

A study on the development of Tourism Industry in Darjeeling

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ABSTRACT: Darjeeling is a hill station located in the state of West Bengal, India, popular for its tea and Himalayan landscape. Tourism means the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their domestic environment for not more than long time for leisure, business and other purposes. Tourism constitutes a wide variety of sectors that provide diverse products and services to visitors. However, these businesses also provide products and services to local residents. Tourism is some sort of stimulant from daily jog trot life. Darjeeling is an important place in West Bengal where tourism is the basic livelihood of local inhabitants. In every year, it facilitates huge foreign exchange earnings as well as earnings from domestic as well as foreign tourism also. This paper attempts to explore the issues and challenges of tourism in Darjeeling and factors affected for the development of tourism in Darjeeling. The analysis is based on secondary data supported some of the secondary data and findings are challenging.

KEY WORDS: Tourism, Economic Development, Social, infrastructure. Etc.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Tourism is an important economic activity which is nothing to produce just to show the authenticity of nature. Tourism is a dynamic and competitive industry that requires the ability to adapt constantly to customers' changing needs and desires, as the customer's satisfaction, safety and enjoyment are particularly the focus of tourism businesses. Darjeeling is a hill station located in the state of West Bengal, India, popular for its tea and Himalayan landscape. Darjeeling is magnificent hill resort, attracting young, adventurous and enthusiasts across various age groups but heavily challenged by environmental degradation, overcrowding, tourist dissatisfaction, competition and limitation of tourist activities. The Darjeeling Himalaya covers an area of 2476 Sq. Km. spanning three Sub-Divisions of Kalimpong, Kurseong and

Darjeeling. Broadly speaking, the Darjeeling Himalaya falls under subtropical per humid climate with an average rainfall of 3104.5mm per annum, with an air temperature of maximum 26° C and minimum 4° C. This Himalayan region is formed of comparatively recent rock structure that has a direct bearing on landslides. However, heavy monsoon precipitation is however a very common cause of the landslides.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rani and Gupta (2016) explained Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. In India, different economic parameter like GDP, Employment generation, foreign exchange earnings have a significant contribution through tourism sector. Tourism also helps create employment opportunity for both skill and unskilled labour encourage infrastructural development in India. Tourism also help to eliminate language barrier, socio cultural barrier class barrier etc. and provide international understanding and peace.

Wall and Towner (1991) examined the contribution of history to the understanding of tourism with ancient world. They showed the historical factors have an important influence over tourism.

Lego and Shaw (1992) explained the empirically evaluated the convergent validity in tourism research which show a light of tourism research.

Smeral and Witt (2002) analysed the impact of unification of Germany and the general move towards free market-type economies in Eastern Europe and claimed that it would create adverse effect on the interactional tourism demand.

Kaur and Sharma (2014) explained in their study Tourism as a multidimensional activity. For the sustainable growth of tourism industry both Govt. and Private Sector endeavor is needed. Indian tourism policy is implemented in such a way that this industry can affect economic growth and

improve governance performance. Tourism is also became a key sector of the Indian economy and growing with vast potential in international trade. It supports India's economic and social development as a whole.

Objective of the study:

The main objectives of this paper are:

- (i) To discuss the factors affecting in tourism at Darjeeling.
- (ii) To find out the challenges of tourism in Darjeeling

Research Methodology:

The study is both empirical and explanatory in nature. By analysing secondary data we use various descriptive statistics. To explore and gather knowledge from tourists regarding the study area a primary questionnaire is used. To evaluate the challenges and relationship of different factors with tourism relevant secondary data were collected from different sources like annual reports of Darjeeling district and different international as well as national literature review regarding this issue.

Different Social factors affecting tourism in Darjeeling

The following are the social factors that affect tourism in Darjeeling

1. **Roadway Construction:** For attracting more tourists apart from railway connection widespread road is connected to all parts of the country and for constructing new roads Government has to destruct hills by charging dynamite. Thus the ecology of this place gets worst.
2. **No. of hotel construction:** To accommodate more number of tourists and to provide them a high class luxury a number of concrete hotels are constructed in the slope. The splendid view of Kanchenjunga together with a fragile chain of wooden house is wiped out and this creates a biodiversity problem in "Queen of Hills".
3. **Sewerage & Sanitation problem:** Darjeeling town generates over of sewerage. The sanitation connection is not good in the studied area. According to Darjeeling Municipality office, Report of Darjeeling town produces about 50 metric tons of solid waste every day.
4. **No. Of increase of vehicles:** Presently there are a large number of unregistered vehicles to accommodate the need of local habitants as well as tourists. The vehicles also do not

follow the environmental rules. These increasing number of vehicles add Carmon-monoxide, sulphur-di-oxide gas in the fresh air of the place and injurious for the health of people.

5. **Water scarcity:** Natural springs from Sinchal Range are the main sources of water supply in Darjeeling town. However Darjeeling town still faces some problem regarding water supply. The per capita availability of water in the town is far from the prescribed norms of 135 liters per day and only 50% of the Municipal households are connected to the Municipal water supply. The historic water supply problem has gone from bad to worse position because of the gap between the demand and supply. It is a great threat to the tourism industry in Darjeeling.
6. **No of Tourist Operator:** Tourism is one of the main drivers of economy in Darjeeling and therefore it is obvious that there will be plenty of tour operators & agents. Many of them are specialized in the area of adventure tourism including treks & hikes, and some even offer white water rafting, mountain biking, mountaineering expeditions and other activities along with gears & equipment.

Economical factors affecting the Economic growth of Darjeeling:

The following are the social factors that affect tourism in Darjeeling

1. **Agriculture:** Agriculture in this region is mostly rain dependant in all upper ridges and hill areas. Soil is generally shallow. Orange, sinkona, tea, organic crops are the main agricultural products of North Bengal. These conditions necessitate aggressive intervention in conserving the precious topsoil during monsoon as well as harvesting life saving irrigation water for the dry months.
2. **Tea Industry:** Darjeeling Hills has been producing finest quality tea in the world fetching the highest price. Starting on a commercial scale in 1856 the present area under Tea Gardens is 19239 hectares producing 11-12 million Kgs. of tea per year. Commercial tea production has been the mainstay of livelihoods and economy in the Darjeeling hills for over 150 years. The tea industry has played a pivotal role in the socio-economic lives of people of the region by providing direct employment to thousands of households and ancillary jobs to many more thousands in chest-tea, plywood, tea packaging and other tea related trades. The gradual declines of the Darjeeling tea industry from

strong international competition, increasing production and labour costs, and declining productivity, and other factors, have affected the sustainable livelihoods of plantation workers.

3. **Tourism Industry:** The labour market of Darjeeling basically depends on tourism. As there is so much difficulty from environmental point of view only agricultural based industry have development. Besides this no other industry has significantly developed in Darjeeling area. So huge of people is depends for their earnings directly to tourism industry which is the main source of income of the people of Darjeeling area.
4. **Horticulture:** Most of the farmers in these regions are still practicing the traditional method of cultivating traditional crops like ginger millet, local varieties of paddy, maize and vegetables. It is, therefore imperative that the emphasis and development initiatives vis-à-vis agriculture be shifted to floriculture-horticulture crops in the hill areas of Darjeeling District. The main fruit crops of the area are temperate fruits like orange, plum, pears and peach. Beside these, there are substantial areas growing banana, pineapple and guava. There is also scope for cultivation of passion fruit and its juice has great demand at present especially for the export purposes.

Challenges of development of tourism in Darjeeling

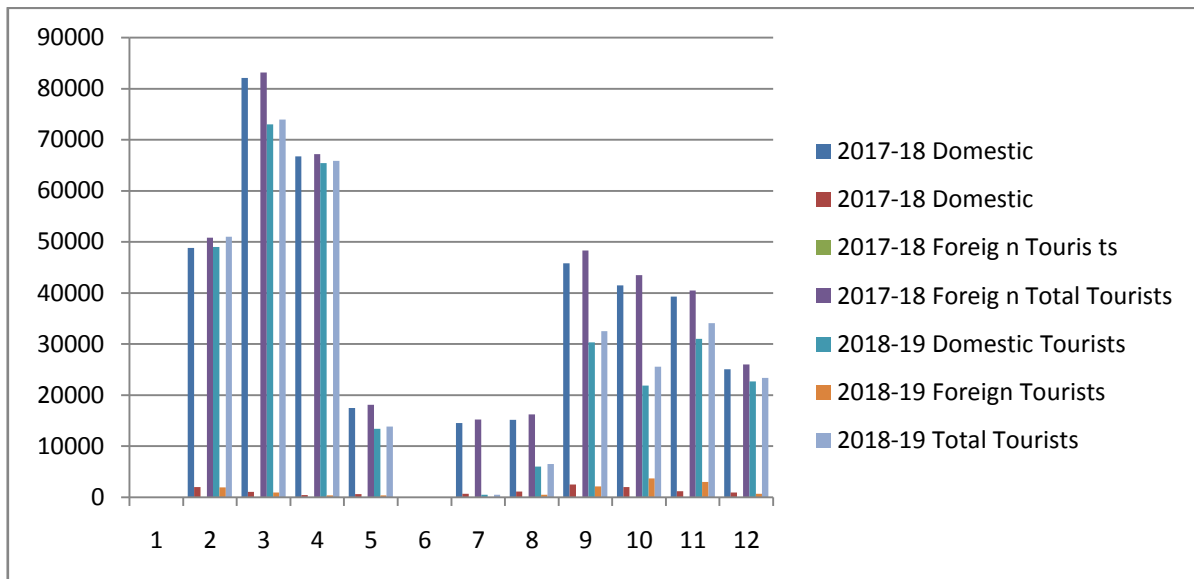
- a) **Financial Help for development:** Tourism is fluctuating business. In Darjeeling tourist season is not for a long time. Most of the home stay hotels felt problems to get financial support from financial Institutions as a result

tourism industry are at great stake. The challenges thus faced by all the hosts and communities should be taken into great consideration by government as well as other funding agencies.

- b) **Lack of education:** A lot of people had acquired education up to primary level which affects the lack of knowledge in efficient running of tourism and the effective management. Thus proper information, lack of education, good knowledge and skill became another challenge for development of tourism in Darjeeling
- c) **Political unrest:** Darjeeling hills have remained under political unrest for the demand of separate state which affects tourism industry in entire Darjeeling. Darjeeling witnessed a mass agitation having a long period strike (bandh) which totally shattered tourism in the study area. Home stay and other local hotels are closed for a long time which also affect financially to all the owners.
- d) **Short span of tourism season:** Darjeeling having very short tourist season in totally only five month i.e. march, April, May, October and November. This also affects the tourism industry in Darjeeling. Rest of the months either remains cold or rainy which restricts tourists to visit the place. Home stays, eco-tourism remains closed for rest of the months which totally shatters the income and employment of rural people.

Analysis of tourist flow

The study shows the number of tourists' arrival in Darjeeling, West Bengal in the year 2017-18 and 2018-19 through bar diagram sown below with secondary data related to that.



Source: Department of Tourism, Gorkhaland Territorial Administration, Darjeeling

Chi-Square Tests

Hypothesis	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Significance Association
Relation between tourist flow and roadways	31.368 ^a	3	.000	Exist
Relation between tourist flow and no of Hotel	57.105 ^a	3	.000	Exist
Relation between tourist flow and vehicles availability	51.238 ^a	3	.000	Exist
Relation between tourist flow and tourist Operator	64.836 ^a	6	.000	Exist

After taking the different from secondary sources whether there is any significance association between different variables, it is observed that chi-square test as shown in table p-value is less than 0.05, therefore there is significance association exist between variables taken in the significant association.

ANOVA Test

Hypothesis	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Evidence exist
Relation between tourist flow and Infrastructural variables	3.656	3	1.219	5.752	.001	Exists
Relation between tourist flow and Social variables	59.475	3	19.825	50.731	.000	Exists

The researcher tested the significance of tourist flow and Infrastructural variables like no of hotels, Km of roadways, No of tourist operator and with social variables like water scarcity, home stay availability, educational level with one way

ANOVA as well. In the above table the p-Value is less than 0.05 percent level of significance. Thus, there is enough evidence to suggest that there is a significant relation between tourist flow with Infrastructural and social variables.

III. CONCLUSION

Though Darjeeling is the “Queen of hill” in West Bengal, which is famous for its mesmerizing natural beauty. Every year a huge number of tourists have attracted to this place. So from the point of view of tourist’s attraction is concern Government has to take some steps to protect its natural beauty and development of tourism the opposite side population is increasing and it is a great threat upon natural beauty. Tourism of Darjeeling is mainly dependant on certain social and economical factors and this industry have a great role towards the development of Darjeeling as well. Though some problems are there which affect the tourist flow and create a problem in tourism. So government intervention is very much important and as well as local people consciousness development of very much important to development of this industry.

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