreign tourists enjoying local food



Plate 6.4.4 Pakhrin Homestay,
Lepchajagat



Plate 6.4.4 Kanchan Kanya
Homestay, Lepchajagat



Plate 6.4.4 Lepchajagat Homestay,
Lepchajagat



Plate 6.8.4 Subash Tamang, working as
painter at Pakhrin Homestay,
Lepchajagat



Plate 6.4.5 Government homestay at Chatakpur



Plate 6.8.5 Entry to Chatakpur

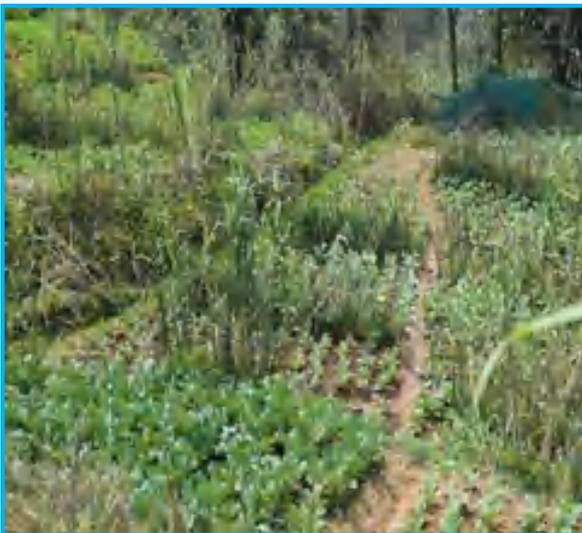


Plate 6.8.5 Cauliflower cultivation

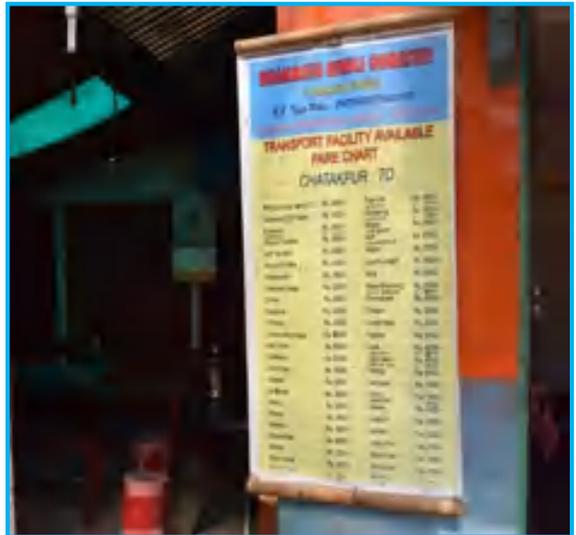


Plate 6.8.5 Room and vehicle tariff



Plate 6.8.5 B.B. Thapa, Owner of Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay, Chatakpur



Plate 6.8.5 Dhanmaya Niwas Homestay, Chatakpur



Plate 6.8.6 Pujan Homestay, Sittong



Plate 6.8.6 Hankim Homestay, Sittong



Plate 6.8.6 Jogihat Bridge, Sittong



Plate 6.8.6 Bamboo basket dustbin

Rural Tourism and Sustainable development in Darjeeling Hills, West Bengal: Case study of Lepchajagat

Sunny Rawat
Research Scholar,
Centre for Himalayan Studies,
University of North Bengal, Darjeeling

Abstract:

Rural tourism nowadays has become a new form of tourism activity that has contributed towards economic, cultural and social benefits to the society. The paper analyzes the role of rural tourism in bringing socio-economic, cultural and environmental and ultimately sustainable development in Darjeeling hills. Rural tourism has been able to preserve the values and beliefs, protect the environment, create employment opportunities, reduce unemployment, local handicrafts, increase the income and capital of stakeholders and local people, stimulate production of organic food, and infrastructural development, and provide possibilities for sustainable and economic development in rural areas. The objective of this research paper is to find the driving forces, benefits, potentialities, challenges, issues for future research and sustainable development of rural tourism and the impact of rural tourism upon the quality of life of the villagers. This paper identifies the available tourist attraction facilities, challenges of owners at Lepchajagat, Darjeeling Hills. Mostly the stakeholders, owners and 400 tourists were interviewed on questionnaire basis. Random sampling method was applied for the selection of owners and tourists. Both the qualitative and quantitative methods have been used as methodology for the analysis of data. With regard to findings, the paper provides an overview of rural tourism at Lepchajagat leading towards socio-economic, cultural and sustainable development.

Keywords: Rural tourism, sustainable development, economic development, stakeholders, tourists, environmental improvements.

Introduction:

Rural tourism refers to activity that takes place in peaceful and beautiful rural areas which remains an important tool for rural planning and sustainable rural development (Liu,

2006). Rural tourism, an emerging phenomenon in the context of tourism has grown not only to be a potential business alternative but also a kind of recreational enterprise to the urban folks, taking them away to a peaceful destination from the hustle and bustle of swift Urban life. “Rural tourism is a form of nature based tourism that uncovers the rural life, culture, art and heritage at rural locations, thereby favouring the local communities socially and economically (Nitashree Mili, 2012). Rural tourism focuses primarily on active participation of a tourist in a rural lifestyle. Various rural areas have been developed all over India and Darjeeling hills which provide tourists with a peaceful living experience in a rural backdrop. Rural tourism develops with active participation of homestay owners, all the stakeholders and local rural people. Rural tourism provides income and employment opportunities to local people in rural areas with the utilization of huge natural resources (H. Wilson and J. Venes, 2001).

Rural tourism has emerged as a new phenomenon, which has started developing, and flourishing since a decade and connecting urban tourists with rural areas of Darjeeling hills empowering it socially, culturally, and economically (Kannegieser, 2015).

Therefore, the focus of the proposed study would be to study the role of rural tourism in sustainable development, economic development and rural development of the study area.

Literature Review:

Sustainable rural tourism encompasses not just environmental protection but also extends to economic development and social equity (Mathew, 2009). In addition, cultural and heritage attractions such as handicrafts, cultural amenities also play a pivotal role in rural tourism development providing opportunities for local communities to generate income (Rahmani, Hajari, Karimian, & Hajilo, 2013). Local communities too play important role in sustainable rural tourism development, hence it is very important to gain local communities’ support (Spencer and Nsiah, 2013) The most important benefits that residents feel improved from rural tourism are increased employment opportunities, property values, closeness to the nature and ultimately sustainable socio-economic development (Lalith Chandralal, 2010).

OBJECTIVES

The proposed research has the following objectives:

- i) To analyze the role of rural tourism in economic and sustainable development.

- ii) To identify issues for future research and development of rural tourism.
- iii) To assess the socio-economic, cultural and environmental impacts of rural tourism upon the quality of life of the villagers.

METHODOLOGY

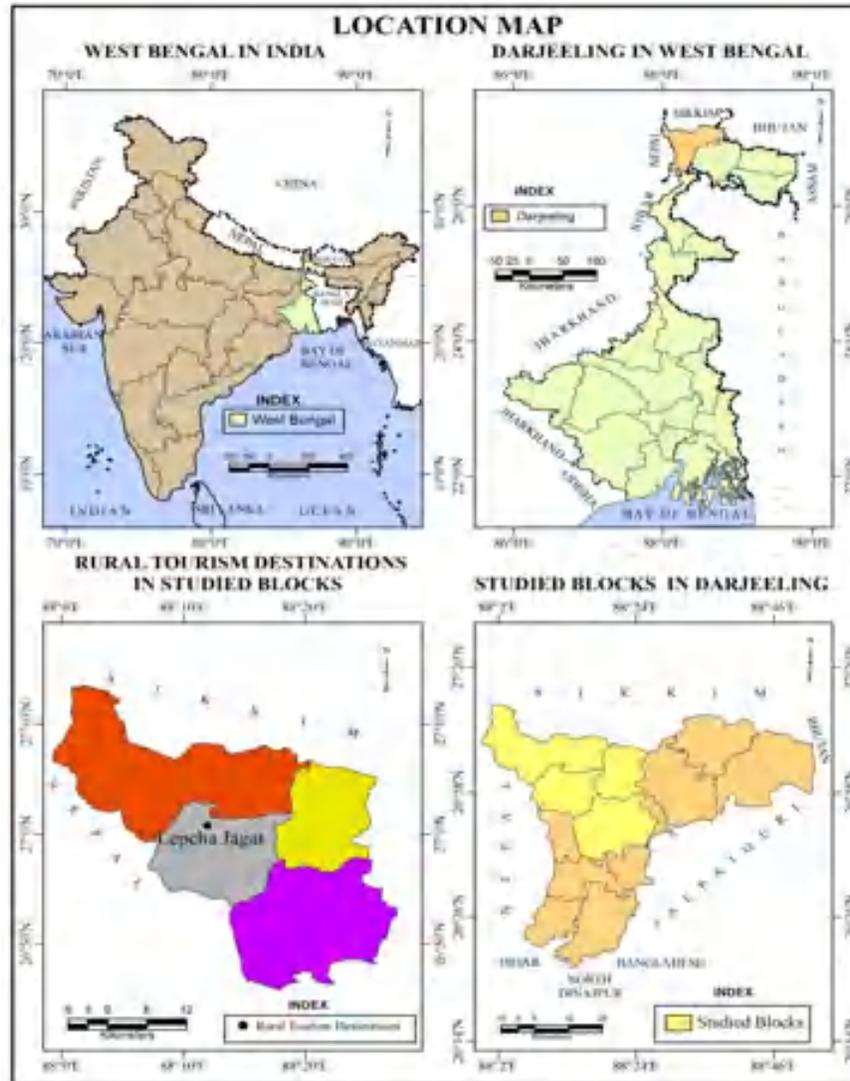
The methodology that has been adopted for the proposed study will be analytical, descriptive, comparative, evaluative and interpretive. Both Qualitative and Quantitative data has been used for the study. Structured interview was conducted for collecting primary data from experts, tourists as well as the local stakeholders. A patterned questionnaire was floated among the local people to observe their viewpoints. For the collection of secondary data, previous studies in tourism, rural tourism and eco-tourism, various publications of Tourism Department of India and Tourism Department of Darjeeling, newspapers, journals, magazines, management plans of various National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries has been studied. Specific Internet portals and websites have been browsed to get more information.

The **sample methods** have been adopted and the sample size has been given after the pilot survey of the select areas. Field studies, data collection and observations during fieldwork are the basis of the present analysis. The data has been processed and represented by different statistical and cartographic techniques.

ARC GIS 10 has been used for mapping.

The **area of the study** has been restricted to **Darjeeling Hills** within **Darjeeling** subdivision. Pakhrin Homestay, Kanchan Kanya Homestay, Salakha Homestay and Humro Homestay from *Lepchajagat* have been surveyed for the study.

Location Map of the Study Area



(Source: Darjeeling Tourism Department and GIS mapping)

LEPCHAJAGAT:

Lepchajagat is a forest village located within Sukhia block between Ghoom and Sukhia at an altitude of 6,956 feet in Darjeeling Hills.

Endowed with beautiful nature, peaceful environment and a picturesque landscape, Lepchajagat is a wonderful place for nature lover, bird photographers. Located amidst the forest, it provides an interaction with wild animals and beautiful flora, mostly rhododendron.

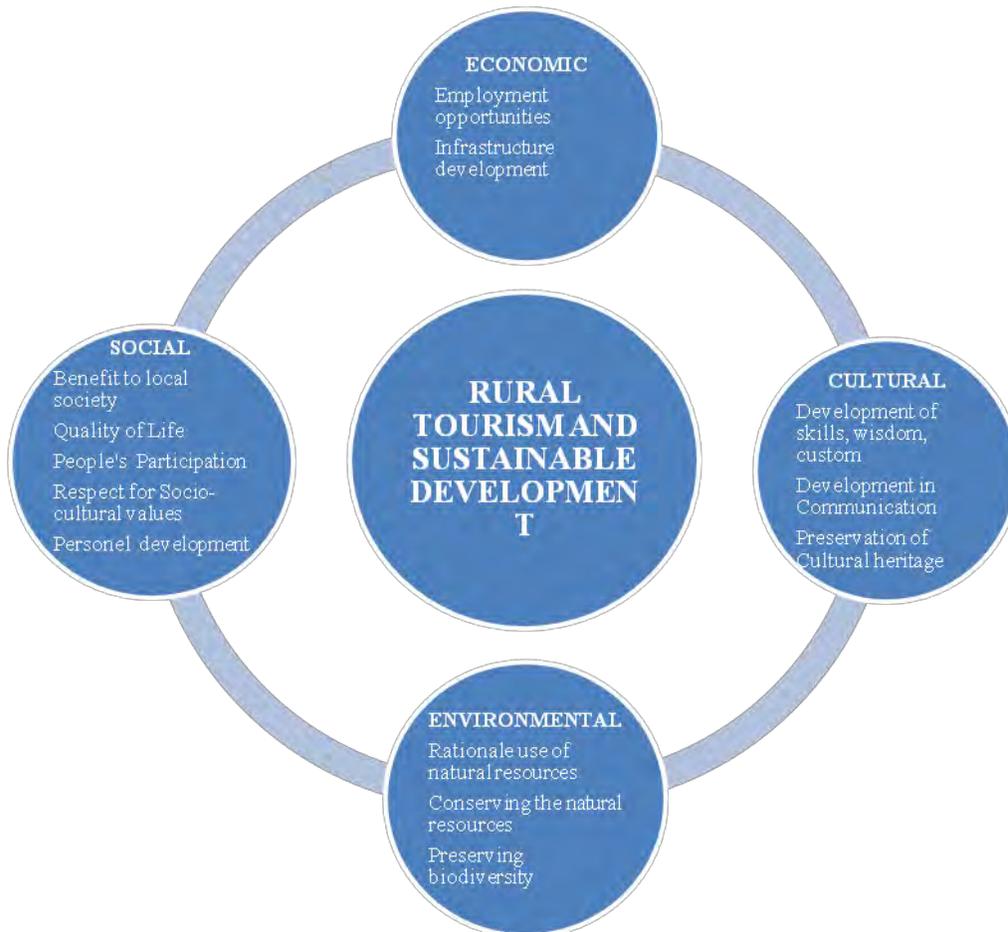
The challenges faced by hosts, stakeholders of Lepchajagat are:

- i) Lack of infrastructure
- ii) Political unrest
- iii) Lack of education
- iv) Financial and monetary Support for sustainable development
- v) Lack of trained personnel in tourism sector
- vi) Publicity

Rural tourism and Sustainable development:

Based on four pillars of sustainable development i.e. economic, social, cultural and environmental parameters, a model for rural tourism has been prepared which is as follows:

Rural tourism for Sustainable development:



(Source: Hall, 1998 and Author's Conceptualization)

The development of rural tourism contributes positively to economic growth as well as regional economic development and thus it provides benefits to the local people.

Rural tourism can be sustainable if development meets the needs of tourists and local residents while protecting future opportunities. Rural tourism offers benefits for local residents, conservation, development and educational experiences. Rural tourism is a sustainable form of nature-based tourism. It focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, its landscape, flora, fauna and their habitats, as well as cultural artifacts from the locality (Dowling, 1997; Fennell, 1999).

Tourists:

Total number of 200 tourists were interviewed, out of which 101(50.5%) were male and 99 (49.5%) were female. 146 tourists hailed from West Bengal (73%), 32 from other parts of India (16%) and 22 (11%) from foreign. Most of them were *nature lover*, some visited for *peace* and few visited for other purposes.

Homestays: Homestays are part of rural tourism where tourist stay with local people to experience local culture and tradition which generates livelihood for local people.

Four homestay owners have been interviewed and their income shows the constant development of the economy of their homestays. Following is the data of Economy of six rural tourism destinations since 2008:

Approx income of Owners in Rs.												
Destinations	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Lepchajaga	2640	2880	3900	4080	4920	1200	9240	25560	29640	2040	5880	91980
t	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(Source: Compiled by author from registers of homestays)

The above table illustrates the income of the owners since the inception of rural tourism in Lepchajagat. It reveals that the economy has been growing constantly. Rural tourism has been successful as it has catered to economic development through generation of employment opportunities especially in tertiary sectors. The development can be seen in transport system, infrastructure, crafts, floriculture, etc. It too raised the standard of living of the rural people.

Some of the local people got the opportunity to develop themselves as entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurship has been able to capitalize local resources; it has been able to generate some scope for rural workers and labors. Rural tourism has acted as a stimulator of economic growth in this rural destination.

Some owners started earnings as homestay while some started with house turned into homestay, some are government homestays and some are private homestay in the study area. The following table shows the scenario of homestays in different rural tourism destinations of the study area.

Destinations	Homestays	House turned into homestays	Government homestays	Private Homestays
Lepchajagat	i) Pakhrin Homestay ii) Salakha Homestay	i) Kanchankanya Homestay		Humro Homestay

(Source: Data compiled by author from Field survey)

Pattern of increase in tourist accommodation facility in Lepchajagat village since 2000

Sample size: 4 Homestay

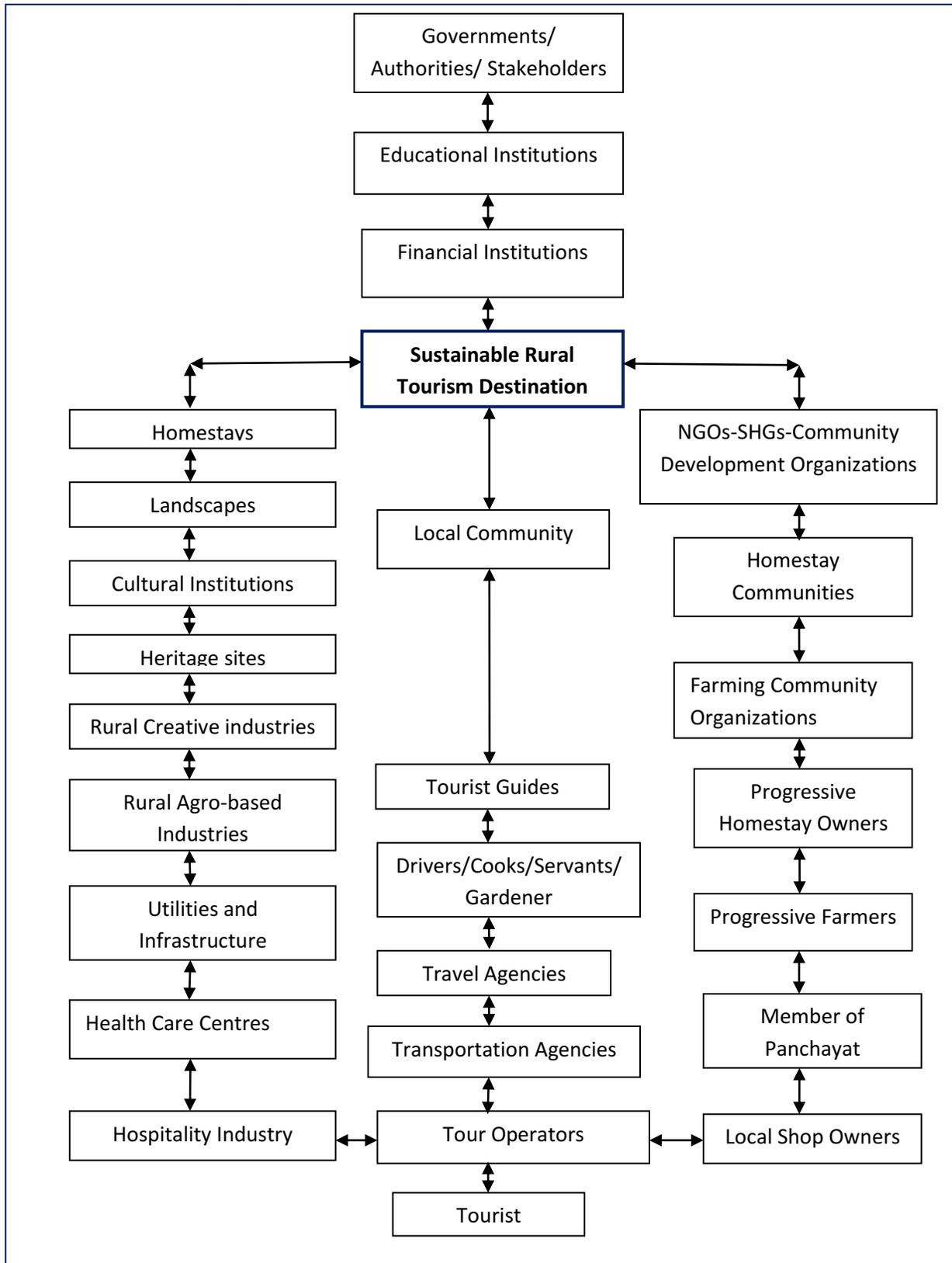
Sl. No.	Name of the Home-stay	From the year	Increasing number of room	Number of persons to accommodate
1	Pakhrin Homestay	2008	$6 + 2 = 8$	$10 + 8 = 18$
2	Kanchankanya Homestay	2013	$6 + 2 = 8$	$10 + 8 = 18$
3	Salakha Homestay	2016	$1 + 1 = 2$	$2 + 4 = 6$
4	Humro Homestay	2016	$2 + 1 = 3$	$4 + 4 = 8$

(Source: Data compiled by author from Field survey)

Stakeholder's networking for sustainable rural tourism development:

Taking into consideration the characteristics and components of rural tourism and sustainable development planning such as the sustainable tourism management, community participation, local benefits, tourists satisfaction, environment protection, educative purpose, development of specialized tourism networking, infrastructure, the study thus accounts for the stakeholders networking model for planning sustainable tourism development in rural areas of Darjeeling Hills.

Stakeholders' Networking for Sustainable Rural Tourism Development



Source: Joshi, Paresh Vidyadhar and author)

Conclusion:

In conclusion, it can be said that Lepchajagat has been able to develop their areas with the introduction of tourism and are moving towards sustainable development. To some extent, rural tourism has created employment opportunities, enhanced growth of service sectors and has been a means of conserving rural ecology in a sustainable manner. It has minimized the disparity between rural and urban area thereby bringing the rural area in the path of development. It has ensured environmental improvements, landscape and resource conservation leading to sustainable development. The local people are becoming aware about the positive and negative impacts of tourism. Rural tourism has a great future perspective in the rural areas of Darjeeling and can surely be an option for another income generation business. A new concern is emerging in the theory and practice of rural tourism which invests considerable importance in the economic well-being and cultural integrity of rural communities and in rural environmental stewardship. Rural tourism has brought social changes in the study area.

All the stakeholders and local people should be aware of the environmental and social consequences of rural tourism. All the owners, stakeholders should work on and progress on 3 keys of sustainable development: *making it more economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally responsible.*



Pakhrin Homestay, Lepchajaat



Kanchankanya Homestay, Lepchajagat



Subhash Tamang, a painter working at Pakhrin Homestay



Traditional Kitchen

References

Agnes Gannon (1994). Rural tourism as a factor in rural community economic development for economies in transition, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2:1-2, 51-60, DOI: 10.1080/09669589409510683

Ahamed Mustak (2018). "Rural Tourism As A Sustainable Development Alternative: An Analysis With Special Reference To BallavpurDanga Near Santiniketan, West Bengal (India)", *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*

Aslam M.S.M., AwangWahidinKhairil, Othman BintiHj. Nor'ain. (2014). "Issues and Challenges in Nurturing Sustainable Rural Tourism Development", *Tourism, Leisure and Global Change*, Volume 1 (2014).

AggarwalPrateek, (1999) *Tourism and Economic Growth and Development*, Mohit Publications, New Delhi.

AnejaPuneet, (2006). "Sustainable Tourism Development Challenges Ahead".Kuruksheetra.

Badan B. S and Harish Bhatt, (2006) *Sustainable Tourism*. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.

BandeUsha, (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Mountains".*Yojana*, Vol.24, No.15 (August).

Bharathbhushan E. K., (2005). "Sustainable Tourism Development". Kerala Calling, Vol.50, No.16, October.

Bhatia A. K., (1991). Tourism Development: Principles and Practices. Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi.

Biju M. R. (2002). "Global Tourism: The Evolutionary Process", *South Asian Journal of Social Political Sciences*, Vol.3, No.1, December 2002, pp. 144-147.

Bojnec Stefan (2010). "Rural Tourism, Rural Economy Diversification, and Sustainable Development", *AcademicaTuristica*, Year 3, No. 1–2, July 2010.

Bramwell Bill (1994). Rural tourism and sustainable rural tourism, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2:1-2, 1-6

Bramwell, B., & Lane, B. (2012). Towards innovation in sustainable tourism research? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 20(1), 1–7.

Broadhurst, R. (2001) *Managing Environments for Leisure and Recreation*. London: Routledge.

Buckley R. 1995. Where tourism and ecology meet. Ecotourism Conference, Bangkok, Srinakharinwirot University.

BurjaCamelia, BurjaVasile (2014). "Sustainable Development of Rural Areas: A Challenge for Romania", *Environmental Engineering and Management Journal*, Vol.13, No. 8, August 2014

Butler R., Hall M., Jenkins J., (1998) "Tourism and recreation in rural areas", Wiley, Chichester, pp-557.

Caprihan,Vijai, Kumar,Shiva, Kirthi, (2004). "Eco-Tourism in India".*South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.12, No.2 (Jan-June)

Chamy Anthony, (2001). "Accessible Sustainable Ecotourism: Necessary Market Adjustments in a New Age of Travel". *Ecotoursonline.ca*.

Chand,Mohinder, Ravi,Bhushan, (2005). "Rural Tourism: A New Approach to Sustainability". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.9, No.2 (Jan-June).

ChaturvediDevesh, (2010). "Tourism in India: Ensuring Buoyancy and Sustainability". Yojana, Vol.13, No.8, May.

Chawla Ramesh (2006). Ecology and Tourism Development, First Edition, SumitEnterprises, New Delhi, India.

Chettri, N. (1998). "Impact of Tourism on Biodiversity: A Case Study from the Sikkim Himalayas, India". South Asian Perspectives in Eco-tourism and Conservation, Gangtok: Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim.

Chhewang Rinzin, Walter J. V. Vermeulen & Pieter Glasbergen (2007) Ecotourism as a mechanism for sustainable development: the case of Bhutan, Environmental Sciences, 4:2, 109-125, DOI: 10.1080/15693430701365420

D' Souza Rohin (2009).Rural Development Through Rural Tourism, Salesian Journal, KalpaGriha Publication, New Delhi, India.

Das, Niranjana, H. J. Syiemlieh, (2004). "Eco-Tourism in Assam".Yojana, Vol.8, No.4 (July)

Day, J., & Cai, L. (2012). Environmental and energy - related challenges to sustainable tourism in the United States and China. International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology, 19, 379–388

Diganta K., Mudoi R. (2011). "Tourism Sector in North East Region of India", *Southern Economist*, (2011) Vol. 50 (11), pp. 49-51.

Drgulanescu Irina Virginia, DrutuMaricica (2012). "Rural Tourism for Local Economic Development", International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences, Volume 2, Special Issue 1 (2012), pp. 196-203

Gursoy D., Jurowski C., Uysal M. (2002). "Resident Attitudes: A Structural Modeling Approach". Annals of Tourism Research.

Hall, D., Mitchell, M. and Roberts, L. (2003) "Tourism and the countryside: Dynamic relationships". In D. Hall, L. Roberts and M. Mitchell (eds) New Directions in Rural Tourism (pp. 3–15). Aldershot: Ashgate

Hall Michael and Alan Addison (1999). "Sustainable Tourism-A Geographical Perspective". International Journal of Tourism Research, Vol. 2, Issue 5.

Harrison, C. (1991) Countryside Recreation in a Changing Society. London: TMS Partnership.

Henderson, J.C., A. Koh, S. Sterlyn & M. Y. Sallim (2001). "Urban Environmental and Nature-Based Attractions: Green Tourism in Singapore". Tourism Recreation Research, Vol. 26(3).

Hill Jennifer and Timgale (2000). "Ecotourism and Environmental Sustainability Principles and Practice". Research Gate Publication, Ashgate, Bristol(U.K.).

Hunziker W., Krapf K. (1942). "General Tourist Theory". The Outline of General Tourism Science, Vol. 26, No. 3.

K.G. Mohanlal, (2007). "Ecotourism in Kerala". South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS), Vol.18, No.1 (July-Dec 2007).

Kandari and Ashish Chandra (2003). "Tourism, Bio-diversity Sustainable Development". Isha Books Publication, New Delhi, Vol. 4, Issue 3.

Kannegieser, Isabel, "A Home in The Hills: Examining the Socioeconomic Benefits of Homestay Tourism on Rural Women and Their Communities in the Darjeeling District" (2015). Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection. 2205.

Katoch Amit and Gautam Prashant (2015). "Rural Tourism as a Medium for Local Development in Himachal Pradesh: The example of Villages around Dharamshala (Kangra)". South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage, Vol. 8, No.1.

Krippendorf, J. (1987) The Holiday Makers: Understanding the Impact of Leisure and Travel. Oxford: Heinemann

Kohli, M.S. (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Himalayas". Yojana, Vol.24, No.15 (August).

Kumar, Swain Sampad, Mohan, (2007). "Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Development-A Case Study of Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary in Orissa". South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS), Vol.7, No.2 (Jan-June).

KuşatNurdan (2016), “The Role Of Rural Tourism In Rural Development: The Case Of Turkey”, Journal of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Volume:XVII, Issue: 2 Year-December, 2016 Pages: 11-21

Lane, B. (1994). What is rural tourism? Journal of Sustainable Tourism 2(1&2), 7–21.

Lepp A. (2007). “Residents’ attitudes towards tourism in Bigodi village, Uganda”.Elsevier, March (2007) Volume 8, No.8.

Liu, A. (2006). “Tourism in rural areas: Kedah”, Malaysia School of tourism, tourism management, 27 (5), 878-889

Liu, J. C., Sheldon, P. J. and T. Var, (1987).“Resident perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism”.Annals of Tourism Research.

Malek Abdul, Anand H., (1993). “Economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism in Socotra Island”, Southern Economist, Vol.48, No.4.

Martin S. R., and S.F. McCool, (1992).“Attitude of Montana Residents towards Tourism Development”.Research Report 23. Missoula. MT: The University of Montana, School of Forestry, Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research 21.

Mathew Viju (2009) “Sustainable Tourism: A Case of Destination Competitiveness in South Asia”, *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, Vol. 2, No.1, 2009, pp. 83-89.

Meena, Shivraj (2015). “Rural Tourism Impact, Challenges and Opportunities in Rajasthan”, *The Journal of Bengal Geographer*, Vol. IV, No. IV, 2015

Mili Nitashree, (2012). “Rural Tourism Development: An Overview of Tourism in the TipamPhakey Village of Naharkhatia in Dibrugarh District, Assam, India”. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, Vol. 2.Issue 12.

MrksaMilutin, Gajic Tamara (2014). “Opportunities for Sustainable Development of Rural Tourism in The Municipality Of VRBAS”, Economics of Agriculture 1/2014, UDC: 338-44(1-22)

Murti, S.K & Kumar S. (1989).Tourists Activities Causing Depletion of Plant Wealth in Jammu & Kashmir, In Impacts of Tourism on Mountain Environment, (ed. S.C. Singh) Research India Publications.

N. Jayapalan, (1984). An Introduction to Tourism.Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, Delhi (1984).

Negi, Jagmohan. (1990). Tourism and Travel, Gitangali Publishing House. New Delhi.

Nomani Abuzar and Khan Rais Kamraj Mohd.(2015). “Human Resource development in tourism Industry – An Analytical Framework”, South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage, Vol. 8.No. 1.

Noori Kamran, Zand Farhad (2013). “The Role of Rural Tourism in Rural Sustainable Development According to the SWOT Method (Case Study: Kermanshah Province villages)”, International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences, Vol, 4 (9), 2013

Oralgaci Monika (2010). “Rural Tourism Sustainable Development in Hungary and Romania”, Quasteus Multidisciplinary Research Journal.

Panda, Tapan, K., Sitikantha, Mishra, & Bivaraj, Bhusan Parida, (1992). Tourism Management: the Socio-Economic and Ecological Perspective. New Delhi: University Press.

Pandya, M.T. & Oza, G. M. (1994).“Biodiversity for the masses”. Indian Forester, Vol 20.

Pearce, J., (1980). “Host community acceptance of foreign tourists: strategic considerations”, Annals of Tourism Research, 7(2)

Priya Bhalla, Alexandra Coghlan & Prodyut Bhattacharya (2016) Homestays’ contribution to community-based ecotourism in the Himalayan region of India, Tourism Recreation Research, 41:2, 213-228

R.M. Patil, (2010). “Tourism and Economic Development of India”. Southern Economist, Vol.32, No.12, August 15.

Raj Aparna, (1999).Sustainability, Profitability and Successful Tourism. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.

- Raj,Sundar, T. (2009). “Ecotourism and Sustainable Development in Kerala”. The Researcher, Vol. IV, No.2 (November)
- Rajan.J. & Sabu K. Thankappan, (2001).“Impact of tourism on the environment of Munnar”. Review of Social Sciences, The Kerala academy of social sciences, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Raju Sarngadharan. M, (2000). “Tourism and Sustainable Economic Development: Indian and Global Perspectives”. University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Rahmani M., Hajari B., Karimian T., Hajilo M. (2013). “Rural tourism development strategies using SWOT analysis: Case study. *Life Science Journal*, 10 (4s): 393-403
- Richard Sharpley (2007) Flagship Attractions and Sustainable Rural Tourism Development: The Case of the Alnwick Garden, England, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 15:2, 125-143
- Ristic Lela, Vujicic Milan, Lekovic Milan (2016). “Tourism As A Factor Of Sustainable Development Of Rural Areas Belonging To Rudnicka Morava”, *Economics of Agriculture* 2/2016, UDC: 338.48-44(1-22)
- Santhosh Yadav, (2010). “Ecotourism: problems and Prospects”. *Yojana*, Vol.18, No.9, January 15.
- Samantaray Lenka Lopamudra (2016). “Sustainable rural tourism: An enabler for the trend of reverse migration in Odisha”, *International Journal of Applied Research*, 2(1), 2016
- Satish Chandra, (2003). *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development*, Rajat Publications, New Delhi.
- Singh, Ashwini, (2007). “Rural Tourism: Tool for Rural Employment”. *Kuruksheetra*, Vol.14, No.7 (June).
- Singh Kuldeep, Gantait Arnab, Puri Goldi, Swamy Anjaneya G. (2016). *Rural Tourism: Need, Scope and Challenges in Indian Context, Hospitality and Tourism: Challenges, Innovation, Practices and Product Development*. (Ed), Dr. Alok Kumar, Adhyayan Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.

Spencer M. D., Nsiah C. (2013). “The economic consequences of community support for tourism: A case study of a heritage fish hatchery”, *Tourism Management*, Volume 34, February, 2013), Pp 221-230

Tan, W. K., Liu, W. C., & Hu, Y. N. (2012). Finding the crucial factors for sustainable development of rural-based tourist destinations: Using Nanzhuang, Taiwan as a case study. *Service Business*, 7, 623–640. doi:10.1007/s11628-012-0178-2

Tapper R. 2001. Tourism and socio-economic development: UK tour operators. *Business approaches in the context of the new international agenda. International Journal of Tourism Development* 3:351 – 366

Tucker, H., & Lynch, P. (2004). Host-guest dating: Of improving the customer experience through host-guest psychographic matching. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism*, 5, 11–23

Udovc Andrej, Perpar Anton (2007) “Role of Rural Tourism for Development of Rural Areas”. *Journal of Central European Agriculture*, Vol. 8, No. 2.

Wilson H. and Venes J. (2001). “Factors for Success in Rural Tourism Development”, *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol.40, November 2001, pp. 132-138.

WEBSITES ACCESSED

<http://www.jstor.org>

<http://www.darjeeling.gov.in>

<http://www.wikipedia.org>

<http://www.bookings.edu/research/speeches>

Sustainable Rural Tourism in Darjeeling Hills: Case Studies of Takdah and Mineral Spring

Sunny Rawat*

**Research Scholar, Center for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling*

Abstract: *The paper analyzes the sustainable rural tourism in Darjeeling Hills that has brought about rural development and economic development. Rural tourism nowadays has become a new form of tourism activity that has contributed towards economic, cultural and social benefits to the society. Rural tourism has been able to preserve the values and beliefs, protect the environment, create employment opportunities, reduce unemployment, local handicrafts, increase the income and capital of stakeholders and local people, stimulate production of organic food, and infrastructural development, and provide possibilities for sustainable and economic development in rural areas. The objective of this research paper is to find the driving forces, benefits, potentialities, challenges, issues for future research and sustainable development of rural tourism and the impact of rural tourism upon the quality of life of the villagers. This paper identifies the available tourist attraction facilities, behavioral and functional aspects of tourists, challenges of owners at two rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling Hills namely **Takdah** and **Mineral Spring**. Mostly the stakeholders, owners and 400 tourists were interviewed on questionnaire basis. Random sampling method was applied for the selection of owners and tourists. Both the qualitative and quantitative methods have been used as **methodology** for the analysis of data. Arc GIS has been used for mapping. With regard to **findings**, the paper provides an overview of rural tourism at two different destinations leading towards economic, rural and sustainable development. Rural tourism opens up the door for employment opportunities. It enhances the growth of service sectors. It can be a means of conserving rural ecology in a sustainable manner. It minimizes the disparity between rural and urban area thereby bringing the rural areas in the path of development. It will ensure environmental improvements, landscape and resource conservation leading to sustainable development.*

Keywords: *Rural tourism, sustainable development, economic development, stakeholders, tourists, environmental improvements.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The temporary activities of a person which comprises travelling and staying in places outside his normal environment for leisure and recreational activities is referred to as tourism. It is the movement of the people to destinations outside their home and workplace and the activities undertaken to meet their cherished desires. Macintosh and Goeldner, (1986) defines tourism as the “sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business suppliers, host governments and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors”.

Rural tourism, an emerging phenomenon in the context of tourism has grown not only to be a potential business alternative but also a kind of recreational enterprise to the urban folks, taking them away to a peaceful destination from the hustle and bustle of swift Urban life. “Rural tourism is a form of nature based tourism that uncovers the rural life, culture, art and heritage at rural locations, thereby favoring the local communities socially and economically,” says NitashreeMili. (2012)

Rural Tourism is a part of both ‘Rural Development’ and ‘Sustainable Development’. It takes many forms as it brings people of different culture, faiths, languages and lifestyle close to one another and provides a broader outlook of life. It not only generates employment for the people but it also develops social, cultural and educational values and is one of the opportunities that rural communities consider to improve productivity and incomes.

Therefore, the focus of the proposed study would be to study the role of rural tourism in sustainable development, economic development and rural development of the study area.

Rural Tourism

Rural tourism as a concept has emerged for the growth and development of rural areas, providing diversified services but it not only caters to the growth of rural areas alone; instead, it helps in the development of the surrounding areas and the local people as well.

“Rural tourism offers a possible solution to some of the problems associated with lost economic opportunities and population decline that accompany the waning of agriculture. Many governments and regional authorities have embraced rural tourism as an opportunity to bring new money into rural regions, stimulating growth, providing employment opportunities and thus beginning to halt rural decline”. (Briedenhann and Wickens2004)

Rural tourism is not only an activity concerning the present; it is a growing industry, which has the potential to grow even larger in the future. It is a feasible growth mechanism that can be practiced with less capital without the risk of heavy financial losses but with an underlying security of sustainable growth and development.

Types of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is often treated as alternative tourism, which is different from mass tourism. It is a kind of sustainable tourism that exploits resources in rural regions, benefiting both the rural and urban society. Rural tourism can be categorized into the following types: nature tourism, culture tourism, health tourism and ecotourism owing to its different characteristics.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has been defined in many ways, but the most frequently quoted definition is from *Our Common Future* also known as the Brundtland Report (1987) where sustainable development is described, as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. It is a principle stating the relevance of human life, where the development process must be participatory from all sections of people and the process itself should be continuous and long term.

Robert Repetto (1986) in his *Global Possible* said, “Sustainable development is a continuous process that considers all natural and human resources as a means to achieve certain goals or objectives. This development process should not be contradictory with nature. Rather, it should be corollary with natural productive process”. Therefore, sustainable development should be a collective endeavor aiming at a definite outcome without causing any disturbance in the social life of the individuals residing in a particular society. It is the integration and should always be the integration among the masses and in some cases even between generations.

Linkages between Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development

Rural tourism, which contributes to the protection and preservation of environment and local resources, relies on development. In fact, development is the basic yardstick of rural tourism. However, rural tourism aims not only on development in its varied forms; instead, it aims for sustainable development considering the resources needed by both the present as well as the future generations. Rural tourism and sustainable development goes hand in hand in the development of a new host region and both contributes to scientific resource management, economic satisfaction, social and esthetic satisfaction and preservation of cultural and biological diversity. They complement each other in meeting the needs of tourism, host region, and enhance varied opportunities for the future. Therefore, sustainable development in the context of rural tourism can be regarded as a long-term plan for tourism, which takes into account the interest of the community, its inhabitants, the tourist and the tourism industry as a whole.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Darjeeling Hills, though a popular tourist destination, the local people do not enjoy enough roles in the planning and implementation of rural tourism projects, which act as a hindrance on the growth of tourism in general and rural tourism in particular. Problems aggravating are lack of cooperation between various departments, problems relating to measure the ecological and environmental impact, deforestation, water pollution, air pollution, unhygienic conditions, loss of native cultural elements, low infrastructure growth in some areas, poor travel facilities, lack of proper planning, some climatic problems, inadequate private investment, problem in the government actions, lack of proper management causing negative impact on fragile ecosystem and so on. Due to the emergence of many new forms of tourism, the idea of tourism is moving towards the periphery from the center. Areas adjacent to Darjeeling town are also growing rapidly and some places like **Takdah** and **Mineral Spring** have proved their potential as tourist destinations in a very short span. Nevertheless, some rural tourism projects wither off after a certain period. Therefore, proper management and implementation of plans are essential at the initial stages. The local stakeholders need to be consulted before the initiation of the project and adequate governmental support is required for the sustainable growth of such projects. The proposed study attempts to analyze the select tourist destination in relation to rural tourism and sustainable development

Rural tourism models in Darjeeling Hills like **Takdah** and **Mineral Spring** are capable of offering inimitable experiences to the tourists. Though endogenous tourism has emerged as an important means in bringing sustainable development in rural areas, so far there is no specific study, evaluating the holistic impact of this tourism model. Therefore, this research proposes to make an in-depth study of the impact of endogenous tourism on the development of rural areas of Darjeeling.

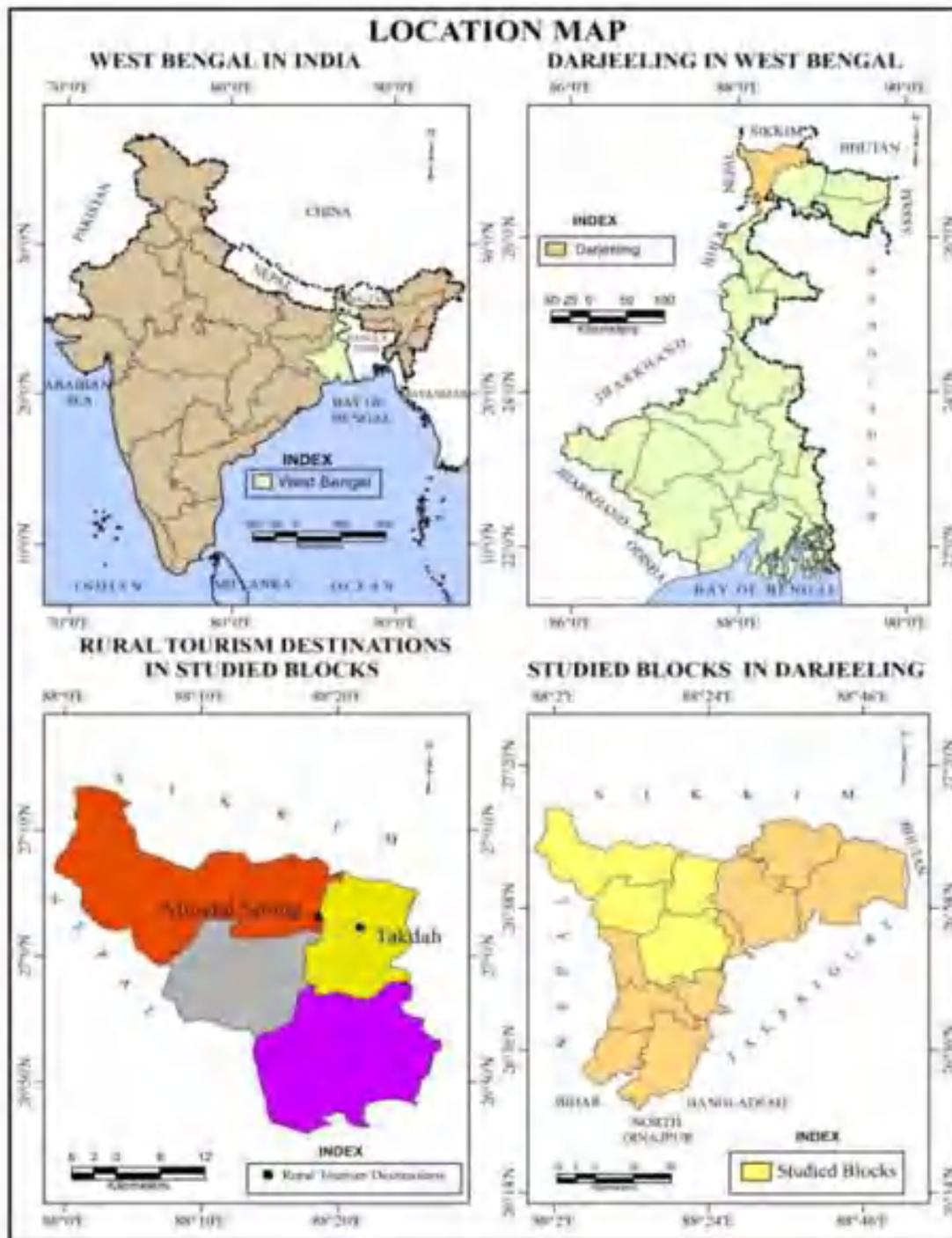
3. STUDY AREA

The proposed area of study comprises of one subdivision of Darjeeling district i.e. Darjeeling. Darjeeling district lies between 26° 31' and 27° 13' north latitude and between 87° 59' and 88° 53' east longitude. It is the northernmost district of West Bengal. It is located on the lap of the Himalayas. The district comprises of three subdivisions namely, Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong and Siliguri. Darjeeling Himalaya forms a part of the Eastern Himalayan range and is bounded by Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan on the north, west and east respectively. The area covered by Darjeeling Himalaya is about 1721 Sq. Km. while the total area of the district is 3202 Sq. Km. The exquisite scenic grandeur and invigorating climate in the area has earned the title of "Queen of the Hill Stations" (Chakraborti 1989). River Teesta is the master consequent stream in the area while Rammam and Rangit are the two important tributaries of Teesta. The climate of Darjeeling is especially noteworthy. Springs and autumns are the seasons most favored by visitors. The monsoon is a period of continuous rainfall while the winter after December is too cold and unpleasant.

Case Study Areas:

Takdah and **Mineral Spring** from Darjeeling are the selected rural tourism areas from Darjeeling Hills.

LOCATION MAP OF THE STUDY AREA



Source: Municipal Office, Darjeeling and GIS Mapping

4. OBJECTIVES

The proposed research has the following objectives:

- i) To understand different types of rural tourism and to find the driving forces and benefits of rural tourism in the study area.
- ii) To examine the potentialities and various challenges of rural tourism in the study area.

- iii) To analyze the role of rural tourism for economic and sustainable development.
- iv) To identify issues for future research and development of rural tourism.
- v) To assess the impact of rural tourism upon the quality of life of the villagers.

5. METHODOLOGY

The methodology that would be adopted for the proposed study will be analytical, descriptive, comparative, evaluative and interpretive. Both Qualitative and Quantitative data will be used for the study. Structured interview will be conducted for collecting primary data from experts, tourists as well as the local stakeholders. A patterned questionnaire will be floated among the local people to observe their viewpoints. For the collection of secondary data, previous studies in tourism, rural tourism and eco-tourism, various publications of Tourism Department of India and Tourism Department of Darjeeling, newspapers, journals, magazines, management plans of various National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries will be studied. Specific Internet portals and websites will be browsed to get more information.

The **sample methods** have been adopted and the sample size has been given after the pilot survey of the select areas. Field studies, data collection and observations during fieldwork will be the basis of the present analysis. The data has been processed and represented by different statistical and cartographic techniques.

The **area of the study** has been restricted to **Darjeeling Hills** within **Darjeeling** subdivision. Gurung Guest House, Pradhan Homestay, Shiwani Homestay, Rai Resort, Darjeeling Blossom Homestay, Abiraj Homestay, Norlha Homestay, TinchuleyGurung's Homestay and Anugraha Homestay from Takdah and Tathagata Farm, Gautam Paradise and Humro Homestay from Mineral Spring has been surveyed for the study.

Two rural tourism areas have been surveyed for case study, namely, **Takdah** and **Mineral Spring** from Darjeeling subdivision.

6. CHALLENGES OF RURAL TOURISM IN THE STUDY AREA

Though rural tourism gives livelihood to many rural dwellers but the challenges faced by hosts should not be ignored. It takes long time, heavy effort and patience to build a good rural tourist spot. Tourism industry is an industry which depends on many factors and challenges overcoming those factors. The challenges faced by hosts, stakeholders of rural tourist destinations of **Takdah** and **Mineral Spring** are elaborated as follows:

a) Financial and monetary Support for sustainable development:

Tourism Business is highly fluctuating. Most of the hosts felt the lack of provision of financial support from different banks/ cooperatives in terms of loan. The capital required for set up of homestays, tourist places, and beautiful environment was not sufficient for the hosts at the initial stage. The community people of **Takdah and Mineral Spring** too suffered from provision of financial supports from different agencies. Only few people enjoyed financial support i.e. 20% of people whereas 80% did not get any financial support to help in sustaining their occupations. This reveals that tourism industry is at great stake. The challenges thus faced by all the hosts and communities should be taken into great consideration by government as well as other funding agencies.

b) Lack of education:

The survey revealed that most of the hosts of rural tourism at **Takdah and Mineral Spring** had acquired education up to primary level which clearly indicates the lack of knowledge in efficient running of rural tourism and the effective management. Thus proper information, lack of education, good knowledge and skill became another challenge for development of rural tourism in **Takdah and Mineral Spring**.

c) Political unrest:

Darjeeling hills has remained under political unrest under survey year twice for the demand of separate state i.e. Gorkhaland which totally ruined tourism industry in entire Darjeeling. The year 2013 and 2017 witnessed a mass

agitation having a long period strike (bandh) which totally shattered tourism in the study area. Homestays remained closed for more than three months which totally stopped income of the hosts and the villagers. "It was a struggling period" stated by Navin Tamang, owner of Tathagata Farm, Mineral Spring which really gave evidence that running tourism is not an easy task. It needs great sufferings. The challenge was to set up the industry again post - strike. Tourists feared to visit Darjeeling post - strike as the agitation may occur any time. When whole Darjeeling suffered a setback, tourism industry too suffered a setback and it went to that condition where income generation became a difficult task.

f) Short tourist season in the Hills:

The short tourist season in Darjeeling hills totally handicaps the tourism industry. The tourist season prevails mostly four to five months i.e. in Spring March, April and May and Autumn October and November. Rest of the months either remains cold or rainy which restricts tourists to visit the place. Homestays, eco-tourism remains closed for rest of the months which totally shatters the income and employment of rural people. The people of **Takdah and Mineral Spring** suffer with short tourist season which does not allow them to generate income and earn profit abundantly.

g) Publicity:

The information and description of all the rural tourism destinations and their scenic beauty and nearby tourist spots of Darjeeling Himalaya are least advertised or least publicity done. Tourists from different parts of India and world remain unknown and thus the rural place remains unexplored. Takdah lacks publicity and thus the flow of tourists remains low.

7. BEHAVIORAL AND FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF TOURISTS

Tourism industry rests on the behavioral and functional aspects of tourists visiting the selected destination. Rural tourism in particular relies on the selective perceptions of the tourists. Factors such as the demographic profile that includes education, income, occupational structure, information regarding the origin of the tourists and the purpose of visit, frequency of visits, mode of transportation, opinion of the local people, facilities, facilities available, demarcate the nature and standard of the tourists and also their behavioral trends.

Origin of the Tourists:

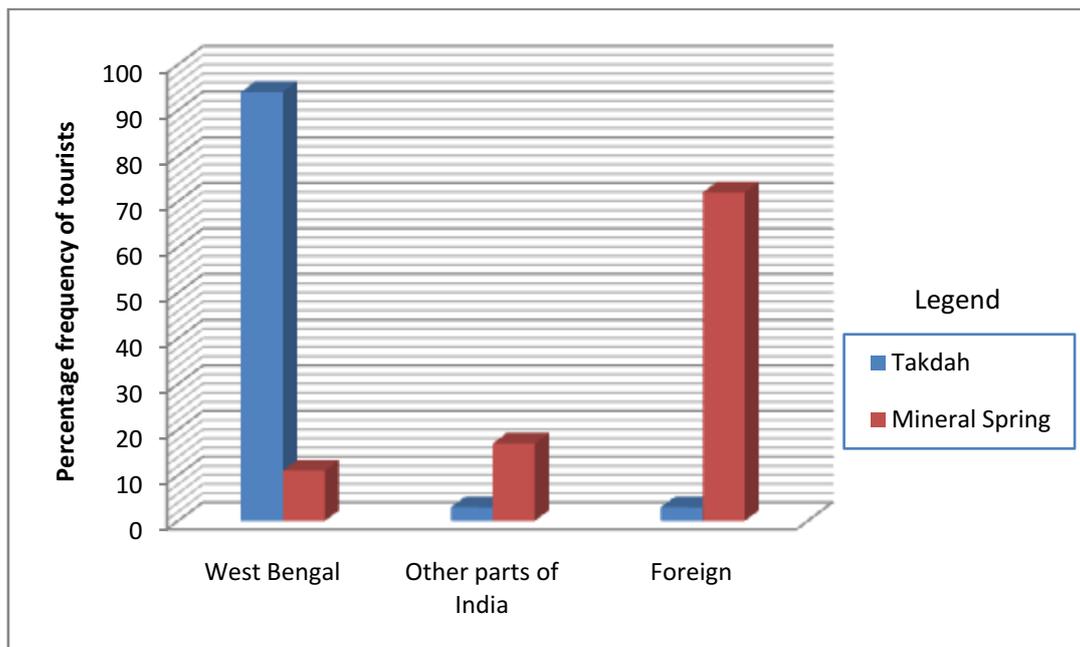
The survey reveals that half of the tourists, to be precise 188 tourists 54 % hail from West Bengal. This substantiates that the majority of the tourists are the domestic tourists who prefer to visit Darjeeling, owing to its easy accessibility, scenic beauty and moderate climate. The average cost at Mineral Spring is 3700 and that of Takdah is Rs. 1200 in general. Around 34% of the total tourists are from foreign countries. The predominance of factors such as distance between the origin and destination, per capita income of the tourists and their literacy ratio has been seen determining the intensity of the flow of incoming tourists. The study suggests that still much emphasis needs to be given to attract foreign tourists that will increase the income and capital of the local people.

Origin of Tourists				
Destinations	West Bengal	Other parts of India	Foreign	Total
Takdah	188	6	6	200
% frequency	94	3	3	100
Mineral Spring	22	34	144	200
% frequency	11	17	72	100

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=400

Origin of tourists at select destinations



N=400

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

Out of 200 tourists visiting Takdah 188 (94%), 6 (3%), 6 (3%) hailed from West Bengal, other parts of India and foreign countries respectively. The proportion of tourists coming from West Bengal seem high due to easy accessibility, hot climate at their native places driving them to cold and pleasant climate of Darjeeling, beautiful landscape and peaceful environment of Darjeeling. The scenario is bit different in Mineral Spring. Out of 200 tourists visiting Mineral Spring 22 (11%), 34 (17%) and 144 (72%) hailed from West Bengal, other parts of India and foreign respectively. The proportion of foreign tourist seems high at Mineral Spring due to high cost of stay.

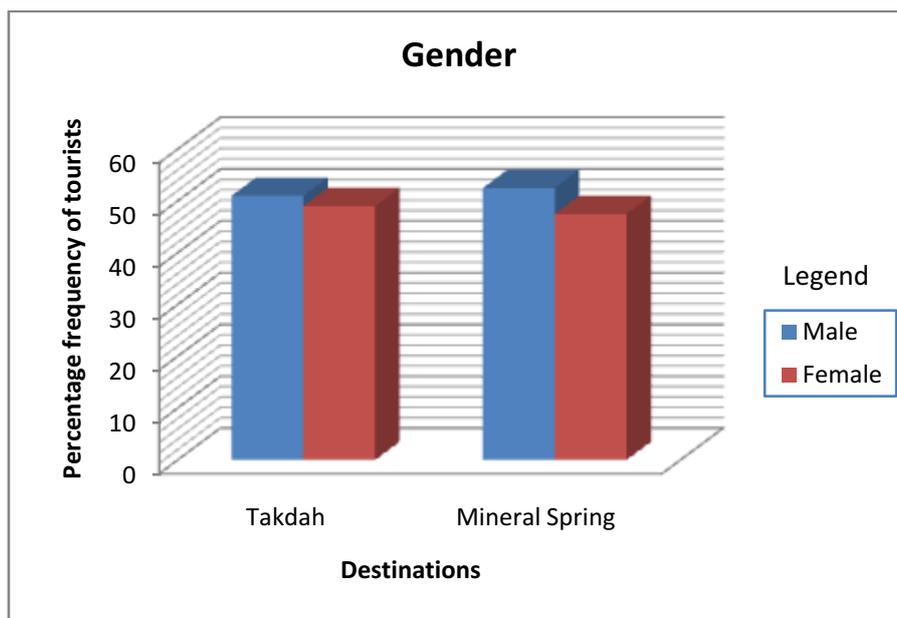
Gender:

In terms of tourists, gender plays a vital role in signifying which portion of gender i.e. male or female tourist tours mostly and is fond of travelling to different places for different purposes. The following table shows the number of male and female tourists in six rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling.

Gender						
Destinations	Male	Female	Total	Members from same family	Only male groups	Only female groups
Takdah	102	98	200	38	32	26
% frequency	51	49	100	19	16	13
Mineral Spring	105	95	200	6	74	72
% frequency	52.5	47.5	100	3	38	36

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=400



N=400

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

The study reveals that the male and female tourists visiting rural tourism destinations of Darjeeling at Takdah and Mineral Spring seem equal. Out of 400 tourists surveyed, 207 (51.75%) were male and 193 (48%) were female. 102 (51%) male and 98 (49%) female visited Takdah and 105 (52.5%) male and 95 (47.5%) female visited Mineral Spring. 38 (19%) and 6 (3%) members are from same family at Takdah and Mineral Spring respectively whereas 32 (16%) and 74 (38%) are only male groups and 26 (13%) and 72 (36%) are only female groups visiting Takdah and Mineral Spring respectively.

Occupational Structure:

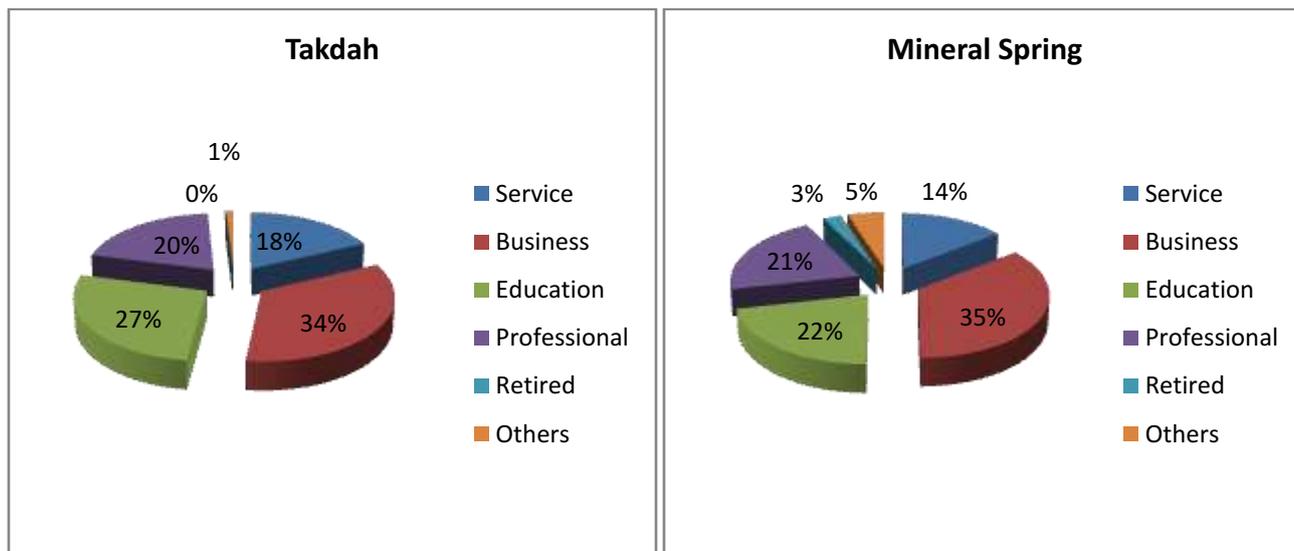
Occupational Structure of the tourists shows their economic character. It determines their earnings and income levels and determines their capacity to visit different and distant places and avail different facilities and services. It signifies the ability of the tourists to visit different tourist destinations from cheaper to costlier depending upon their occupation and their income and earnings. Some of the occupation provides free time to roam while some occupation keeps tourists busy within their occupation. The tourists with government services get opportunity to roam at least once a year with their family to distant places. The businessmen earn a lot and they invest some portion of their earnings for tour. Tourists pursuing education find difficulty in touring as they have to depend on their family for tour fare. The retired person mostly visits distant places for relaxation.

Occupational Structure						
Destinations	Service	Business	Education	Professional	Retired	Others
Takdah	36	68	54	40	0	2
% frequency	18	34	27	20	0	1
Mineral Spring	29	71	43	42	5	10
% frequency	14.5	35.5	22.5	21	2.5	5

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=400

Occupational Structure of tourist visiting select destinations:



N=400

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

Occupational structure revealed that most of the tourists at Takdah and Mineral Spring are engaged in business i.e. 34% and 35% respectively. 18% and 14% tourists at Takdah and Mineral Spring are engaged in service respectively, Takdah shows 27% of tourists in education, 20% as professional, 0% retired and 1% in others, similarly Mineral Spring shows 22% tourists in education 21% as professionals, 3% as retired and 5% in others. The data revealed that the tourists with service and business are larger in number which signifies that their occupation supports tourism and roaming to distant places.

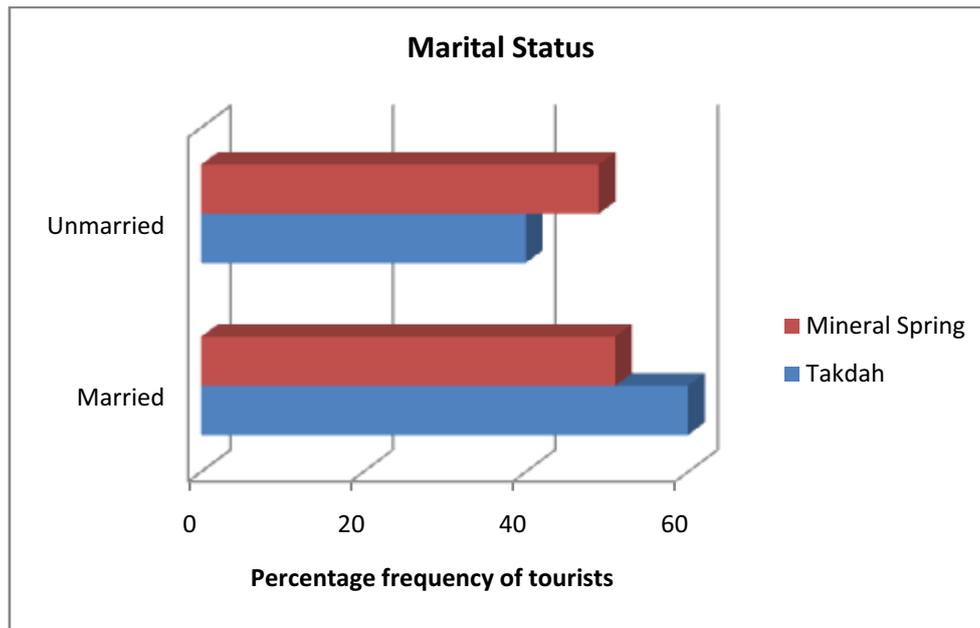
Marital Status:

Marital status of tourists shows the interest of the tourists to enjoy their leisure either alone or with friends, colleagues or with their partners.

Marital Status			
Destinations	Married	Unmarried	Total
Takdah	120	80	200
% frequency	60	40	100
Mineral Spring	102	98	200
% frequency	51	49	100

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=400



N=400

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

The data revealed that 60% tourists were married and 40% were unmarried at Takdah. Similarly, 51% tourists were married and 49% tourists were unmarried at Mineral Spring. The ratio of married couples is more at Takdah than Mineral Spring.

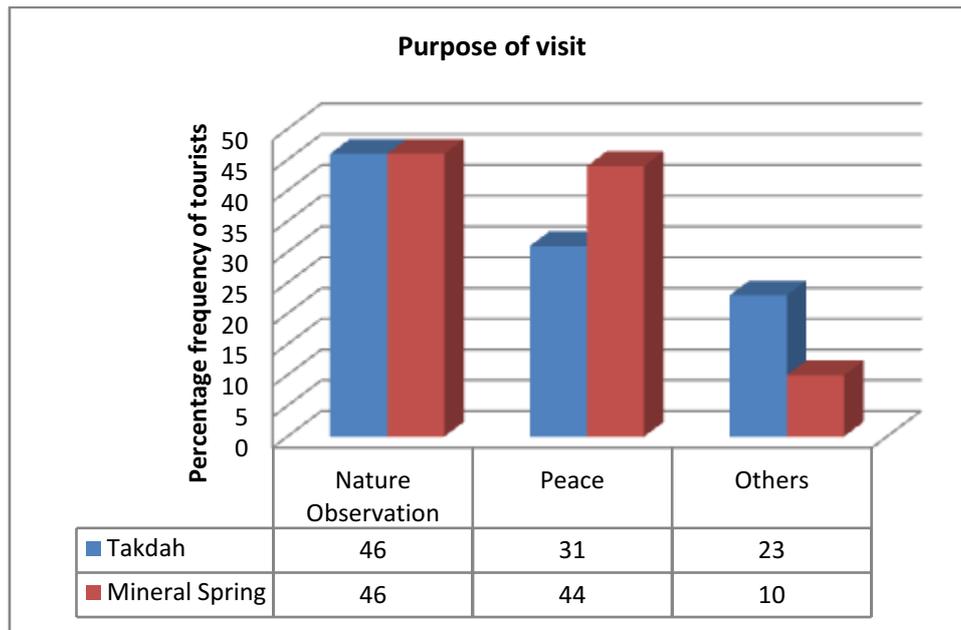
Purpose of Visit:

The purpose of visit varies within tourists. Different tourists have different purposes to visit different destinations. Some are nature lover, some love peace, some bird watching, some for photography, etc. Purpose of visit plays an important role in the evaluation of different components of tourism and different places.

Purpose of visit				
Destinations	Nature Observation	Peace	Others	Total
Takdah	92	62	46	200
% frequency	46	31	23	100
Mineral Spring	92	88	20	200
% frequency	46	44	10	100

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=400



N=400

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

It is revealed from the above data that most of the tourists coming to Takdah and Mineral Spring are nature and peace lovers. The same proportion of tourists i.e. 46% love Nature observation both at Takdah and Mineral Spring. 31% tourists at Takdah and 44% tourists at Mineral Spring love peace and peaceful environment free from noise and pollution.

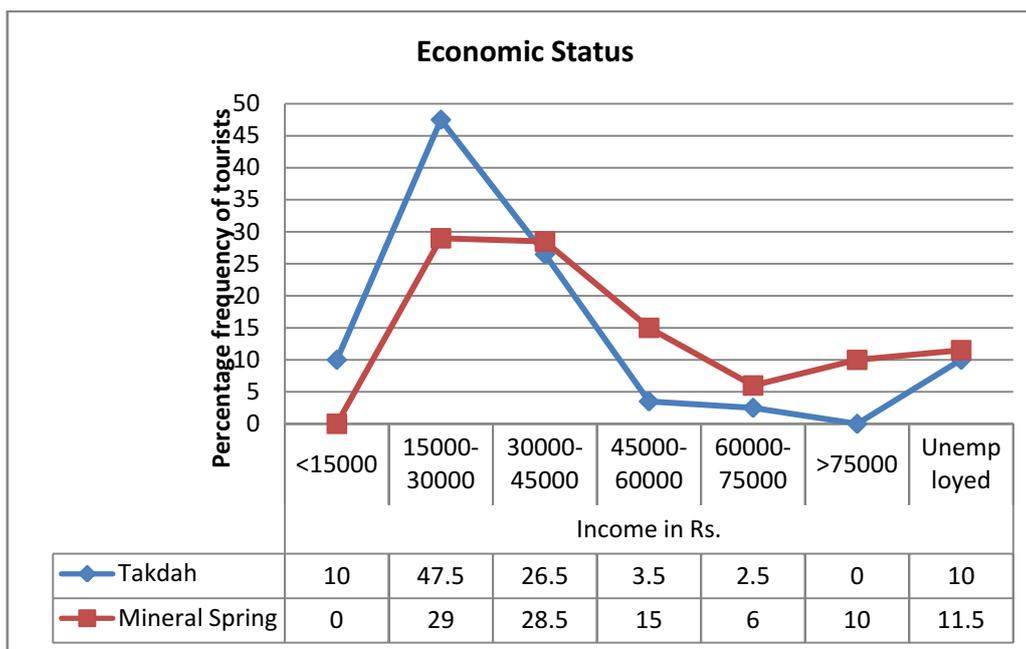
Economic Status:

The economic status of the tourists determines the capacity of the tourists to visit cheaper to costly tourist destinations with their varying per capita income. The more the income level, the more the costlier place they visit and more costly homestay they prefer with longer duration of stay.

Economic Status							
Destinations	Income in Rs.						
	<15000	15000-30000	30000-45000	45000-60000	60000-75000	>75000	Unemployed
Takdah	20	95	53	07	05	0	20
% frequency	10	47.5	26.5	3.5	2.5	0	10
Mineral Spring	0	58	57	30	12	20	23
% frequency	0	29	28.5	15	6	10	11.5

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=400



N=400

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

Most of the tourists coming to Takdah and Mineral Spring have good economic status. Out of 200, 20 (10%) tourists have earning less than 15000, 95 (47.5%) tourists have earnings between 15000 to 30000, 53 (26.5%) between 30000 to 45000, 7 (3.5%) between 45000 to 60000, 5 (2.5%) between 60000 to 75000, 0 (0%) more than 75000 and 20 (10%) were unemployed at Takdah.

No tourists have earning less than 15000, 58 (29%) tourists between 15000 to 30000, 57 (28.5%) between 30000 to 45000, 30 (15%) between 45000 to 60000, 12 (6%) between 60000 to 75000, 20 (10%) more than 75000 and 23 (11.5%) were unemployed at Mineral Spring.

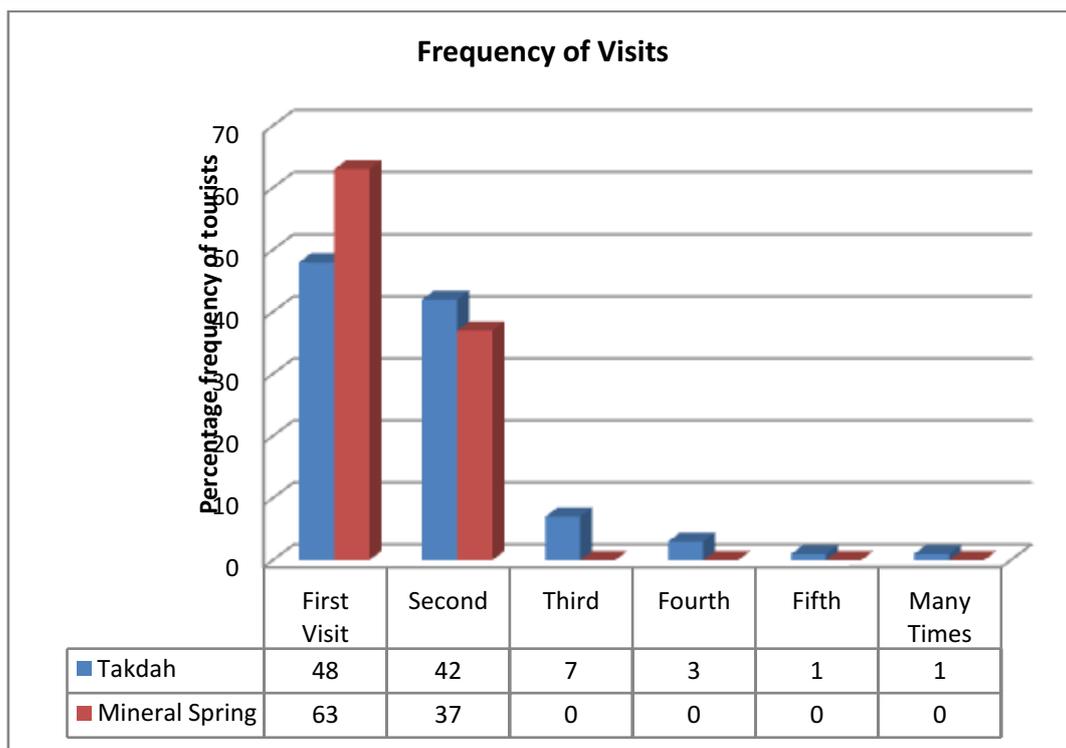
Frequencies of Visits:

Frequency of tourist provides a good idea about the popularity of particular rural tourism destinations. It helps to know about their love for nature, peace, different types of facilities or services enjoyed by a particular tourist at the same place. The frequency of tourist at a particular place proves the potentiality and efficiency of the place to attract tourist frequently. Tourists usually visit different places rather than focusing on a single tourist destination. The frequencies of tourists visiting a single place frequently more than one time clearly signifies the special interest of the tourists on the particular destination which has great attraction.

Frequencies							
Destinations	First Visit	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Many Times	Total
Takdah	96	84	14	6	2	2	200
% frequency	48	42	07	3	1	1	100
Mineral Spring	126	74	0	0	0	0	200
% frequency	63	37	0	0	0	0	100

(Source: Field Survey: 2014 – 2018)

N=400



The data revealed that most of the tourists 126 (63%) and 96 (48%) visited the rural areas of Takdah and Mineral Spring for the first time respectively, few 84 (42%) and 74 (37%) visited for second time at Takdah and Mineral Spring respectively and very few tourists visited the destinations more than two times. It is clear from the above table that some tourists visited Takdah more two times is because of cheap rates of homestay and friendly nature of owners and locals. Though the friendly nature of owners and locals, beautiful landscapes, pleasant weather attracted few tourists to visit Mineral Spring twice but no tourists visited more than two times because of costlier rates of homestays.

8. ROLE OF RURAL TOURISM IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

TAKDAH:

Takdah is a cantonment area located under Rangli-Rangliot block of Kurseong subdivision at an altitude of 1400 feet. Endowed with hanging bridge, orange garden, Teesta River, Rungli tea garden, rock climbing and many viewpoints Takdah has become a famous rural tourism destination.

There are many tourist destinations scattered in and around Takdah. Out of 75 homestays under Rangli Rangliot Homestay Owner Association, Takdah has 56 homestays and 14 homestays belongs to Lamahatta. Rural tourism at Takdah has become a good alternative livelihood source for local people.

Besides homestays, floriculture, forest parks has contributed towards the development of rural tourism at Takdah.

Floriculture is another hallmark of Takdah that has contributed in the growth of rural tourism in a very alarming rate. The region is known for the plantation of orchids of varied kinds. Orchids from this region are sold all over the country as well as in the global market. Some of the famous species that are synonymous with Takdah are appendicular cornuta, anthogoniumgracile, chasiloschistaparishii, eulophiaspectabilis, micropera obtuse, etc.

During our field survey, we even consulted the President of Rangli-Rangliot Homestay Owner Association (which has been formed in the year 2017 to address the grievance of all the homestays operating in the region), Mr. Narbuji Lama. He states that there is a long term agenda of the association to convert the region into a heritage location. He further states that rural tourism should not only focus as a business perspective, but it should have future prospects for the development of the entire rural area. The owner and local people should be giving best hospitality to the tourists. The relationship with tourists should be well maintained which will provide cultural, religion and language

exchange. Tourists come as a guest and returns as a family which signifies that a family and relationship bond with tourists keeps increasing.

Buddhiraj Rai, aged 46, a native of Takdah, is a driver, who owns a vehicle, feeds on rural tourism for his livelihood. He takes tourists for sight-seeing of the nearby areas and guides them as well with good and abundant information about the place. His good behavior and guidance has attracted tourists a lot who wants to visit Takdah again under his guidance.

During our field survey, we came in interaction with **M.K. Pradhan** who claims himself as the founder of rural tourism at Tinchuley, Takdah. As graduated in science, his interest was to conserve medicinal plant and as agro climatic condition favored environment he started rural tourism in Chhota Mangwa, Takdah in 1998. He could not attract any tourists till 2000. After continuous visit to Kolkata for many times he could bring eight tourists in 2001, since then his tourism started growing. Aged 65 he worked hard for the development of tourism. At the initial stage, he started ecotourism and started homestay tourism and now it is known as Bamboo Darjeeling Blossom Eco-tourism. With a view to sustainable development of rural tourism, he initiated his homestay which turned into an inspiration for whole of Takdah and Tinchuley and now it is a major source of income for the people. M.K. Pradhan's thinking was to upgrade his society through rural tourism. His interests for community development, environment protection, water conservation, electricity conservation helped the society to prosper for sustainable development. Around 25 families of ChhotaMangwa depend on his homestay for their livelihood. Apart from their salaries, they get extra incentives of Rs. 15000 per year along with medical facilities.

Another youth of Takdah, **DiwasGurung**, aged 27, who works at Shiwani Homestay states that rural tourism has helped villagers to improve their livelihood. They are getting opportunity to open up their own business, new homestays, increase their income level, and develop their skills due to rural tourism at Takdah. They need not go out of their place for employment opportunities, since rural tourism have given them opportunity to generate self-employment.

The following table shows the trend of homestays at Takdah:

Destination	Homestays	House turned into homestays	Government homestays	Private Homestays
Takdah	i) Abiraj Homestay ii) Anugrah Homestay iii) Gurung Guest House iv) Rai Resort	i) Darjeeling paradise ii) Shiwani Homestay iii) Norlha Homestay iv) Tinchuley Gurung's Homestay	i) SainoHeritage Guest House	i) Pradhan Homestay



Shiwani Homestay - Takdah



Traditional Kitchen (Chula)



Swimming pool



Buddhiraj Rai (driver)

9. MINERAL SPRING

Mineral Spring is a small rural hamlet located 16 Kms away from Darjeeling town. It comes under Panchayat area and is under the jurisdiction of Pulbazar Bijanbari block. The nearest market is Leborg and the village falls under the category of revenue village where majority of the population are farmers endowed with land documents. They are basically engaged in farming crops and vegetables which they sell in the nearby market. This is also supplemented by animal rearing. Cows, goats, pigs and poultry also support their day to day living. The total households of Mineral Spring are 40 as per 2011 census. Among these households, our study reveals that 30% of the people are engaged in rural tourism. Some have set up homestays, some are engaged as skilled workers, and some provide necessary ingredients in running the homestays while some have opted to operate taxi services.

Mineral Spring is a farming controlled area where villagers are engaged in cultivation of potatoes, millet, corn and vegetables.

Endowed with orange garden, peaceful environment, organic farming, Yanku River, trekking, scenic beauty, viewpoints Mineral Spring has become a famous rural tourism destination.

Local people do not have to go outside their stations. There is an income of 2, 3 lakhs during season time.

The rich heritage is given due importance and heritage of socio-cultural and ethical are well preserved and protected in Mineral Spring.

Rural tourism at Mineral Spring has become an alternative livelihood for local people.

Besides homestays, floriculture, forest parks have contributed towards the development of rural tourism at Mineral Spring.

Navin Tamang, a local native left his NGO and has started an organic farm in 2007 and named it as Tathagata Farm in his village, Mineral Spring.

The locals get great opportunity to earn their livelihood in connection with Tathagata Farm.

Tathagata Farm not only serves as a homestay in the village but also engages itself in the production of organic tea. The organic tea of this farm is even sold to the markets of Darjeeling. The expensive tea of this farm earns lots of profit. The local villagers are engaged in the processing of this tea manually. The purchase of farm's tea by the tourists has helped in the growth of socio economic livelihood of villagers. Navin's effort and villagers' enthusiasm have given them a good quality of life for sustainable living. Homestay and production of organic tea have given them alternative sources of earnings. Navin has been successful in encouraging villagers to convert their homes into homestays for tourists and earn a good livelihood. And now most of the houses have been converted into homestays.



Tathagata farm, Mineral Spring



Tent Stay



Traditional Kitchen (Chula)



Tea Garden



Tourists and the Owner



Relaxation Point

Rajesh Chettri, aged 36 remarks on the influence of rural tourism at Mineral Spring. He states that the rural tourism brought a great change in the livelihood of local people. The local people are benefitted economically, socially and culturally. He himself is looking after Tathagata farm which not only gave him employment but an opportunity to develop his skills. He was given Permaculture Training two times in a single year which has helped him to manage tourists, their problems and develop his skills in Permaculture. According to him, local people gets the opportunity to work as guide, trekkers, cooks, gardener, cleaner, service provider, care taker, etc. As the farm owns only one vehicle, the farm has to hire different vehicles and drivers from the village as well as surrounding villages. Thus, the drivers too are benefitted economically.

Pratima Sherpa, aged 32, female in support and favor of rural tourism stated that it gives lots of opportunities for villagers to sustain their livelihood. Her family sells vegetables to the farm which motivates to grow more crops and prosper agriculture. The price of vegetables that she sells is bit higher than the price of local market.

LendupLepcha, aged 34, male, owns the shop which is the only source of income for him. Most of the tourists who stays at Tathagata farm visit his shop for different fast food items especially delicious momo, aaloomimi, thukpa, chop, chicken wings, leg piece, chicken typho, etc. His friendly nature attracts more tourists to his shop. Lendup Lepcha thus, sustain his livelihood with the income that he earns from Tathagata farm. Thus rural tourism in Mineral Spring has given opportunity to many locals to earn their livelihood in a sustainable manner.

AmbarThami, aged 36, is a driver and runs vehicle for Tathagata farm when there is excess tourist. During peak season he earns more than 50,000 per month which can sustain his and his family's livelihood. Thus most of the drivers from Mineral Spring are benefitted by rural tourism.

The infrastructural development like roads, buildings, new homestays, shopping facilities, plantations, floriculture, etc. along with the introduction of tents, cottages, swimming pool, etc. in the rural area of Mineral Spring has brought a great development and which is thought to attain sustainable development in the area.

The organization of capacity building program in this destination has allowed the people to promote their area for tourism.

Socially, the place is changing. People's perspective on the oriented society is towards its development. All the people work together to develop their society and as they have face to face relation, the behavior of the local people remains very good with the tourists. A good interaction and relation with local people leads to welfare of the society. Rural tourism in this area has provided incentives to maintain local cultures preserving traditional arts and crafts. Rural tourism in this area has increased the opportunities for social contact and social exchange.

Culturally, the village gets opportunity to interact with new people, learn new thoughts, ideas and diverse form of life.

Most of the agricultural products are organic. The villagers are not allowed to use pesticides, chemical fertilizers in their field. They too are not allowed to use phenyl, bleaching powder. The organic products too are another attraction of the village. The agricultural products are orange, cardamom, brooms, etc.

The progress of village is immense. All the stakeholders are working united for attaining sustainable development.

Environmentally, all the stakeholders, tourists and the local people are very much aware of keeping the village clean and green. Most of the environments are well preserved. Afforestation and plantations are given preference. Rural tourism too has encouraged sustainable use of biological resources.

The rural area of Mineral Spring is thus getting much attraction from the tourists and leading towards sustainable development.

In order to attain sustainable development in rural areas, the opinions of residents, be it positive or negative, should be given due preference since they can provide best information on socio-cultural, economic and environmental matters.

The following is the scenario of homestays at Mineral Spring:

Destination	Homestays	House turned into homestays	Government homestays	Private Homestays
Mineral Spring	i) Tathagata Farm ii) Gautam Paradise iii) Humro Homestay			

10. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that both the rural tourism areas Takdah and Mineral Spring have been able to develop their areas with the introduction of tourism and are moving towards sustainable development. The local people are becoming aware about the positive and negative impacts of tourism. To some extent rural tourism has been able to create employment opportunities. Rural tourism has a great future perspective in the rural areas of Darjeeling and can surely be an option for another income generation business.

All the stakeholders and local people should be aware of the environmental and social consequences of rural tourism.

All the owners, stakeholders should work on and progress on 3 keys of sustainable development: **making it more economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally responsible.**

REFERENCES

- Ahamed Mustak (2018). "Rural Tourism As A Sustainable Development Alternative: An Analysis With Special Reference To BallavpurDanga Near Santiniketan, West Bengal (India)", *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*
- Aslam M.S.M., AwangWahidinKhairil, Othman BintiHj. Nor'ain. (2014). "Issues and Challenges in Nurturing Sustainable Rural Tourism Development", *Tourism, Leisure and Global Change*, Volume 1 (2014).
- AggarwalPrateek, (1999) *Tourism and Economic Growth and Development*, Mohit Publications, New Delhi.
- AnejaPuneet, (2006). "Sustainable Tourism Development Challenges Ahead".*Kuruksheetra*.
- Badan B. S and Harish Bhatt, (2006) *Sustainable Tourism*. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- BandeUsha, (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Mountains".*Yojana*, Vol.24, No.15 (August).
- Bharathbhushan E. K., (2005). "Sustainable Tourism Development". *Kerala Calling*, Vol.50, No.16, October.
- Bhatia A. K., (1991). *Tourism Development: Principles and Practices*. Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi.
- Bojnec Stefan (2010). "Rural Tourism, Rural Economy Diversification, and Sustainable Development", *AcademicaTuristica*, Year 3, No. 1-2, July 2010
- BurjaCamelia, BurjaVasile (2014). "Sustainable Development of Rural Areas: A Challenge for Romania", *Environmental Engineering and Management Journal*, Vol.13, No. 8, August 2014
- Caprihan,Vijai, Kumar,Shiva, Kirthi, (2004). "Eco-Tourism in India".*South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.12, No.2 (Jan-June)
- Chamy Anthony, (2001). "Accessible Sustainable Ecotourism: Necessary Market Adjustments in a New Age of Travel". *Ecotoursonline.ca*.
- Chand,Mohinder, Ravi,Bhushan, (2005). "Rural Tourism: A New Approach to Sustainability". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.9, No.2 (Jan-June).
- ChaturvediDevesh, (2010). "Tourism in India: Ensuring Buoyancy and Sustainability". *Yojana*, Vol.13, No.8, May.
- Chawla Ramesh (2006). *Ecology and Tourism Development*, First Edition, SumitEnterprises, New Delhi, India.
- Chettri, N. (1998). "Impact of Tourism on Biodiversity: A Case Study from the Sikkim Himalayas, India". *South Asian Perspectives in Eco-tourism and Conservation*, Gangtok: Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim.
- D' Souza Rohin (2009).*Rural Development Through Rural Tourism*, Salesian Journal, KalpaGriha Publication, New Delhi, India.
- Das, Niranjana, H. J. Syiemlieh, (2004). "Eco-Tourism in Assam".*Yojana*, Vol.8, No.4 (July)

- Gursoy D., Jurowski C., Uysal M. (2002). "Resident Attitudes: A Structural Modeling Approach". *Annals of Tourism Research*.
- Drgulanesu Irina Virginia, DrutuMaricica (2012). "Rural Tourism for Local Economic Development", *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, Volume 2, Special Issue 1 (2012), pp. 196-203
- Hall Michael and Alan Addison (1999). "Sustainable Tourism-A Geographical Perspective". *International Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 2, Issue 5.
- Henderson, J.C., A. Koh, S. Sterlyn & M. Y. Sallim (2001). "Urban Environmental and Nature-Based Attractions: Green Tourism in Singapore". *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 26(3).
- Hill Jennifer and Timgale (2000). "Ecotourism and Environmental Sustainability Principles and Practice". Research Gate Publication, Ashgate, Bristol(U.K.).
- Hunziker W., Krapf K. (1942). "General Tourist Theory". *The Outline of General Tourism Science*, Vol. 26, No. 3.
- K.G. Mohanlal, (2007). "Ecotourism in Kerala". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.18, No.1 (July-Dec 2007).
- Kandari and Ashish Chandra (2003). "Tourism, Bio-diversity Sustainable Development". Isha Books Publication, New Delhi, Vol. 4, Issue 3.
- Katoch Amit and Gautam Prashant (2015). "Rural Tourism as a Medium for Local Development in Himachal Pradesh: The example of Villages around Dharamshala (Kangra)". *South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage*, Vol. 8, No.1.
- Kohli, M.S. (2002). "Eco-Tourism and Himalayas". *Yojana*, Vol.24, No.15 (August).
- Kumar, Swain Sampad, Mohan, (2007). "Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Development-A Case Study of Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary in Orissa". *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS)*, Vol.7, No.2 (Jan-June).
- Kuşat Nurdan (2016), "The Role Of Rural Tourism In Rural Development: The Case Of Turkey", *Journal of Economics and Administrative Sciences*, Volume: XVII, Issue: 2 Year-December, 2016 Pages: 11-21
- Lepp A. (2007). "Residents' attitudes towards tourism in Bigodi village, Uganda". Elsevier, March (2007) Volume 8, No.8.
- Liu, J. C., Sheldon, P. J. and T. Var, (1987). "Resident perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism". *Annals of Tourism Research*.
- Malek Abdul, Anand H., (1993). "Economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism in Socotra Island", *Southern Economist*, Vol.48, No.4.
- Martin S. R., and S.F. McCool, (1992). "Attitude of Montana Residents towards Tourism Development". Research Report 23. Missoula. MT: The University of Montana, School of Forestry, Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research 21.
- Mili Nitashree, (2012). "Rural Tourism Development: An Overview of Tourism in the Tipam Phakey Village of Naharkhatia in Dibrugarh District, Assam, India". *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Vol. 2. Issue 12.
- Mrksa Milutin, Gajic Tamara (2014). "Opportunities for Sustainable Development of Rural Tourism in The Municipality Of VRBAS", *Economics of Agriculture* 1/2014, UDC: 338-44(1-22)
- Murti, S.K & Kumar S. (1989). *Tourists Activities Causing Depletion of Plant Wealth in Jammu & Kashmir, In Impacts of Tourism on Mountain Environment*, (ed. S.C. Singh) Research India Publications.
- N. Jayapalan, (1984). *An Introduction to Tourism*. Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, Delhi (1984).

- Negi, Jagmohan. (1990). *Tourism and Travel*, Gitangali Publishing House. New Delhi.
- Nomani Abuzar and Khan Rais Kamraj Mohd.(2015). "Human Resource development in tourism Industry – An Analytical Framework", *South Asian Journal for Tourism and Heritage*, Vol. 8.No. 1.
- Noori Kamran, Zand Farhad (2013). "The Role of Rural Tourism in Rural Sustainable Development According to the SWOT Method (Case Study: Kermanshah Province villages)", *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, Vol, 4 (9), 2013
- Oralgaci Monika (2010). "Rural Tourism Sustainable Development in Hungary and Romania", *Quasteus Multidisciplinary Research Journal*.
- Panda, Tapan, K., Sitikantha, Mishra, & Bivaraj, Bhusan Parida, (1992). *Tourism Management: the Socio-Economic and Ecological Perspective*. New Delhi: University Press.
- Pandya, M.T. & Oza, G. M. (1994). "Biodiversity for the masses". *Indian Forester*, Vol 20.
- Pearce, J., (1980). "Host community acceptance of foreign tourists: strategic considerations", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 7(2)
- Pérez, E.A., & Nadal, J.R. (2005). "Host Community Perceptions a Cluster Analysis". *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32 (4)
- R.M. Patil, (2010). "Tourism and Economic Development of India". *Southern Economist*, Vol.32, No.12, August 15.
- Raj Aparna, (1999). *Sustainability, Profitability and Successful Tourism*. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- Raj,Sundar, T. (2009). "Ecotourism and Sustainable Development in Kerala". *The Researcher*, Vol. IV, No.2 (November)
- Rajan.J. & Sabu K. Thankappan, (2001). "Impact of tourism on the environment of Munnar". *Review of Social Sciences*, The Kerala academy of social sciences, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Raju Sarngadharan. M, (2000). "Tourism and Sustainable Economic Development: Indian and Global Perspectives". University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Ristic Lela, Vujicic Milan, Lekovic Milan (2016). "Tourism As A Factor Of Sustainable Development Of Rural Areas Belonging To Rudnicka Morava", *Economics of Agriculture 2/2016*, UDC: 338.48-44(1-22)
- Santhosh Yadav, (2010). "Ecotourism: problems and Prospects". *Yojana*, Vol.18, No.9, January 15.
- Samantaray Lenka Lopamudra (2016). "Sustainable rural tourism: An enabler for the trend of reverse migration in Odisha", *International Journal of Applied Research*, 2(1), 2016
- Satish Chandra, (2003). *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development*, Rajat Publications, New Delhi.
- Singh, Ashwini, (2007). "Rural Tourism: Tool for Rural Employment". *Kuruksheetra*, Vol.14, No.7 (June).
- Udovc Andrej, Perpar Anton (2007) "Role of Rural Tourism for Development of Rural Areas". *Journal of Central European Agriculture*, Vol. 8, No. 2.

WEBSITES ACCESSED

<http://www.jstor.org>

<http://www.darjeeling.gov.in>

<http://www.wikipedia.org>

<http://www.bookings.edu/research/speeches>