

# 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 Flucker (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 km<sup>2</sup> of the district’s total size of 3,202 km<sup>2</sup>. 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.

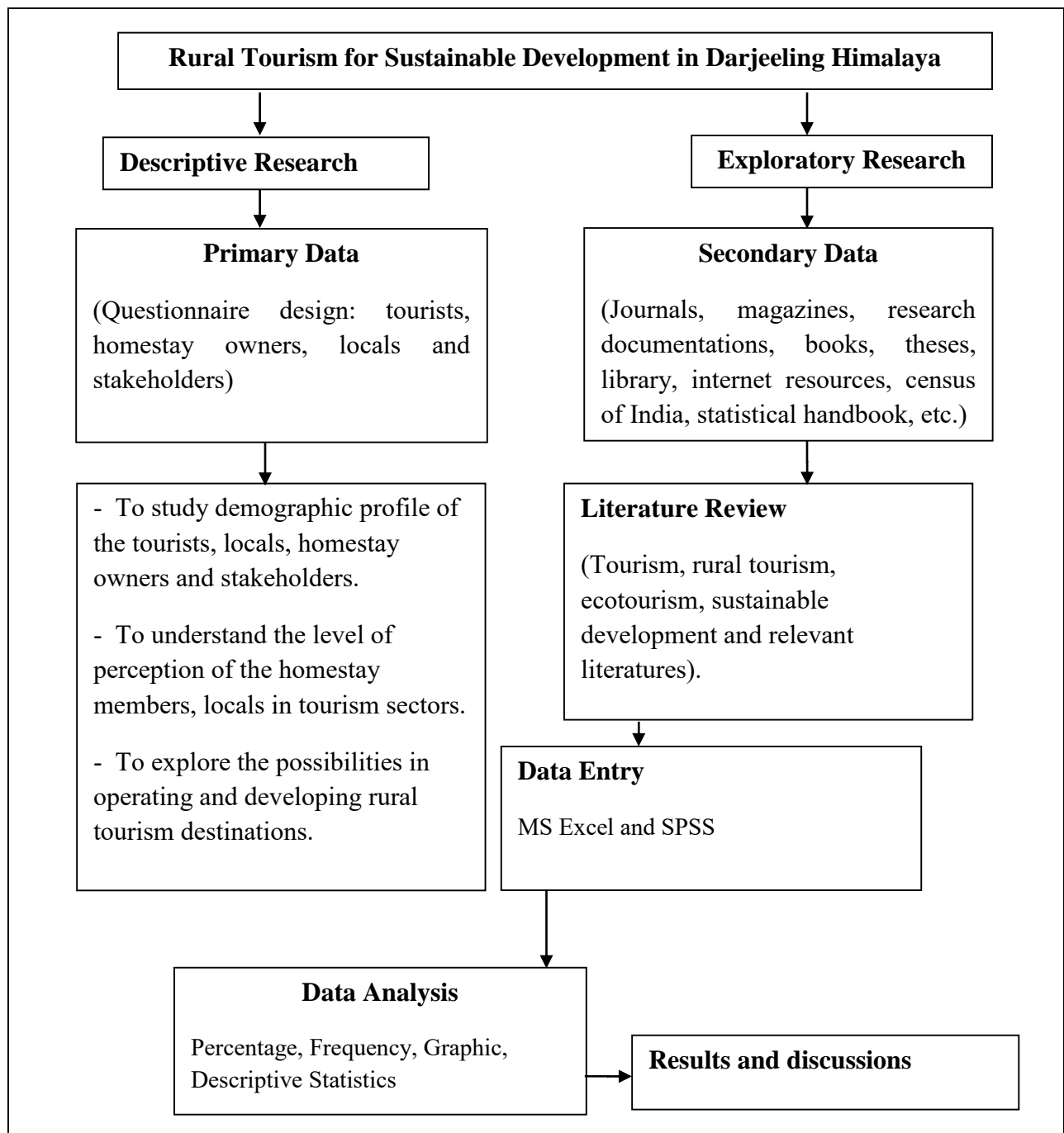
The different factors for economic, socio-cultural, and environmental development were recognized by a basic survey of the literature. A structured questionnaire schedule was constructed utilizing the factors acquired from the review of literature for the primary data collection. Hereafter, a study of 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.

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