

AN OVERVIEW OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

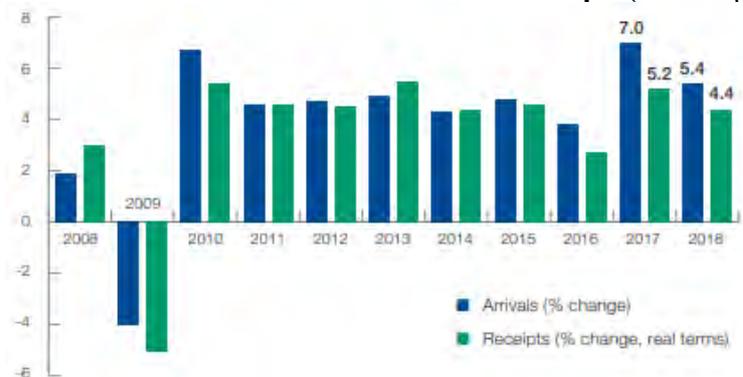
Chapter I:

AN OVERVIEW OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

1.1 Introduction:

According to United Nations World Tourism organization (UNWTO), "Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes." According to UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) 2019 report, foreign tourists' arrival (FTA) has grown by 5 percent to reach the mark of 1.4 billion. The upsurge in the FTA is driven by technological advances, a strong global economy, growing middle class in emerging economies, a new business model, affordable cost of traveling and e-visa facilitation (UNWTO, 2019). The tourism sector has strategically positioned itself for employment opportunities, poverty alleviation, environment protection, and multicultural peace and understanding. Moreover, the export earnings generated through the tourism sector has also grown to US\$1.7 trillion. Besides that, poverty alleviation has become a worldwide challenge to uplift the vulnerable sections of society. Tourism offers as a most viable and sustainable development solution leading to employment generation and foreign exchange mobilization to the developed and least developed countries.

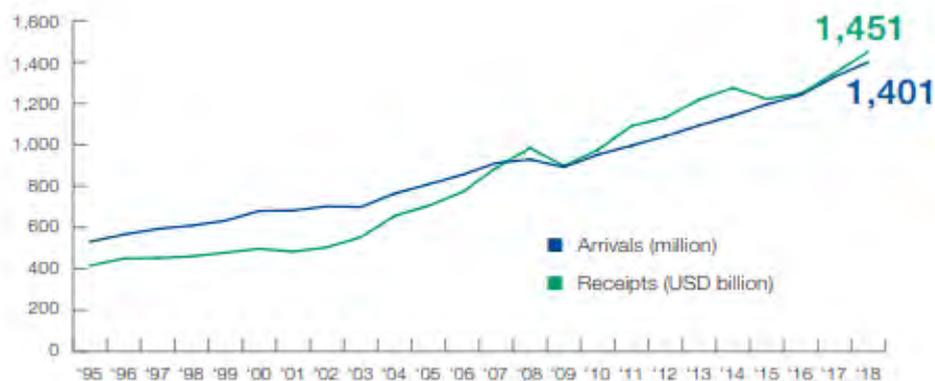
Figure: 1.1
International tourist arrivals and tourism receipts (% change)



Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), July 2019

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Figure: 1.2
International tourist arrivals (million) and tourism receipts (USD billion)



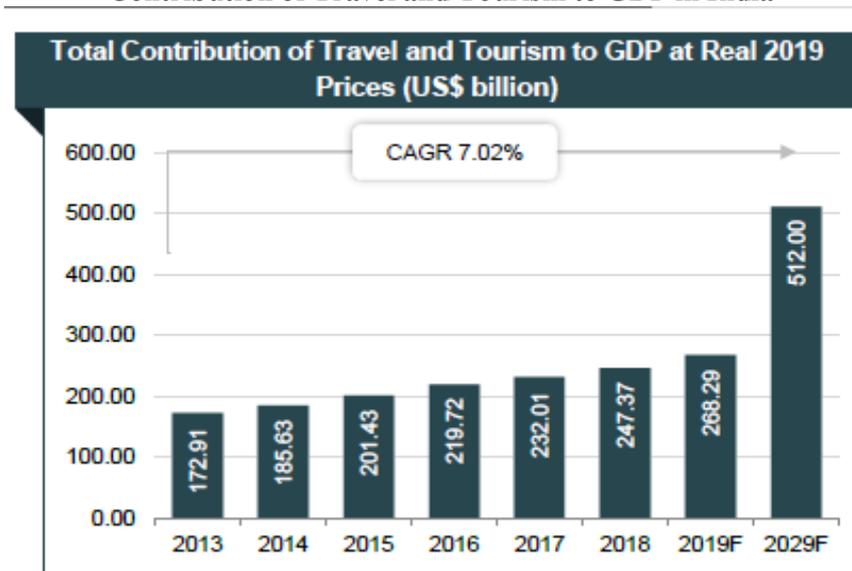
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), July 2019.

As per the ministry of tourism, the government of India report (2019-2020), the tourism sector is positioning itself as a driving force for economic development. Besides that, the tourism sector also improves the quality of peoples' lives through the capacity of building a large-scale employment generation. According to the report, the augmentation of infrastructure, easing of the visa regime, assurance of standard quality in service, projection of the country as 365 days' tourist destination, promotion of sustainable tourism are the key areas that need to constantly work to increase and facilitate tourism in India. The tourism sector is positioning as a major driver of economic growth, harnessing its direct multiplier effect on employment and poverty alleviation in a sustainable manner by the active participation of the segments of society which is the main objective of the tourism policy of the government of India. The tourism sector is the largest service sector generating employment and ensuring inclusive growth by bringing the marginalized section of the society into the mainstream. According to the Ministry of Tourism, the government of India 2020, the Foreign Tourists Arrival (FTA) in India during 2019 were 10.90 million registering a growth of 3.2% as compared to the same rate of growth in the previous year. The Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) from the tourism sector in India in terms of the US \$ during 2019 was US\$29.962 million with a growth of 4.8% as compared to

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the same growth in the previous year. After the implementation of the e-visa policy introduced in December 2019, the arrival of foreign tourists has increased drastically. A total of 2.93 million foreign tourists arrived on an e-tourist visa generating growth of 23.6% during 2019 as per the report.

Figure: 1.3
Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP in India



Source: World Travel & Tourism Council's Economic Impact 2019
Collected from IBEF Report, 2020

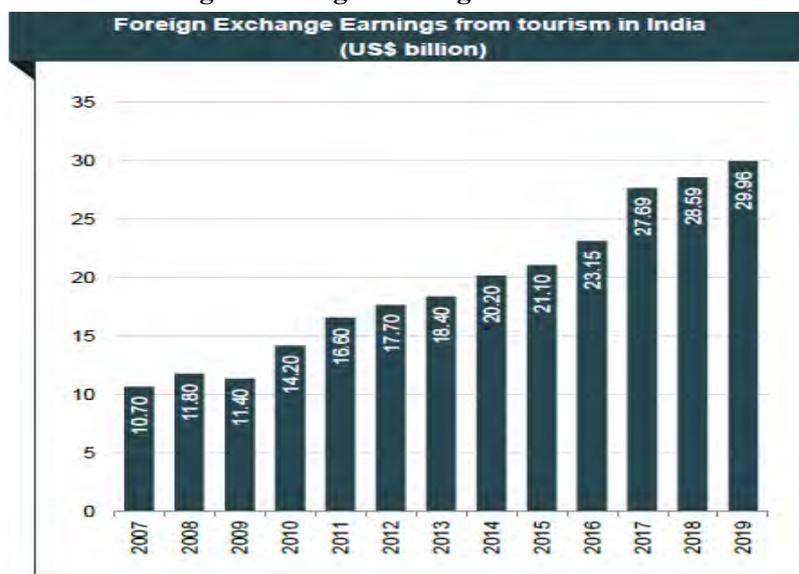
According to the IBEF (Indian Board Equity Foundation) 2020 report, India is ranked eighth in 2018 contributing US\$247 billion dollars directly from the travel and tourism sector to its GDP. It is expected to reach US\$512 billion dollars in the year 2029 as per the report. The CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of the total contribution from the year 2013 to 2028 is expected to be 7.02%. During 2019, the foreign tourist arrival (FTA) in India accounted for 10.89 million achieving a growth rate of 3.20 percent year on year as per the IBEF report. It is expected to increase the 7.96 percent of CGAR by 2025.

Figure: 1.4
Foreign tourists' arrivals in India



Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India
Collected from IBEF Report, 2020

Figure: 1.5
Foreign Exchange Earning from tourism in India



Source: Ministry of Tourism, Economic Times
Collected from IBEF Report, 2020

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India has earned foreign exchange of US\$29.96 billion from tourism recording a year-to-year growth of 4.80 percent during 2019. India has witnessed growth at a CAGR of 8.96 percent during 2007-19.

1.2 Rural tourism in India

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India started the scheme of rural tourism in the year 2003-04 with the aim to showcase art, rural life, culture, and heritage to the tourists at various locations in the villages. It is intended to empower the local people socially and economically facilitating them to interact with the tourists. On 28th February 2011, the government of India sanctioned 169 sites in the 28 states/union territories in India. These sites have been winning accolades in the international circuits as well. The development of rural tourism is one of the useful concepts for a country like India where nearly 74% of the population are the inhabitants of 7 million villages (Incredible India).

Rural tourism is the form of tourism that highlights specific characteristics of rural places such as lifestyles, cultures, traditions, customs, and heritage. While rural tourism helps in uplifting the local people socially and economically, it also enables the interaction between local people and tourists for the enrichment of experience. Fredrick (1992) described the distinctive features of rural tourism as experience-oriented in sparsely populated areas, primarily in a natural environment; synchronize with local events, and emphasizing the protection of local culture, heritage, and traditions. Rural tourism includes the range of activities, services, and amenities provided by farmers and rural people to attract tourists to their area in order to gain extra income for their business (Ratz and Puczko, 1998). Rural tourism is a complex multifaceted activity and includes farm-based holidays, eco-tourism, walking, climbing, exciting activities like sports, health tourism, hunting, fishing, learning travel, heritage, and ethnic tourism (Kunwar, 1997). Rural tourism plays a paramount role in economic development in the nook and corner of the country by offering multi-faced activities to tourists such as tourism

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destination including accommodation, the market of local handicrafts, and other ancillaries' activities. It differs from other forms of tourism in terms of opportunity for observation and learning as it provides tourists to know about the conservation of culture and the perpetual sustainability of communities and natural resources.

1.3 Growth and Scenario of homestay tourism in India

India has become one of the fastest-growing countries in the world in respect of national income. The tourism sector has also contributed substantially to the national income. It helps to reduce the balance of payment gap and ensure inclusive growth in the country which is one of the objectives of the five-year plan in India. Homestay is one of the rural tourism products where the tourists are allowed to stay in private homes, provide homemade cuisine, experience the natural beauty of a serene environment, culture, heritage lifestyle, and customs of local people. In this programme, visitors get a chance to observe the customs, cultures, and values of local people, which enables them to experience the taste of rural life in a pristine environment. It is an alternative form of accommodation that involves allowing tourists to stay with selected families where they can interact and experience the daily life of these families as well as experience the host's culture (Abu, 2009). Lynch et al., (2009) had defined and broadened the concept of homestay tourism as a private commercial home which would allow the interaction between the hosts and the guests. Rural homestays allow the guests to uncover into the daily lives of village folks and serve as a medium to experience the local community in a way that differs from the conventional setting of tourism (Dolezal, 2011).

The homestay term was first coined in America where the students of other countries studying in American institutions used to stay with the local family as a family member in the nearby areas. In the past, homestay tourism is developing in countries like Malaysia, Thailand, South Africa, Nepal, and so on. The different concept of homestays in different countries is shown in Table 1.1

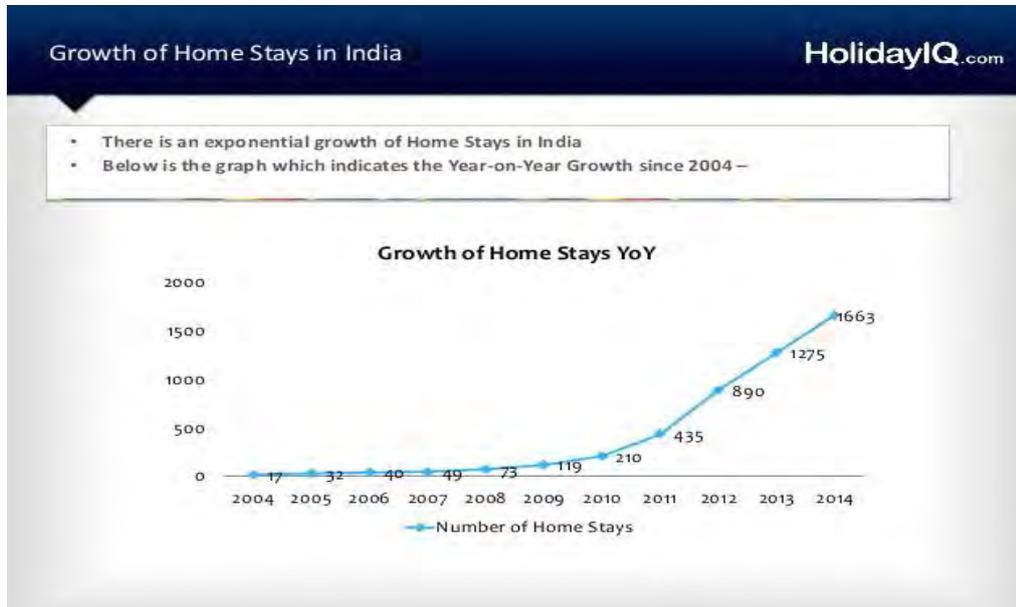
Table 1.1
Homestay concept in different countries

Country	Existing Concept
United States	Agricultural home stay and Educational homestay
Canada	Cultural home-stay, Heritage homestay
Australia	Farm stay, Academic stay with locals
South Korea	Educational homestay
South Africa	Leisure stay
New Zealand	Farm stay and Cottage homestay
Philippine	Cultural Home stay
Thailand	Student home stay and volunteer homestay
Indonesia	Cultural Home stay and Leisure homestay

Source: MohdZaki et al. (2011)

Figure 1.6

Year to year growth of homestays in India



Source: HolidayIQ.com

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The Ministry of Tourism has introduced the concept of an alternative form of accommodation specifically, Bed and Breakfast/ Homestay establishment scheme as part of its globally acclaimed Incredible India campaign in India 2001-2002. As per source HolidayIQ.com, the number of homestay units has increased substantially from 17 to 1663 over the years from 2004 to 2014. The basic idea of the scheme is to provide clean and affordable accommodation to domestic as well as foreign tourists providing them to experience the culture and traditions of local people including local cuisine. There is an immense gap between the demand and supply forces in the accommodation sector in a country. The availability of hotel rooms is not sufficient to meet the demand of the visitors, especially during peak seasons. Apart from hotels other forms of accommodation are indispensable to sustain the smooth running of tourism in different parts of Indian states. India still requires a lot of effort to upgrade the quality and quantity of accommodation to make the availability for the growing trend of demand of the visitors. The changes in taste and preferences of contemporary tourists have resulted to gain momentum to evolve the bouquet of choices of budget-friendly accommodation. According to the Statistical Year Book of the Ministry of Statistics and programme implementation (GOI 2013), the number of government-approved hotels was 2483 as of 31st December 2013 with about 1,18,000 rooms. The number of homestays under the Bread and Breakfast scheme accounts for one-fourth share in the total number of hotels but accounts for only a two percent share in the total number of rooms. This is attributed to its smaller size as it is run by family-based facilities. Reynolds and Emenheiser (1996) in their study have suggested the need of an alternative form of accommodation which plays a significant role in the hospitality industry. An Incredible change has been taking place in the remote places of India. The aloof destinations on the map which seemed to have lost in the race of development of the country are coming to the forefront in the tourism industry. Several homestays running in India especially in the villages have opened up their homes to visitors. It not only encourages community involvement but also allows the villagers to develop tourism in a sustainable way.

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The recent concept of homestay is associated with the rural tourism product in almost all the countries which gives an opportunity to the rural people to integrate into the tourism sector. This helps the local people to uplift their socio-economic conditions who are living at the bottom of the pyramid. The developing countries are continuously giving emphasis to ensure inclusive growth benefiting the poor people in the villages and offbeat areas. One of the ways to include weaker sections of people in rural areas in the vicinity of tourism is through homestay program. Homestay tourism may be considered a major avenue when it comes to the reduction of rural poverty. Other adventurous activities are also associated with this form of tourism such as trekking, cultural tourism, agro-tourism, health tourism, and eco-tourism (Devkota, 2010). The activities associated with the homestay depend upon the suitability of the destination. Trekking is suitable for the hilly region, agricultural activities are suitable for the place where the people are engaged in agricultural activities, health tourism relates to the climatic condition of the place and availability of herbal plants, and so on. In homestay tourism, profitability is determined by the demand for the destination and the availability of homestays to cater a large number of visitors. The growth of homestay is based on the commoditization of both the local environment and culture. This provides financial incentives to the local community for the conservation of the environment and their culture (Laurie et al., 2005). People living in the rural areas surrounded by homestays should safeguard and preserve the culture and tradition of rural folks which is one of the most important factors to increase the footfall of tourists in the destination. Homestay tourism provides a market to sell local products such as agricultural products, and local handicrafts (Budhathoki, 2013). The local people are economically benefitted by engaging themselves in the homestay ventures either directly or indirectly. People in rural areas are, in general, facing unemployment problems and it is difficult for them to meet even basic amenities. The new and innovative concept of homestay would definitely reduce the hardship of people who are mostly the marginalized section of society. Homestay tourism

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would act as a tool for the development of rural areas in every dimension including the economic, cultural, social, and environmental spheres (Singh, 2014).

India is a country where a major part of the area is covered by rural destinations. The number of tourists' arrival has increased considerably in the past few years after the massive promotion of 'Incredible India' campaign. Even domestic tourists are coming out of their shells and started visiting nooks and corners of the country. Following the introduction of the Break and Breakfast scheme under the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of India, the concept of homestay tourism has been growing in different parts of the country. Not only foreign tourists, but even many local tourists prefer staying in the comfort of a homely environment where one is not embraced by too many protocols. It has enabled tourists to enjoy their stay in these homestays and scope to learn local culture and traditions. One can clearly say that these homestays definitely offer a homely feel away from home. Many of the states in India has taken initiatives to promote the homestay tourism in the rural places to explore the untouched resources attached to the natural and pristine environment far away from the congested cities.

In terms of cuisine and local traditions, the unorganized homestay segment has been gaining popularity in the Indian tourism industry for the friendly and incredible hospitality by the homestay owners especially family members. The low level of investment for the commencement has encouraged a large number of people to initiate the homestay venture as compared to other hotels and resorts. The additional room which already exists within a personal property involves no expenditure or little investment for renovation to ensure minimum level of satisfaction to the visitors. The concept of homestay is extremely different from the hotels and resorts as they run their business on profit motive and the former primarily acts as a source of livelihood for the local people. Visitors nowadays are always lookout and prefer to explore themselves into offbeat areas to learn about the destination. This makes the homestay a demand-driven stay for the visitors. The idea of staying with a local family and

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learning about the destination and culture from the local people at a reasonable tariff is immensely preferable by the visitors. In India, the growth of homestay tourism might be intensifying the competition to the hotels in respect of profit motive, however, it still cannot be considered as a potential threat to the hotels as the existence of homestay basically focuses on the rural places where the establishment of hotels and resorts are almost nil. Both are setting up their own markets based on their core offering. Homestay offers accommodation at a reasonable rate as a rescue during the peak season where the hotels are unable to manage the uncontrollable influx of tourists. Despite the future prospect of homestay ventures in India is tremendous, more efforts need to be made in order to create greater demand in the tourism market. Currently, it is only through word of mouth or minimal online presence, the existence of homestay is steadily getting popular. The central government and respective state governments have to take the responsibility to support this niche form of rural tourism segment within the state and across the country.

Unity is diversity is the concept that has integrated Indians to get united despite being a variety of cultures and traditions. The Indians are engrossed in the varieties of cuisine based on different traditions and customs. Basically, the real traditions and customs are not practiced in the big hotels and resorts located in the centralized cities and towns as it offers the tourists the similar hospitality and services. The rural areas which are distanced from the dean and bustle of congested areas are rich in traditions and cultural practicing. Homestay tourism focuses on the rural areas where the visitors are given opportunities to observe and witness the practice of the culture and traditions of the local people.

India is a developing country; most of the people who live in villages in the rural areas basically sustain their livelihood through agricultural and other agricultural allied activities. Some of the states are still practicing the method of terrace and organic farming which has also become the center of attraction to boost up the number of visitors to the destination. Every Indian state has

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its own uniqueness in respect of cultural practice, traditions, and customs based on their past antiquity. Tourism sources believe that the search for new and unspoiled culture in the hills has lured tourists to land in the villages in India. Changing trend in tourism shifting from town to villages, many villagers in India has applied for the registration to run homestay units in Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh homestay association has reported having vacant hotels even during the peak season and the changing preference of tourists in recent times. Homestay accommodation is cheaper than the big resorts and hotels in the cities. Tourists are exploring themselves in the untouched areas to experience the calm and pristine environment and observe the idea of growing grains and green vegetables in their own land. The homestay business not only uplifts the socio-economic condition of the operators in the villages in Himachal Pradesh but also creates the scope to market the agricultural and dairy products of the villagers.

Kerala State Homestay and Tourism Association is a consortium of homestay providers and is also entrusted with the effective functioning of the other tourism activities in respect of service and competitiveness. Kerala is the first Indian state to implement the concept of homestay tourism. The state is blessed by the plethora of natural resources coupled with the rich culture and traditions of the indigenous people. The charm of this unique destination attracts tourists not only from another state but also around the globe. To meet the demand of the visitors as per their tastes and preferences, the number of homestays in Kerala is increasing day by day as it helps the tourists to experience the multifarious culture of the state. Traditional homemade cuisine is the main attraction of visitors. Visitors are also allowed to take part in household activities to make them feel a homely environment.

As reported by homestay.com 2014 report, the global homestay market is valued to be \$15 billion. The number of homestays in Goa which is a crucial tourism hub in India is negligible but the scope of growing the number of homestays in the state is enormous. As per industry reports, the growth of homestay units has been increasing year by year witnessing from 17 to

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1,663 in the year 2015. Even though the contribution in accommodation is just 5% nationally against 67% share in hotels and resorts. In Goa, operators are trying to bring back the charm of the place very often going back to the Indo-Portuguese era. Apart from adding in the elements of art and solid wooden furniture, homestays are specializing themselves to provide authentically Portuguese cuisine. The old charm of Goa lures the vacationers to have footfalls leading to the need for more places to provide unique experiences.

The recent media has reported the government initiative to those who offer homestay services to the tourists keeping the theme of '*Atithi Devo Bhava*'. The central government has planned to frame the provision for the issuance of licenses to those who are engaged in running homestay services providers and extend several tax benefits to them. Non-commercial charges would be applied for electricity and water bills. This would give more scope to the service providers to upgrade their services. The relaxation announced by the government has a positive impact on this service sector. This encourages more people to enter the market, plugging the shortage of hotels room across the country. Exemptions incentives would empower service providers economically. Owners would be able to invest more and add properties and eventually increases the quality of services to the hosts. There are plenty of Mutual benefits between hosts and the guests in this form of accommodation. The hospitality of services is provided in a family setup. Apart from affordable accommodation than hotels, visitors get an opportunity to learn and know about the local culture and traditions. It gives unique experiences to the tourists as most of the destinations are located in the pristine rural areas free from the dean and bustle of city life. It becomes a visitor's delight to taste the local homemade food apart from experiencing the local mesmerizing scenery.

1.4 Development of homestay Tourism in adjoining areas of Darjeeling hills

The onset of homestay tourism in the tourism sector has added splendor in Darjeeling hills which itself is one of the world-class well-known tourism hubs for the last couple of years. The

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form of tourism highlighting the rural life, culture, heritage at rural places which supports the host's (local) community socially as well as economically which also enables the host and the guests for more experience and enrichment. Homestay tourism is flourishing in the Darjeeling hills and gaining popularity in rural areas empowering the local economy of the region (Bhutia, 2016).

The unique experience of rural tourism in Darjeeling hills which is closely connected to nature with various tribes and clans finds its roots in nature. The tremendous success of rural tourism depends on several factors such as its location, mild climate, and availability of endangered flora and fauna. Scenic attraction, favorable climatic condition, the sincerity of local people as well as the welcoming attitudes of the local people drives the tourists to visits across many villages. Darjeeling is renowned for the highest quality tea-producing region in the world which allures visitors to visit the place at least once in a lifetime during the plucking season. The breathtaking view of Kanchenjunga covered with misty snow peaks has further added to the mesmerizing beauty of this place.

Darjeeling is one of the northern districts in West Bengal state and the landmark is based on three T's i.e. Tea, Timber, and Tourism. It is situated in the northern part of Bengal at an elevation of 6700 feet from sea level. Majestic view of Kanchenjunga, third largest peak in the world and Darjeeling Himalayan Railway declared as a world heritage site by UNESCO has had attracted an innumerable footfall of tourists during the year. Most of the people in Darjeeling depend for their livelihood in the tourism sector from porters to hotel owners. From colonial times, it was valued by the British to make it a summer capital because of its favorable climatic conditions even during the summer season. In the nineteenth century the British had made Darjeeling a sanatorium with its favorable climatic condition and too added by the majestic view of Kanchenjunga, gradually emerged as a queen of hills attracting the tourists not only from the country but also from the abroad.

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The perennial water problems and excessive congestion in town areas in Darjeeling have shifted the attention of tourists to the rural and outskirts areas. The potential of rural areas in the hills has gained admiration for the attraction sites. The footfall of tourists are 60 to 70 percent during the months of April, May, June, and October. The tremendous rush of tourists during these months creates the sanitation problem, hike in conveyance cost, and stiff rise in the accommodation. Despite many challenges, it cannot be ruled out that the occupancy in the hills lies in the tourism sector. If proper planning and coordination are ensured, there is an immense scope of tourism with respect to income and balanced regional development.

The immense footfalls of tourists in the Darjeeling hills and adjoining areas have upsurged the demand for accommodation in the place, especially during the peak season. To meet the requirement of demand, homestay tourism has been gaining recognition in rural places. The growth of homestay tourism in rural places has encouraged the local people to initiate the venture. To meet sustainable livelihood, the agricultural activities are not only sufficient to meet the requirement in rural places. The scenic beauty, clean environment, culture, tradition, and local events attract tourists to rural destinations. The people who are economically backward would also get an opportunity to start homestay businesses. Initiation of a homestay venture does not require a huge capital investment. The simple modification of private homes and the expansion of the capacity of the room are sufficient to start a venture. This form of tourism also gives exposure to people for economic advancement and livelihood generation. As the agricultural production in the hills is being deteriorated in the region, homestay tourism has become the mode of resort for the rural people. The rural people have started the alternative form of occupation which is suitable for their livelihood sustainability. The practice of homestay tourism started to counter the balance between agricultural deterioration hampering livelihood and homestay tourism augmenting livelihood opportunities. Homestay tourism could be promoted by the local people's collaboration with the different tourism stakeholders. Private tour operators have been playing a paramount role to promote this form of tourism in Darjeeling

and adjoining areas. Until and unless the footfall of tourists is nil, the sustainability of homestay tourism becomes zero. Hence, private tour operators have played a crucial role to bring the destination into the limelight in the eyes of the visitors.

There are different types of homestay prevalent in Darjeeling hills:

1.4.1 Community-based homestay

Community-based homestay can be defined as rural tourism where the local communities are given an opportunity to take part in the homestay venture. The aim of community-based homestay tourism is to provide a source of income to the local people encouraging the visitors to visit the community and allowing the local people to provide accommodation to the visitors. Community-based tourism is a viable method for the development of local communities because it empowers the local people to determine the community development process, take initiatives to protect the environment, and promote awareness through the cultural exchange (Janie, 2009). The local people earn as a service provider or as an employee in a homestay venture. At least part of the income earned from the tourists is kept aside to provide benefits to the community as a whole. Community-based tourism enables the tourists to explore a new habitat and wildlife, celebrates and respects the traditional culture, traditions, and customs of the locality. Through this tourism, the people are aware of the commercial and social value placed on their natural and cultural heritage and adoptive to the conservation of resources of the destination. There is cohesion among the villagers to jointly promote the untouched rural places and exert the potentials of the destination. Very few numbers of them are community-based in Darjeeling hills and adjoining areas. Chatakpur eco-tourism is an example of community-based tourism initiated collaboratively with the local communities and the state government (state through forest department).

1.4.2 Sole proprietorship homestay

Sole proprietorship homestay is the homestay where all the responsibilities of planning and managing are done by a single operator. The operator takes the responsibility to manage the accommodation of the visitors, promote the destination as per their capability. Basically, the operator creates a linkage with the renowned tour operators to get their promotion done. The family members assist the operator to host the guest with the local touch providing homemade local cuisine and allow exploring to flora and fauna. Other adventure activities are also provided to the guest as per their demand and the suitability of the location. However, the homestay being the individual ownership, the local people in the village get to explore in exchanging the culture with the guests. Apart from that, the people in the locality get an avenue to create the demand for local products such as organic agricultural products, handicrafts, etc.

1.4.3 Collaborative homestay model

Marketing the destination is one of the main challenges being faced by the homestay operators. So, to bring the destination to the limelight or to the eyes of the visitors, the homestay operators are almost compelled to collaborate with the tour operators. Tour operators are entrusted with the responsibility of promoting the destination and the location of the homestay in lieu of certain commissions. The homestay operators take the responsibility to host the guest at the destination. Even sometimes the tour operators make an investment with the homestay operators to help in initiating the venture. This is done after taking into account the potentials of the destination by the tour operators.

However, the sustainability of homestay tourism is immensely dependent on the big tour operators. As the footfalls of visitors are low, the homestay business will no longer sustain itself. The tour operators play an indispensable role to keep homestay tourism alive. Irrespective of any type of homestay tourism, the paramount role of tour operators cannot be ruled out.

Homestay tourism has been growing in numbers widespread across the hills but has had to face lots of challenges to ensure its sustainability. Different authors have focussed on a different dimension as the sustainability of homestay. Acharya and Halpenny (2017) explore the dimension of socio-cultural sustainability based on inclusive, collaborative, resilient, and modernizing in the community-based homestay units in Ghalegoan, Nepal. As per the past literature, different aspects have been taken into account for the research work. The visitors are expected to have at least the minimum level of hospitality in respect to service quality, infrastructure, the image of the destination, and safety & security in the accommodation. These four dimensions are taken into account for the aspect of sustainability of homestay tourism in Darjeeling hills and adjoining areas.

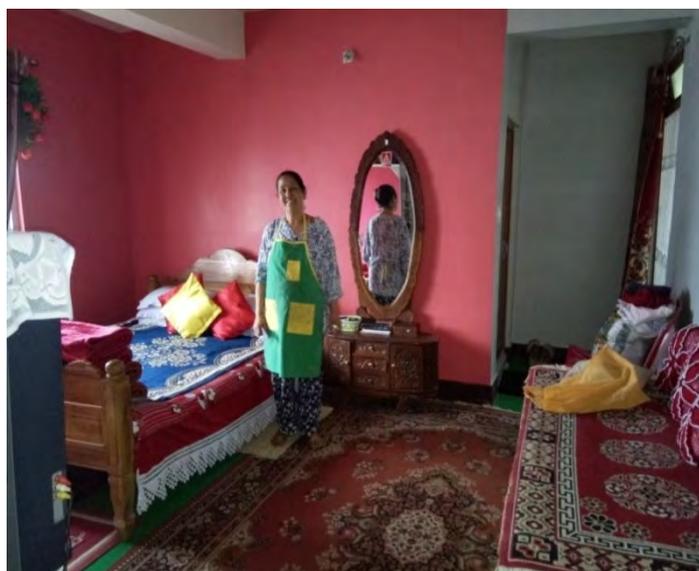
1.5 Homestays in Darjeeling

Homestays, are considered as bed and breakfast, guesthouses or a small establishment that provide food and lodging to the guest at a moderate cost compared to the hotels surrounding hilly area of Darjeeling. The concept of homestays is becoming very popular due to some of its inherent advantages. The money at stake is lower than any other businesses if any house looks ethnic and additional rooms are available; the business can be started with minimum working capital. The idea of homestays is fairly simple where one can give an opportunity to rent out the vacant rooms to visitors traveling in places close to one's destination. The typical homestays prevailing in Darjeeling where the study is conducted is depicted in the following plate

Traditional Homestay Kitchen
Plate 1.1



Typical Homestay Room
Plate 1.2



Forest Department Homestay
Plate 1.3



Front View of Usual Homestay
Plate 1.4



Eco Friendly Homestay
Plate 1.5



1.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, an overview of tourism in India has been discussed keeping in view the opportunities for homestay initiatives undertaken by the small entrepreneurs. Homestay tourism is basically rural tourism that tries to attract tourists to pristine destinations and share the traditions, cultural heritage of the local people.

Rural Tourism is a complex venture that may include resort-based holiday packages, adventure activities including walking through the forest, providing health tourism activities, and understanding the culture of rural masses. It is needless to mention that rural tourism plays a pivotal role to generate additional income for the people engaged in homestay-based tourism. Homestay tourism was first introduced in the US where the students who wanted to pursue education in the US were given the opportunity to share rooms provided by the local communities for mutual benefits. Subsequently, the concept of homestay tourism has undergone

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evolutionary changes and developing in many countries like Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, South Africa, Nepal, and India.

Homestay tourism provides accommodation to the visitors in the hosts' homes deliver homemade food, shares the culture, lifestyle, and customs of local people for the enjoyment of the tourists'. The Ministry of Tourism had introduced the concept of an alternative form of accommodation in the form of Homestay establishment scheme from 2001-2002 to generate additional sources of income and since then, homestay business has become very popular across the country.

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