

Role of community on Destination Development: A case Study of Holy Tree Kanzemane and Holy Waterfall Chumi Gyaste, Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

Community based tourism is the involvement of local community to uplift tourism in their neighborhood, as well as a way of sustainable tourism that allows travellers to closely connect to local communities. In the proposed study, focus has been given on how local communities can be involved in destination development focusing on religious tourism. It attempts to assess the participation level of government and local community in application of religious tourism as an adaptive strategy of community based tourism. Selected areas for the study are two places with religious value located in the Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Both places have diverse potential to attract tourists. The study was done mostly through primary data collected from tourists who have visited the places. The study aimed at identification of areas besides religious tourism which could be developed in the study areas.

Keywords: Community Based Tourism, Religious Tourism, Destination Development, Tawang.

1. INTRODUCTION

As per the report of World Tourism Organization it is estimated that 300 to 330 million pilgrims visit the world's key sites annually. As India is among one of most religiously overwhelmed country, religious tourism plays vital role in its development. Religious Tourism is not only travelling to a religions place with an intention of seeking blessings from the god but also enjoying the pleasure of travelling, which includes art, culture, and architecture.

Destination development is the strategic planning for advancement of region to support the evolution of desirable destinations for travellers, with the spotlight on the supply side of tourism, by providing compelling experiences, quality infrastructure, and remarkable services to attract repeat visitation.

Selected areas for the study, the Holy tree Kanzemane and the Holy waterfall Chumigyatse are two religious site of Buddhist religion in the interior region of Tawang district of the state Arunachal Pradesh in India. These two religious site are located near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) therefore tourism was not promoted due to security reasons but as of now state government and Indian army is focusing on tourism growth in both region for infrastructure developments and also to improve friendly relations with the neighbouring country.

Tawang is among the leading district in the state in terms of tourist inflow, The aim of the study is to put light into the religious importance of both places and history attached to it as well as to suggest measures to create awareness among tourist and thus increasing the tourist inflow in the region.

Sl No.	Name	Domestic	Foreign
1.	lohit (Tezu)	18627	63
2.	West Kameng (Bomdila)	36205	644
3.	Dirang	13317	---
4.	Bhalukpong	12372	--
5.	Lower Dibang Valley (Roing)	38034	326
6.	Lower Subansiri (Ziro)	27780	1225
7.	Tawang	56166	1376
8.	Aalo(West Slang)	21043	299
9.	Pasighat (East Siang)	18797	93
10.	Yingkiong (Upper Siang)	4473	104
11.	Seppa (East Kameng)	14008	110
12.	Miao/Changlang	4164	240
13.	Daporijo (Upper Subansiri)	5794	239
14.	Koloriang (KurungKumey)	630	38
15.	Anjaw	2236	49
16.	Yupia(Papum Pare)	33670	400
17.	Mechuka(Shi-Yomi)	3353	218

District wise Tourist inflow Data -2019 (source : Department of tourism, Itanagar)

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.

As per (Tosun, 2006) local community has essential role in tourism development. Novelli and Gebhardt (2007:449) remark, "Community participation is often suggested as an essential ingredient in improving the quality of tourism's contribution to national development". (Tasci, Semrad & Yilmaz, 2013:84) Involvement of local communities, helps them to get benefited from the development happening in their neighbourhood. According to (Nyaupane et al.,2006) limitations faced by local communities while implementing tourism practices are scarcity of funds, infrastructure know-how, limitations of cultural kind and potential conflict between different public administration. Based on tourism models, participatory management is essential element to stay away from the negative tourism impacts of conventional tourism on community members and the ecosystems (Burgos & Mertens, 2017:546). For development and change in tourism scenario involvement of Community is required. (Rasoolimanesh & Jaafar, 2016:5). According to (Nagarjuna, 2015:14) involvement of local community becomes fundamental in order to increase the benefits of tourism, and to minimize the negative impacts. Novelli and Gebhardt (2007:449) states, "Community participation is often suggested as an essential ingredient in improving the quality of tourism's contribution to national development. Thus, CBT should be encouraged for community development and in "remote, rural, impoverished, marginalized, economically depressed, undeveloped, indigenous, ethnic minorities, and people in small towns" (Tasci, Semrad & Yilmaz, 2013)

3. RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF STUDY AREAS.

a) Holy Tree Kanzemane

During the Chinese onslaught in 1959, His Highness Dalai Lama dressed as a soldier, along with his family and several top officials escaped to India through Arunachal Pradesh where he was accorded a warm welcome by an Indian delegation under the aegis of 5 Assam Rifles. Dubbed as one of the most fantastic escapes in history, His highness and his entourage travelled for two days and two nights without stopping, on foot and on horseback. The holy tree kanzemane is believed to have sprung to life from the staff of His Highness that he struck into a solid rock on this site. The holy tree stands as a testimony to a new socio-political, military, economic and cultural relation between India and China.

b) Holy Waterfall Chumigyatse

The little known Chumi Gyaste waterfalls, also known as "Holy Waterfalls", is a collection of 108 waterfalls at the Sino-Indian border. Locals believe that Guru Padmasambhava, commonly known as the Tibetan Buddhist "second Buddha" was meditating in the caves close to the present Holy Waterfalls. It is said that the waterfall was created in response to the frantic calls of the locals to save them from a plague that was raging in the area. Guru Padmasambhava threw his 108 beaded mala on the close by mountain which hit the rocks resulting in 108 water streams flowing from it. The locals drank this holy water and are said to have been cured of the diseases. The Holy waterfalls is believed to have supernatural powers with many drinking the water to cure them of diseases and bring them good fortune.

4. TOURIST ELEMENTS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

History, culture, tradition, natural resources, etc., are the elements that will identify both selected destinations as a tourist attraction in future. Both places has lot to offer in the transit route and destination. To reach Holy tree there are two routes from Tawang one via Lumla and another via Sangetsar lake.

Travelling through Lumla road one will cross Bap Teng Kang (BTK) waterfall, Gorsam Chorten and Zemithang before reaching Holy Tree Kanzemane. Bap Teng Kang Waterfall, also known as BTK Waterfall, is one of the beautiful waterfalls in Tawang District, Arunachal Pradesh. It falls from a height of 100 ft at Yumkhang. This waterfall lies at a distance of about 85 km from Tawang, on the way to Zemithang.

GORZAM CHORTEN ZEMITHANG The sky looming high stupa about 92 Km from Tawang was constructed by Lama Pradhar from Kharman village in Zemithang, in 13th Century A.D., it stands featuring 186 feet base and 93 feet high is modelled after Boudhinath stupa of Nepal. Thousands of devotees visit during Gorzam Kora festival to observe the virtuous occasion during the last day of the first month of the lunar calendar. Locals say that Lama Sangye Pradhar (Monpa), who supposedly built Gorsam Chorten, travelled to Kathmandu and carved a miniature model of the shrine using radish. Indeed the chorten is a virtual replica of the Nepalese landmark its giant hemispherical dome, crowned by a pyramidal head, resting on a square three-tiered base, with four enormous eyes of the "all seeing Buddha", painted on the pyramidal crown just as in Boudanath, with small stupas on the plinth's four corners. It is said to have taken 13 years to build the chorten.

Zemithang also called Pangchen, is a village and the headquarters of an eponymous circle in the Tawang district. It is on the bank of the Nyamjang Chu river, which originates in Tibet and enters India from the north near the locality called Khinzemane. The Zemithang Circle is the last administrative division of India on the border with the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, along the border with Bhutan in the west.

Zemithang's border with Tibet, along the Namka Chu and Sumdorong Chu valleys, is disputed with China.

To reach Chumi Gyatse one will have to drive for four hours from Tawang, and then will have to walk for another 30 minutes to get to the location. The distance to the Line of Actual Control is only 250 metres from the destination. To appreciate the peace and beauty of the waterfalls after driving up to the Tshechu town and passing through Damteng, a village known for some of its hot springs.

5. RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN INDIA

There are two noticeable forms of Religious Tourism in India; First, the faith of the domestic tourist, who has a spiritual bond or closeness to the deity/ destination in consistent with their religious beliefs and another is the 'foreign' tourist, one who is a member of a different religion, or belongs to a different region or country, for them the destination and the religious practices have the dimension of 'newness', a spiritual experience something different from their own, despite the ethical values derived from them remaining the same. From the domestic market's standpoint, there is a fine line dividing business and belief. In today's socio-economic structures, many major religious centres, are viewed as a tangible assets in terms of infrastructure and the workforce they employ, thereby implying that the institution has to monetize itself to be able to meet its everyday survival in societal environments. According to the nature of the product, intensity and region of travel, Religious Tourism is widely categorised in the following major categories:

- Pilgrimages
- Missionary travel
- Leisure (fellowship) vacations
- Faith-based cruising
- Crusades, conventions and rallies
- Retreats
- Monastery visits and guest-stays
- Faith-based camps
- Religious tourist attractions

6. INDIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE TO BOOST THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM

The Government is very much aware of the importance of religious tourism not only as an economic enabler, but also a tool to ensure communal harmony. In recent time few initiatives took by the government to promote religious tourism are as follows: IRCTC has given much needed boost to the Buddhist Circuit, providing a holistic product that addresses transport, sightseeing and accommodation requirements. Apart from this, airports have also been made operational in Bodh Gaya, thereby facilitating direct movement of tourists from South East Asian countries, a major part of the clientele. Seven new tourist circuits will be developed across the country to facilitate travel to and stay at religious places. Work has already begun to prepare detailed project reports for Sufi, Buddhist & Jain, Christian, Sikh, Hinduism and Sarva Dharma circuits. The Sufi circuit will include Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Bijapur, Shirdi, Aurangabad, and the Awadh region, besides the dargahs in J&K, Punjab, Haryana and Uttarkahnad. The Christian circuit will have the churches of Goa, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The Sarv Dharma Circuit, to promote national integration, will be aligned along Tirupathi-Chennai- Velankanni-Nagoor and Vaishnodevi - Golden Temple-Sacred Heart Church (Delhi)Nizamuddin. The Ministry of Tourism has already identified 35 destinations for Phase I and will cover another 89 in Phase II. Consultants engaged by the ministry will help identify gaps in infrastructure and amenities, assess investment requirement and possible source of funds and also evolve business models for investment and operations. The ministry has proposed a required outlay plan of Rs 9,450 crore for the 12th Plan and hopes to draw in private investment close to Rs 28,000 crore for such projects.

7. CHALLENGES IN RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN INDIA

Tourism plays a pivotal role in facilitating development of basic infrastructural facilities, generates income for the local community as well as the government, balances regional development strategies through 'umbrella' effect, and fosters peace and socio-cultural harmony. However, to prevent the negative impacts on the region, tourism development needs to be regulated. Major challenges include –

1. Problem of transportation - Most religious centres in the country, major or minor, suffer from short but intense seasons that affects the environmental conditions of the region for the rest of the year. The Char Dham Yatra in Uttarakhand is one such example. Lasting from May till about November, it puts a heavy burden upon the transport infrastructure of the Garhwal region, which coupled with the monsoons and a lot of road construction still under progress that entail landslides, meaning frequent road blocks, accidents and loss of life.
2. Waste Management – A major problem in areas with high appealing natural attractions is the disposal of waste. Tourist generate a great deal of waste and there is no avenue for proper waste management, which spoil the natural environment.
3. Lack of proper infrastructure: There are various infrastructure needs for a successful tourism development which range from physical infrastructure such as modes of transportation to urban infrastructure such as access to electricity, water supply, telecommunications etc. The sector related to the travel and tourism industry includes transportation, accommodation, entertainment and attractions etc. The poor infrastructure has been a major reason why the country is receiving lesser international tourist as compared to smaller countries despite its vast tourism potential.
4. Security & safety: - Security and safety are of the foremost consideration for tourist when they travel. India is highly lacking on this aspect . The major reasons being the internal community riots and also the terrorist attacks faced from time to time. The country is also highly unsafe for females. High crime rates, food safety, health issues etc are the other reason affecting the arrivals of tourist.

5. Information & communication: - Though the official languages of the republic of India are Standard Hindi and English yet the government of India has given 22 languages of the 8th schedule the status of official languages. Because of such diversity in the regional languages the foreign tourist has difficulty of communication with the locals.

8.COMMUNITY AS A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM

Community participation is one of the core elements of tourism development. It is integral to the sustainability of tourism industry. Local community has a substantial value in tourism for locals, their lifestyle and environmental, cultural and traditional factors which are the main attraction of tourism. The extent to which local communities are involved in decision-making and various policy issues is determined by the extent to which they influence or are influenced by these decisions and policies. In the same way, Pongponrat (2011) noted that “development of local tourism requires that people who are influenced by tourism should be involved in both planning process and implementation of policies and action plans. This ensures that development meets the perceived needs of the local community”. Active participation of the local community ensures the enrichment of tourism experience and also in conservation of environment as well as the culture of the local community.

Community-based tourism (CBT) is a form of tourism that is designed to offset the negative impacts of conventional or mass tourism, such as leakages and falling of local control of natural resources. Community based Tourism is gaining popularity and it is increasingly being promoted as a means of alleviating poverty and promoting local community development. This does not mean that CBT does not present challenges and difficulties. Although CBT can increase the benefit of the community and can be a means of alleviating poverty, it is not the answer to community poverty alleviation through tourism. CBT forbid the involvement of nonlocals in tourism management of the community calls. The principle of CBT is the development of local communities rather than external party.

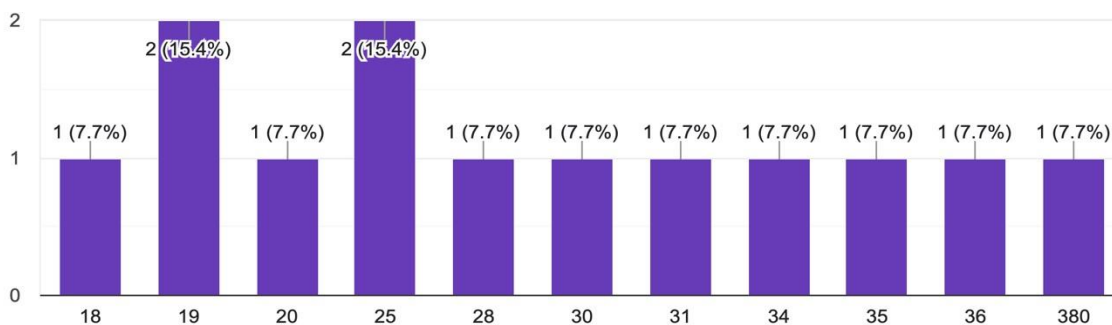
9.ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

1. Respondents Age

Age Group	Number	Percentage
15-20	4	31%
20-25	2	15%
25-30	2	15%
30-35	3	24%
35-40	2	15%
Total	13	100%

Age

13 responses



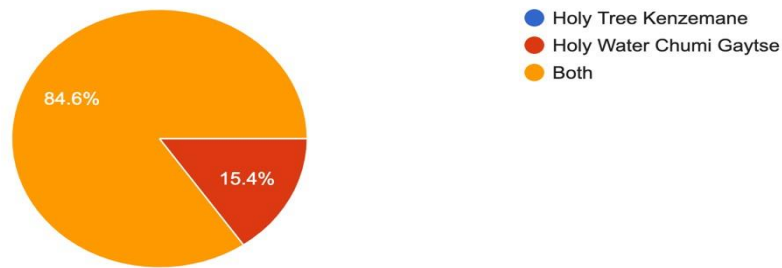
Among 13 respondents from the study area, 31% were of age group 15-20, 15 % from 20-25, 15%. from 25-30, 24% from 30-35, and 15% from 35-40.

2. Places visited

Places	Number of respondent	Percentage(out of total Respondent)
Holy Tree	11	85%
Holy Waterfall	13	100%

Which Place you have visited?

13 responses



Interpretation

Among the 13 respondents all of them have visited holy waterfall but only 11 of them have reached holy tree.

3. Was this your first visit to these tourist destinations?

Responses	Number	percentage
Yes	5	38%
No	8	62%
Total	13	100%

62% of the total respondents have already visited the places and for 38% it was their first visit.

4. Main purpose to visit these tourist destinations?

Responses	Number	Percentage
Rest and relaxation.	6	45%
Visiting relatives and friends.	0	0%
Business reasons.	1	8%
Culture.	1	8%
Fun.	1	8%
Sports and recreation.	3	23%
Religious reasons.	1	8%
Total	13	100%

Among the respondent 45% of them visited the place for rest and relaxation purpose, 8% for business reason, 8% for culture and 8% for fun and 23% for sports and recreation purpose

What are the main reasons for your visit to this tourist destination?

13 responses



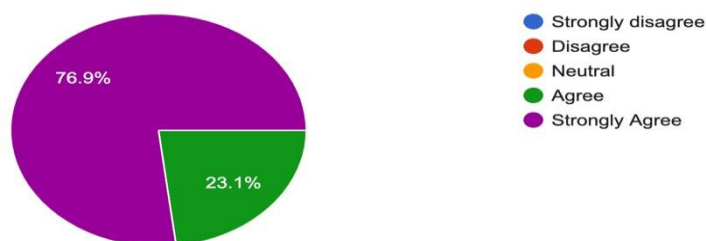
The analysis below is pertaining to the general image of these tourist destinations. For each statement, responses indicate to what extent they agree with it.

5. I think most people have a positive opinion about these tourist destinations.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	10	77%
Agree	3	23%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	13	100%

I think most people have a positive opinion about this tourist destination.

13 responses



77% of the respondent strongly agree to statement that they have a positive opinion about the tourist destination and 23% have agreed to the statement.

6. The people at these tourist destinations are friendly towards the guests.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	7	54%
Agree	4	31%
Neutral	2	15%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	13	100%

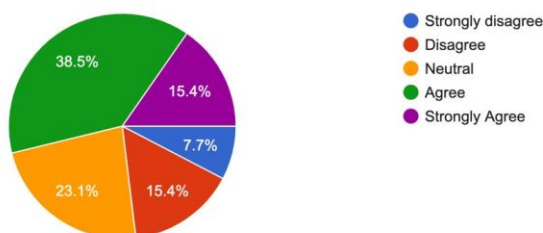
54% of total respondent strongly agrees that local people at the tourist destinations are friendly towards guest and 31% agrees to the statement and 15% do not have an opinion on it and remained neutral.

7. I think these tourist destinations are popular.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	2	15%
Agree	5	39%
Neutral	3	23%
Disagree	2	15%
Strongly disagree	1	8%
Total	13	100%

I think this tourist destination is popular.

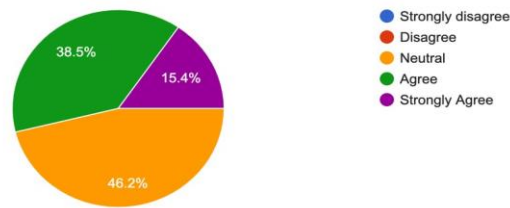
13 responses



8. The people at these tourist destinations always put the guest first.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	2	15%
Agree	5	39%
Neutral	6	46%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	13	100%

The people at this tourist destination always put guest first.
13 responses



9. This tourist destinations respects the natural environment

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	31%
Agree	6	46%
Neutral	3	23%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	13	100%

This tourist destination respects the natural environment
13 responses



10. Overall quality of the facilities provided in the tourist destination offer is.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Very High	3	23%
High	3	23%
Normal	6	46%
Low	1	8%
Very Low	0	0%
Total	13	100%

This part of the analysis is on questions pertaining to the feelings and comprehension of the value of stay at these tourist destinations.

11. Pleasure at visiting the tourist destinations

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	69%
Agree	4	31%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	13	100%

12. Visit to these tourist destinations exceeded my expectations.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	39%
Agree	6	46%
Neutral	2	15%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	13	100%

13. Staying at these tourist destinations was value for money.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	38%
Agree	5	38%
Neutral	3	24%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	13	100%

Among 13 respondents total of 76% says it was value for money paid to visit the destinations. 24% has average responses.

FINDINGS

1. All the respondents are from the state itself. That means these sites are more popular among the resident of the state.
2. The respondent who visited the holy places are from the nearby places only. This may be attracted to the fact that there is very less publicity about these places.
3. Visitors were from the age group of 15-40 and all were men.
4. Most of them visited the place for rest and relaxation purpose and recreation purpose.
5. It is been also observed, local people at the tourist destination are friendly and helpful to the visitors.
6. Although destinations are in the interior visitors opined that it was value for money.
7. It is been observed from the study that all the visitors were pleased to visit the destinations.
8. The environment was clean and blessed with nature.
9. Proper stay facility for tourists like hotels resorts were not found on the destinations.
10. As both destinations are at the interior regions of the state, road conditions are not proper which makes difficult for the visitors.
11. Visitors are mostly among religious travels and adventures lovers. Measures need to be taken to ensure that it is covered into a tourist destination that attracts all types of customers.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Both of the study areas are places with religious value, with lots of natural features (mountains, rivers, lakes) and adventures possibilities. Tourism department should identify the main attractions and highlight it, also giving more publicity to the main attractions by identifying the targeted visitors according to the attraction. If a travel plan is made it is searched on internet first, a compelling website about the tourist destinations providing full details will give a huge boost in the tourist flow in both the destinations. Usage of search engine like google will promote tourism. SEO (search engine optimisation) strategies should be made to ensure that the websites are found by online visitors. Aside from creating dedicated website to promote the attraction, trusted and reputable travel websites should be used to promote the destinations. Another effective and indirect marketing strategy is using influencers for promotions. influencers can be celebrities, vloggers, bloggers, or anyone who has lots of followers on social media, YouTube or their own blog.

From the study it has been observed that the majority of the tourist belonged to age group 15-40. In order to attract Senior Tourists focus should be on safety of tourists, emergency medical service system, health & quality oriented cuisine, availability of public transportation and also proper road should be done.

Government Schemes to start home stays should be initiated as home stays indirectly attract senior tourists as well as schemes involving big private player to come up with resorts and facilities in public-private partnership will boost the tourist inflow of all age group.

CONCLUSION

The global trend in tourism is much in the direction of attraction, cultural heritage, green tourism and adventure tourism. Arunachal Pradesh is relatively undeveloped in terms of tourism infrastructure. It is essential for tourism to be state priority of the present government to ensure the viability of the industry in the future. The efforts of the government in implementing effective policies will maintain the life of the industry and assist it to develop healthily. By targeting community development, the local people will grow to value the importance of the industry and also be able to improve their lifestyle. The concept of focusing on the attractions and having the local people become involved will bring about a change that will boost the tourism industry to another level, a level that will provide the citizens with a more beneficial alternative to their livelihood. Community involvement in tourism is assessed positively by the locals as it is a way of generating economic benefits and at the same time creating new jobs Tourism to develop as a whole, a different mindset is required from the policy makers and the society. Research and training has to be taken more seriously, as training at all levels of the industry is important for tourism to prosper.

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