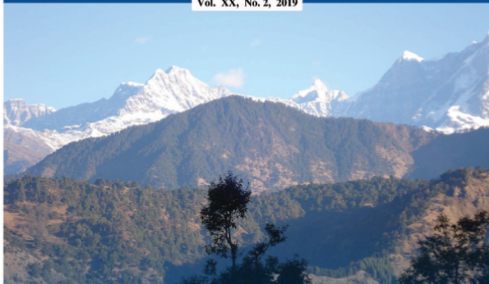


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From the desk of Editor

Journal of Tourism is pleased to come up with yet another interesting issue for its respected and valuable readers. Tourism sector is experiencing rapid changes, enabling the researchers to work upon. Sometimes, it becomes very difficult to understand the ongoing trends and demands of the prospective tourists. However, it is the research community, who work continuously to learn the changes and developments with regard to demand, supply, new product development, challenges in the service delivery, which in turn provides useful inputs to the stakeholders involved in policy frameworks. This issue of Journal of Tourism again attempted to identify the research results of the aforesaid areas across tourism researchers. The Journal has received 15 research papers of varying interests and was subjected to review. At last, the reviewing team has given a go ahead sign only to 4 research papers to consider for publication. And those papers are presented below for your reading. The fourth paper in this issue is specially added on the specific reason to record the findings and to act as literature for future research of the study area.

The first paper titled ***“A study of the servuction model for accommodation providers based on guests' perception”*** authored by DenishPegu, Panchanan Barman and Sinmoy Goswami shares the application of Servuction model for the hospitality sector based on the guest perceptions on 39 parameters, which remarkably reflect the image and quality of the accommodation outlets. Also, those parameters are hypothetical leading to different perception level among the users. The Authors studied the parameters with different guests and presented the findings in this research paper and opine that out of 39 parameters, 33 have high impact among the guest leaving 6 behind. This research paper in particular, paves way to understand the relationship between perception-satisfaction and the scale of importance perceived by the guests of various aspects of the hotel. In the changing dynamics of hotel business, this paper serves as an eye opener for the hospitality players giving functional inputs for the betterment of the sector besides providing memorable services to the guests.

The second paper titled ***“A Sustainable Approach to Community based waste management in the Backwaters of South Kerala”*** by Emilda K Joseph, Tomy K Kallarackal and Bindi Varghese discusses the very important issue experienced by the prime backwater destinations of Kerala state. The authors carry the research paper with the active support of community members, without whom the sustainability approach will never take shape. The intense of having community members on board in assuring waste management serves as a positive indication of the Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action (APPA) model and highlights its significance and necessity. The paper addresses the perceived benefits and costs of community, community support and involvement as major variables and its associated factors with the representations from stakeholders. The findings of the paper show a positive sign towards witnessing sustainable tourism through community support and involvement, thereby ensuring community-based waste management success.

The third paper titled ***“Examining the factors influencing community participation in destination development”*** by Zaffar Iqbal & Neetu Andotra shares the findings about the pertinent factors motivates community members in destination building and development in Poonch district of Jammu & Kashmir state. It is accepted that, community members are the prime

stakeholder ensuring the success of any tourist destination and authors have rightly understood the significance. This paper provides inputs on the extent and impact of community participation is judged upon certain factors namely economic, social and tourism development. Local community benefits from an economic perspective besides other two factors as stated above. Also, community members reveal about their sick representation in policy framing team. Suitable recommendations have been made by researchers to promote Poonch district as a purposeful tourist destination.

The fourth paper titled ***“Benefits of Protected Area Network Status: Pilot study at Bieszczady National Park, Poland”*** authored by Stuart P.Cottrell and Jana Raadik Cottrell examines the underlying impacts of parks in the protected area network (PAN) on community members and tourism intriguingly. Authors have used both qualitative and quantitative techniques to learn the benefits and overall results of the parks existence to the aforementioned stakeholders. Various stakeholders representing Local Pan Park Group (LPPG) were formed to partner on ensuring sustainable practices in the park through tourism. Further the authors opine that there is a strong *evidence* that *the park* has driven tangible socio-cultural sustainability. However, based on the quantitative results, only 50% of the respondents were not happy with the quality of tourism development in the region. Further the authors demanded the *use* of mixed research methods in sustainable tourism research.

At last, it is my humble duty to record my sincere thanks to the reviewers, who have devoted their valuable time in reviewing the papers besides their academic assignments. Also, I am elated to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to our beloved readers and subscribers for their support and motivation.

S.C.Bagri

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Key Words

Servuction model, accommodation providers, service experience, satisfaction, hygiene and atmosphere.

A Study of The Servuction Model for Accommodation Providers Based On Guests' Perception

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Abstract

The Servuction Model of Service Marketing highlights the impact of servicescape, contact personnel, fellow guests, and invisible organizations and systems on guests' overall service experience in any service based firm. This paper explores to study the Servuction Model for different types of accommodation providers (like hotels, resorts, lodges etc. in the tourism and hospitality industry) based on guests' perception in terms of their satisfaction. Findings of this study has indicated significant parameters falling under the above four aspects of the aforesaid model that have impact on guests' satisfaction in such entities. These findings may be emphasized in marketing strategies of these firms for satisfying their guests.

INTRODUCTION

Accommodation providers, an essential component of the tourism and hospitality industry, include all types of establishments that offer overnight accommodation on a “commercial or quasi-commercial basis to all types of tourists” (Sharma, 2004; Jha, 2015). The different types of these establishments are shown in Table-1 (along with various sources).

Considering the importance of the aforementioned accommodation providers in the above industry, this paper aims to delve into the Servuction Model based on guests' (customers') perception in terms of their satisfaction in such entities. This model (propounded by Langeard, Bateson, Lovelock and Eiglier (1981)) helps to assess the impact of four factors on customers' (guests') service experience in any service based firm including the above accommodation providers (Fitzsimmons, 2003; Roday et al., 2009; Fitzsimmons, Fitzsimmons & Bordoloi, 2018). These four factors include “servicescape” (i.e., physical evidence), “contact personnel”, and “other fellow customers (guests)” which are visible to customers (guests), and “organizations and systems” which are not visible to them in any such firms.

Table-1: Different Types of Accommodation Providers

Sr. No.	Types	Sr. No.	Types
1	Hotels	2	Caravans and camping sites
	i) Boutique hotels	3	Guest houses
	ii) Commercial hotels	4	Lodges
	iii) Floating hotels	5	Motels
	iv) Heritage hotels	6	Pensions
	v) International hotels	7	Rest houses
	vi) Residential/ Apartment hotels	8	Time-share and Resort Condominiums
	vii) Resort hotels/ Resorts	9	Tourist Holiday villages
		10	Youth hostels

Sources: Sharma, 2004; Taylor & Young, 2005; Roday, Biwal & Joshi, 2009; Yang, Huang, Song & Liang, 2009; Huang, Song & Zhang, 2010; Hills & Cairncross, 2011; Grotte, 2013; Jha, 2015; Gössling & Lane, 2015; Dutta, Bhattacharya & Guin, 2017; Johnson & Neuhofer, 2017; Mody, Suess & Xinran, 2017)

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The following common parameters of services in hospitality enterprises (including different types of accommodation providers) have been identified by Choi and Chu (2000), Heung (2000), Tsang and Qu

(2000), Groenenboom and Jones (2003), Poon and Low (2005), and Mohsin and Lockyer (2010) in Table-2. These parameters may be summarized under the above mentioned two factors, “Servicescape” and “Contact personnel” of the Servuction Model as:

Table2: Parameters of Servicescape and Contact Personnel in Various Types of Accommodation Providers

Sr. No.	Parameters of Servicescape	Sr. No.	Parameters of Contact Personnel
1	Food and beverage quality	1	Room service
2	Availability of food and beverage variety	2	Helpful pre-transaction information
3	Hygiene of food and beverage	3	Convenient and reliable reservation system
4	Food and beverage at reasonable price	4	Friendliness and helpfulness of the staff
5	Quality of the restaurant	5	Availability of staff to provide prompt service
6	Location	6	Courtesy of the staff
7	Physical appearance	7	Special attention
8	View of the surrounding areas	8	Language proficiency of the staff
9	Welcoming atmosphere	9	Neat appearance of staff
10	Room furnishings and appearance	10	Convenient payment method
11	Quietness of the room	11	Efficient check-in and check-out
12	Overall cleanliness and tidiness	12	Availability of reliable wake-up call
13	Comfort of beds/ mattresses/ pillows	13	Availability of staff for transportation arrangements
14	Quality of in-room temperature control	14	Availability of meeting facilities
15	In-room entertainment including television/ video/ audio	15	Availability of convenient parking facilities
16	Internet connection	16	Security of belongings including valuables
17	Reasonable price for the room	17	Availability of efficient laundry service

(Sources: Choi & Chu, 2000; Heung, 2000; Tsang & Qu, 2000; Groenenboom & Jones, 2003; Poon & Low, 2005; Mohsin & Lockyer, 2010)

An earlier study by Barman, Goswami and Sarma (2015) has established the impact of the above parameters in Table-2 on guests' overall service experience in terms of their satisfaction in case of hotels. Besides, this study has also highlighted the impact of

four key parameters falling under the aforementioned third factor, invisible “organizations and systems” of the Servuction Model in such entities on the aforementioned guests' satisfaction. These four parameters are “prevailing rules

applicable to guests”, “other prevailing rules”, “prevailing service delivery processes”, and “information forms to be completed (like guest relationship form, feedback form, guest information form etc.)”. Barman et al. (2015) has also noted the impact of the above mentioned fourth factor, fellow guests (i.e. “other customers”) (of the Servuction model), on the aforesaid guests' satisfaction in hotels. So, there were a total of 39 parameters falling under the aforementioned four factors of the Servuction Model as shown in Table-A-5 in the Annexure. The above observations may also be applicable in other types of accommodation providers like lodges, resorts etc. other than hotels in the tourism and hospitality industry. This present study is a step in this regard.

In line with the above discussion, it is prudent to highlight the importance of customer satisfaction for success of any business endeavour (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001). Oliver (1980) has described customer satisfaction through the Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory. As per this theory, whenever outcome from a product or service matches customers' expectations, confirmation occurs. Whenever the above outcome exceeds customer expectations, positive disconfirmation occurs. Customer satisfaction is caused by confirmation as well as positive disconfirmation. Pizam and Ellis (1999) have mentioned guests' (customers') satisfaction as the “leading criterion” for determining quality of overall services in case of hospitality enterprises. Meuter, Ostrom, Roundtree and Bitner (2000), and Jamal and Naser (2002) have noted customer satisfaction as an “important theoretical as well as practical issue for most marketers and consumer researchers”. Wirtz (2001), and Andaleeb and Conway (2006) have mentioned customer satisfaction as an important aspect of service quality of any firm. Zeithaml (2000), and Hensley and Sulek (2007) have mentioned that customers' satisfaction or

dissatisfaction affects their perception of service experience. Torres-Moraga, Vásquez-Parraga and Zamora-González (2008) have mentioned customer satisfaction as an important aspect of “customers' responses to a company's offerings”. Based on these studies, it may be pertinent to note that guests' (customers') satisfaction is the primary measure of their service experience in hospitality enterprises including accommodation providers. This view has been supported by World Tourism Organization (WTO) (1985), Reis, Pena and Lopes (2003), and Kumar, Reddy and Surender (2008).

As per Parker and Mathews (2001), customer satisfaction is related with customers' happiness which results in repeat purchase behaviour. This corroborates with the views of Vanhoof, Pauwels, Dombi, Brijs and Wets (2005), and Lam (2007) which have also linked customer satisfaction with repeat purchase behaviour as well as customer retention. Customers' “repurchase decision” is a measure of their loyalty with respect to products and services of a firm (Chiu, Wang, Fang & Huang, 2014; King, Schilhavy, Chowa & Chin, 2016). Similar opinion has been stated by Pizam and Ellis (1999) for hospitality enterprises that also includes different types of accommodation providers like hotels, resorts, lodges etc. in the tourism and hospitality industry. Mey and Mohamed (2009), and Solanki (2011) have also stated similar opinion in the overall context of tourism. Bhote (1996), and Heskett, Sasser Jr. and Schlesinger (1997) have established customer satisfaction as one of the important antecedents of customer loyalty. Yu and Dean (2001), and Baksi and Parida (2013) have also established the existence of positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. The above observations further validate customers' (guests') satisfaction as the chief measure of their service experience in various firms including various accommodation providers as

mentioned above. This is also because such satisfaction may result in their loyalty through repeat visits in any such firms. These views are specifically endorsed by Heung (2000), Torres and Kline (2006), and Crotts, Pan and Raschid (2008).

Need for the study:

The discussions in the earlier section clearly highlights the importance of guests' (tourists' (customers')) satisfaction in various accommodation providers in the tourism and hospitality industry. In this context, it is also relevant to emphasize the views of Oliver (1980) who has stated that customer satisfaction is one of the most important factors that may lead to “experience based attitude change” among them. Westbrook and Oliver (1991) have established a link between satisfaction and emotion of such customers (guests/tourists).

Malhotra (2005) has opined that development of tourism (and hospitality) is highly essential for “increased income and employment” in any place. The same scholar has noted that the most important economic benefit of tourism (and hospitality) is earning of foreign exchange. Another economic benefit from tourism is the overall development of a particular destination (Malhotra, 2005; Roday et al., 2009). In addition, tourism also fosters “interactions between cultural customs” of visitors and local host population, and increased promotion of “creative talents” and “special relationship” between visitors and host population (Bhatta, 2006; Roday et al., 2009; Shrestha and Jeong, 2016). At

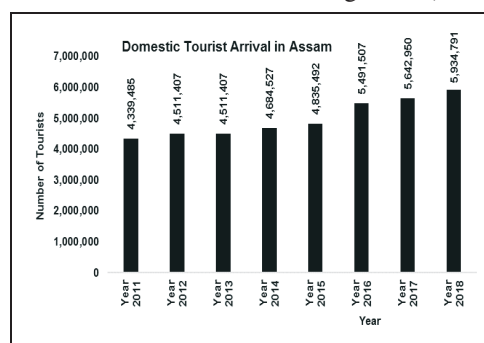


Figure-1: Domestic Tourist Arrival in Assam
(Source: ATDC, 2019)

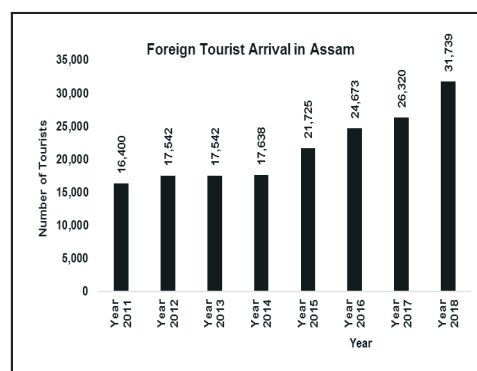


Figure-2: Foreign Tourist Arrival in Assam
(Source: ATDC, 2019)

present, the tourism and hospitality industry is witnessing a worldwide rapid pace of growth owing to increases in disposable income, accessibility of international travel for all classes of people, stress and strain of routine work, human desire to travel to different parts of the world, and awareness about travel and tourism through different media (Malhotra, 2005; Roday et al., 2009). According to WTO (2019), the total international tourist arrival in the year 2018 was 1.4 billion and total receipts (in tourist destinations) from international tourism stood at US\$1.5 trillion. This indicated 5% and 11% increase respectively over the same parameter in the year 2017. This report also stated that worldwide tourism contributed towards 29% of global services exports. The total estimated foreign tourist arrival (FTA) in India in the year 2018 was 17,427,000 which represented a 12.12% increase over the previous year (WTO, 2019). As per the same report, the total estimated receipts from tourism in case of India stood at US\$28,568 million in the year 2018. Similar increase in domestic and foreign tourist arrivals was noticed upto the year 2018 in case of the state (province) of Assam in North East India which has immense tourism potential (refer to Figure-1 and Figure-2).

The above discussion throws light upon the increasing importance of the tourism and hospitality industry in Assam in particular, and India and the world in general. As explained earlier,

accommodation is one of the most important components of this industry. Bilbao and Valdés (2016) have established the importance of proper quality accommodation in case of rural tourism in their study. Similar views have also been expressed by Grotte (2013). As per Jha (2015), accommodation in case of the aforementioned industry revolves around issues like “security, quality and economical services”. In fact, type of accommodation provided immensely affects the “behaviour of tourists/guests” (Jha, 2015).

As discussed in the earlier section, satisfaction of guests (tourists) in case of overall services of accommodation providers can lead to repeat visits to the same accommodation providers in future (Ball, Simões-Coelho & Machás, 2004; Lindroth, Ritalahti & Soisalon-Soininen, 2007; Türkilmaz & Özkan, 2007; Torres-Moraga *et al.*, 2008; Ha, Janda & Muthaly, 2010). This will definitely ensure uninterrupted cash flows and profitability of such entities in the coming years (Ha *et al.*, 2010). This is highly important for the success of such entities in the tourism and hospitality industry (Glancey & Pettigrew, 1997). Therefore, appropriate attention on the core aspects of consumer behaviour is highly important in the above entities (Lindroth *et al.*, 2007). This is also true in case of Assam due to reasons noted earlier. This paper, therefore, attempts to study the Servuction Model for different types of accommodation providers based on guests' perception in terms of their satisfaction as explained in the earlier section. It is to be noted that till date Barman *et al.* (2015) have conducted a study involving this model only in case of hotels. However, there is dearth of such studies involving other types of accommodation providers like resorts, lodges etc. This represents an important research gap. Further, there is a serious lack of similar studies involving Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Kamrup (Rural) districts of Assam. This denotes another

significant research gap as far as tourism and hospitality industry is concerned. The significance of these two districts stems from the fact that their geographical territory includes the city of Guwahati, Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International airport, Guwahati railway station and other important railway stations, Rupnath Brahma Inter-State Bus Terminal (ISBT), important accommodation providers (including star category hotels, resorts etc.), and important tourist destinations (refer to Table-A-1 and Table-A-2 respectively in the Annexure) (Maps of India, 2012a; Maps of India, 2012b; FHRAI, 2019). In fact, Guwahati city happens to be the largest city and gateway to all other tourist destinations of Assam as well as entire North East India (IITG, n.d.; ITDC, 2018). Based on the above discussion, this present study attempts to fill the aforementioned gaps.

Objective of the Study:

The objective of this paper is to study the Servuction Model for different types of accommodation providers based on guests' perception in terms of their satisfaction.

Research Methodology:

This study was carried out in order to fulfil its stated objectives. For this purpose, a structured questionnaire was used and administered among 350 potential respondents through a survey within Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Kamrup (Rural) districts of Assam. These respondents were guests in various accommodation providers which were in the form of hotels, resorts, heritage hotels, lodges, guest houses, and rest houses in the above state (as noted through proper observation and interviews of the aforementioned respondents). Due to unavailability of any proper sampling frame for the population from which data was collected, probabilistic sampling procedure could not be used in this study. As such, the aforesaid respondents were selected through convenience sampling from the study population owing to time and resource constraints. However, only 224 out of the above 350 respondents responded by

providing all their responses to the questions included in the aforesaid questionnaire. As such, the sample size for this study can be taken as 224 respondents. This survey was carried out within a time frame of six months (from 1st November, 2018 to 30th April, 2019). The main sources of secondary data were books, journals etc. The aforementioned questionnaire consisted of questions for identifying the respondents' perception of the impact of earlier discussed 39 parameters falling under servicescape (physical evidence), contact personnel, invisible organizations and systems, and other guests (of the Servuction Model) in the above entities. This impact was measured on a 5-point scale ranging from "High impact", "Above Average impact", "Average impact", "Below Average impact" to "Least impact". The aforesaid questionnaire also tried to determine respondents' satisfaction level on a 5-point scale ranging from "High satisfaction", "Above Average satisfaction", "Average satisfaction", "Below Average satisfaction" to "Least satisfaction". The above questionnaire exhibited high reliability coefficient (*Cronbach's* $\alpha=0.899$). Thereafter, it was tried to find out the main parameters falling under the above mentioned four factors of the Servuction Model that have significant impact on respondents' overall service experience (in terms of their satisfaction) in various accommodation providers. This was done by identifying such parameters where this impact was mostly *high* or *above average*. For additional verification of this impact, a series of Independent sample t-test and One-way ANOVA at a significance level of 5% ($\alpha=0.05$) were carried out (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011; Malhotra & Dash, 2016). These statistical tools were used to find out if the means of guests' satisfaction in various accommodation providers varied significantly across their perception regarding this impact of the above identified parameters. For this purpose, the respondent guests' satisfaction

level was taken as the dependent variable, and levels of their perception regarding the above impact of aforesaid identified parameters were taken as the independent variable. It is to be noted that Independent sample t-test and One-way ANOVA were used in the above regard whenever there were only two groups, and more than two groups respectively of the independent variable. It was then tried to find out those parameters (among these identified parameters) wherein the above mentioned mean was highest in case of "high impact" and gradually reduced in a linear manner towards lower levels of impact from "above average impact" to "least impact" or whichever is applicable. In other words, it was tried to find out such parameters wherein the above impact exhibited linear positive relationship with the aforementioned dependent variable. The validity of the Servuction Model with respect to such guests' perception in terms of their satisfaction was tried to be checked through this process. For further verification of the aforementioned impact of these identified main parameters on respondents' overall service experience (in terms of their satisfaction) in different accommodation providers, Discriminant Analysis was used. Here, the above respondent guests' satisfaction level was taken as the grouping variable (dependent variable) and the above impact of aforesaid main parameters were taken as the independent (predictor) variable. Based on responses obtained, the dependent variable was grouped into two groups, namely, "High Satisfaction" (*denoted as Group "1"*) and "Above Average Satisfaction" (*denoted as Group "0"*) as mentioned in Table-A-7 (in the Annexure). Here, the probabilities for group membership of the dependent variable were noted in case of the aforementioned independent variable. In this manner, it was tried to find out the above identified main parameters wherein aforesaid probability of the above impact was mostly "high" in case of "high

satisfaction” of the respondent guests, and mostly “above average” or “average” or lower (depending on responses obtained) relating to their “above average satisfaction”. The above identified parameters whose impact on respondent guests' satisfaction were validated through Independent sample t-test or One-way ANOVA, and Discriminant Analysis (as discussed above) require higher emphasis on the part of the management of various types of accommodation providers for satisfying their guests. However, those parameters wherein above such impact were validated only through Independent sample t-test or One-way ANOVA but not through Discriminant Analysis (as explained earlier) require moderate emphasis for satisfying such guests. In the above manner, it was tried to fulfil the stated objectives of this study.

Discriminant Analysis was employed due to its following advantages as far as this study was concerned (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2013; Malhotra & Dash, 2016):

- i) It helped in finding out the Discriminant function that can discriminate between the categories of the dependent (criterion) variable.
- ii) It helped in identifying the presence of significant differences among groups in terms of the independent (predictor) variables.
- iii) It aided in classification of cases on the basis of the values of independent (predictor) variable.
- iv) Besides, it also helped in finding out the accuracy of the classification.

In the above context, it may be noted that an attempt was made to employ Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for creating a path diagram for confirmation of the aforementioned Servuction Model. But, this could not be used because of the presence of substantial missing data in this study which led to failure of model fit using SEM (Valluzzi, Larson and Miller, 2003; Kleyman and McVean, 2008; Wu,

2009).

Limitations of the study:

As noted above, this study involved convenience sampling with its inherent limitations. Besides, this study involved only two districts of Assam, i.e., Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Kamrup (Rural) districts. As such, the outcome of this study may not be generalized.

Analysis and Findings:

It was observed from Table-A-3 (in the Annexure) that among the different types of accommodation providers, most of the respondent guests stayed in hotels (64.73%) and a significant number of them stayed in resorts (25.89%). It was also noticed that most of these respondents were males (74.11%), married (85.27%), and graduates (70.98%) (refer to Table-A-4 in the Annexure). Besides, most of them were residing inside North East India (90.63%), were graduates (70.98%), between 41 to 50 years in age (50.00%), employed in the public sector (25.00%), and with monthly income between Rs.25,000 to Rs.40,000 (49.55%). Further, most of them visited and stayed in the various aforementioned entities for both official and leisure purposes (49.55%).

Next, it was found that most respondent guests' perceived that altogether 33 parameters (out of 39 parameters) falling under servicescape, contact personnel, invisible organizations and systems, and other guests had significant impact (i.e., mostly high or above average impact) on their overall service experience in terms of their satisfaction in various accommodation providers (refer to Research Methodology, and Table-A-5 in the Annexure). However, no such impact was seen in case of six parameters due to which they were left out from further analyses. These six parameters included view of surrounding areas (A_8), comfort of beds/ mattresses/ pillows (A_{13}), helpful pre-transaction information (A_{19}), special attention (A_{24}), efficient check-in and check-out (A_{28}), and security of belongings including valuables (A_{33}) in case

of the above entities.

Thereafter, results of One-way ANOVA indicated that the null hypothesis that there is equality of means of guests' satisfaction in various accommodation providers across their perception regarding the impact of food and beverage quality (A_1) can be rejected (p-value less than $\alpha = 0.05$) (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. No.1) in the Annexure). This implied that the means of guests' satisfaction varied significantly across their perception regarding the impact of parameter A_1 . It was noticed that the above mean was highest whenever they exhibited "high" impact of A_1 . The same mean was lowest whenever guests' experienced "average" impact of A_1 . This indicated a linear positive relationship between levels of guests' satisfaction and levels of their perception regarding the impact of food and beverage quality in their respective accommodation providers. This meant that those who felt that this impact was high might experience high satisfaction. However, those who perceived that this impact was above average and average might experience above average satisfaction. Games-Howell Post Hoc test was conducted because the presence of equal variances could not be assumed in this case. The results indicated that significant pairwise differences existed among the above means of guests' satisfaction with respect to "high" impact, "above average" impact, and "average" impact of parameter A_1 in different accommodation providers (refer to Table-A-6 in the Annexure). These analyses ascertained that positive impact of parameter A_1 may result in guests' satisfaction in such entities. Further, in the above case, Discriminant Analysis could not be conducted for validating the impact of parameter A_1 on respondent guests' overall service experience in terms of their satisfaction. This was because the p-value of Box's M (for assessing the equality of covariance matrices) was found to be 0.001

(less than $\alpha = 0.05$). This indicated that the data differed significantly from the multivariate normal (Hair et al., 2013). Similar findings were noted in case of the above impact of additional two parameters, namely, availability of food and beverage variety (A_2), and food and beverage at reasonable price (A_4) on guests' satisfaction in aforesaid entities through same analyses. Here too, Games-Howell Post Hoc tests conducted (due to same reasons) yielded almost similar results as in case of parameter A_1 (refer to Table-A-6 in the Annexure).

In case of the impact of quality of the restaurant (A_3) on guests' satisfaction, Independent sample t-test was conducted as there were responses in only two levels of this impact, namely, "high" impact and "above average" impact. The results indicated that the null hypothesis that there is equality of means of guests' satisfaction in various accommodation providers across their perception regarding the impact of A_3 can be rejected (p-value less than $\alpha = 0.05$) (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. No.5) in the Annexure). This meant that the means of guests' satisfaction varied significantly across their perception regarding the impact of parameter A_3 . It was noticed that the above mean was highest whenever they experienced "high" impact of A_3 , and lowest whenever they perceived "above average" impact of A_3 . As such, a linear positive relationship existed between levels of guests' satisfaction and their perception regarding the impact of A_3 in their respective accommodation providers. This implied that those who felt that this impact was high might experience high satisfaction. Yet, those who perceived that this impact was above average might experience above average satisfaction. Here also, Discriminant Analysis could not be conducted as the p-value of Box's M was 0.01 (less than $\alpha = 0.05$) (as described earlier).

The above analyses ascertained that positive

impact of four parameters, namely, food and beverage quality, availability of food and beverage variety, food and beverage at reasonable price, and quality of the restaurant may result in increasing guests' satisfaction in various accommodation providers. As mentioned in the Research Methodology, it may be stated that the management of any accommodation provider may put moderate emphasis on these four parameters in order to satisfy their guests.

Again, results of One-way ANOVA indicated that positive impact of hygiene of food and beverage (A_3) may lead to increase in guests' satisfaction in their respective accommodation providers (p-value less than $\alpha=0.05$) (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. No.3) in the Annexure) as noted in case of food and beverage quality (A_1) above. This was further reaffirmed through Games-Howell Post Hoc tests that were conducted owing to similar reasons as explained above with similar results as in case of parameter A_1 (refer to Table-A-6 in the Annexure). Discriminant Analysis was carried out to assess the impact of hygiene of food and beverage (A_3) on respondent guests' overall service experience in terms of their satisfaction. This was because p-value of Box's M was found to be 0.705 (greater than $\alpha=0.05$) in this case implying that the data do not differ significantly from the multivariate normal (refer to Table-A-7 in the Annexure) (Hair et al., 2013). Further results of this analysis are shown in Table-A-7. It also indicated that 88.4% of the grouped cases are correctly classified. Based on the Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients, the Discriminant function involving respondent guests' satisfaction with the perceived impact of A_3 was derived as:

$$D_3 = (-8.554) + (2.134) A_3$$

.....(i)

From equation (i) it was found that those guests who experienced "high" impact of hygiene of food and beverage (A_3) in their respective accommodation providers were

"highly" satisfied (refer to Table-A-7 in the Annexure). On the other hand, those guests who experienced "above average" impact and "average" impact of the aforesaid parameter in such accommodation providers exhibited "above average" satisfaction. This verified that the guests' perceived impact of A_3 had linear positive relationship with their satisfaction level.

From similar analyses as noted in case of parameter A_3 above, it was found that linear positive relationship existed between levels of guests' satisfaction and their perception regarding the impact of welcoming atmosphere (A_9) in their respective accommodation providers (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. No.9) in the Annexure). The results of Discriminant Analysis indicated the following Discriminant function involving respondent guests' satisfaction with the perceived impact of A_9 as follows (p-value of Box's M= 0.444 (greater than $\alpha=0.05$) and 69.6% of the grouped cases being correctly classified):

$$D_9 = (-8.060) + (1.954) A_9$$

.....(ii)

Equation (ii) indicated that the impact of welcoming atmosphere had linear positive relation with guests' satisfaction level as in case of parameter A_3 (explained above). From the above findings, it may be opined that the management of any accommodation provider may put high emphasis on hygiene of food and beverage, and welcoming atmosphere in order to satisfy their guests (as per Research Methodology).

In case of respondents' perception regarding the impact of room furnishings and appearance (A_{10}), and quietness of the room (A_{11}) in various types of accommodation providers, it was seen that there was no response regarding "high" impact in this case (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. Nos.10 and 11) in the Annexure). As such, no further analysis was carried out in both these cases as it was meaningless to do so (although such responses were noticed in case of other levels of the aforesaid impact). Therefore, these parameters may not be

emphasized on part of the management of any accommodation provider while framing marketing strategies for satisfying their guests. This finding is also applicable for five parameters in case of contact personnel for satisfying guests in any of the above entities due to same reasons. These five parameters included convenient and reliable reservation system (A_{20}), friendliness and helpfulness of the staff (A_{21}), availability of staff to provide prompt service (A_{22}), courtesy of the staff (A_{23}), and neat appearance of staff (A_{26}).

Similar linear positive relationship was noticed between levels of guests' satisfaction and their perception regarding the impact of three parameters, i.e., language proficiency of the staff (A_{25}), availability of reliable wake-up call (A_{29}), and availability of staff for transportation arrangements (A_{30}) in case of contact personnel in their respective accommodation providers using One-way ANOVA (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. Nos.25, 29 and 30) in the Annexure). These findings were similar as noted in case of food and beverage quality (A_1). Games-Howell Post Hoc tests (conducted for similar reasons as explained above) indicated that positive impact of parameters A_{25} and A_{30} may lead to guests' satisfaction in such entities as in case of A_1 (refer to Table-A-8 in the Annexure). With respect to parameter A_{29} , similar Post Hoc test results indicated that there were no significant pairwise differences between the above means regarding "average" impact and "below average" impact of parameter A_{29} . Therefore, these two levels of impact of A_{29} may be treated as being equivalent. However, such significant pairwise differences were noticed between the aforesaid means relating to all other levels of the above impact as in case of parameter A_1 explained earlier. Still, it may be noted that from these analyses that positive impact of A_{29} may result in guests' satisfaction in various accommodation

providers. Discriminant Analysis could not be carried out in case of each of the above three parameters due to absence of adequate non-empty groups in case of the dependent variable, i.e., guests' satisfaction level (Hair et al., 2013). Therefore, the management of any accommodation provider may put moderate emphasis on these three parameters in order to satisfy their guests (as per Research Methodology).

In a similar manner using One-way ANOVA, linear positive relationship was observed between levels of guests' satisfaction and their perception regarding the impact of four parameters in case of invisible organizations and systems in their respective accommodation providers (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. Nos.36, 37, 38 and 39) in the Annexure). These four parameters included prevailing rules applicable to guests (A_{35}), other prevailing rules (A_{36}), prevailing service delivery processes (A_{37}), and information forms to be completed (like guest relationship form, feedback form, guest information form etc.) (A_{38}). Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc tests (conducted for similar reasons as mentioned earlier) indicated that positive impact of the above three parameters A_{35} , A_{36} and A_{37} may lead to guests' satisfaction in various accommodation providers as in case of food and beverage quality (A_1) as explained above (refer to Table-A-9 in the Annexure). In case of information forms to be completed (A_{38}), results of Post Hoc tests indicated that there were no significant pairwise differences between the above means regarding "average" impact and "below average" impact of parameter A_{38} as in the case parameter A_{29} described above. As such, these two levels of impact of A_{38} may be treated as being equal. Likewise, as in case of parameters A_1 and A_{29} explained earlier, significant pairwise differences existed between the above means regarding other levels of impact of parameter A_{38} . Still, these analyses ascertain that positive impact of parameter A_{38} may result in

guests' satisfaction in various accommodation providers. With respect to each of the above four parameters, A_{35} , A_{36} , A_{37} and A_{38} , Discriminant Analysis could not be conducted due to similar reasons as in the case of parameters A_{25} , A_{29} and A_{30} as explained earlier. Hence, moderate emphasis may be accorded on these four parameters for satisfying guests in the above entities (as noted in the Research Methodology).

Likewise, linear positive relationship was found to exist between levels of guests' satisfaction and their perception regarding the impact of fellow guests (A_{39}) in their respective accommodation providers using One-way ANOVA (refer to Table-A-5 (Sr. No.40) in the Annexure). The results of Games-Howell Post Hoc tests (conducted because of same reasons as noted above) indicated absence of significant pairwise differences between the above means regarding "high" impact and "average" impact of A_{39} . As such, these two levels of impact of A_{39} may be treated as being equivalent (refer to Table-A-10 in the Annexure). However, such pairwise differences existed between the above means regarding other levels of impact of A_{39} as in case of parameters A_1 and A_{29} mentioned above. Still, it may be noted that positive impact of parameter A_{39} may result in guests' satisfaction in various accommodation providers. Here too, Discriminant Analysis was not conducted for same reasons as in the case of parameters A_{25} , A_{29} and A_{30} . So, moderate importance may be accorded on the impact of fellow guests for satisfying guests in the aforementioned entities.

Based on the above analyses, a Servuction Model based on guests' perception of the impact of aforementioned different identified important parameters of services in various accommodation providers and their overall experience in terms of their satisfaction has been conceptualized as shown in Figure-A-1 in

the Annexure.

Discussion:

The above findings of this study indicated and verified that parameters, hygiene of food and beverage, and welcoming atmosphere, falling under servicescape needed high focus on the part of the management of various accommodation providers in order to satisfy their guests. Besides, moderate emphasis may be given on four parameters, namely, food and beverage quality, availability of food and beverage variety, food and beverage at reasonable price, and quality of the restaurant (in case of servicescape) for satisfying guests in the above entities. Likewise, three parameters falling under contact personnel, language proficiency of the staff, availability of reliable wake-up call, and availability of staff for transportation arrangements may be moderately stressed upon for satisfying guests in above such firms. Similar findings have been also observed with respect to prevailing rules applicable to guests, other prevailing rules, prevailing service delivery processes, and information forms to be completed under invisible organizations and systems for satisfying guests in various accommodation providers. Same findings have been noted in case of the impact of fellow guests for satisfying guests in the aforementioned entities. The above findings thereby provide a significant understanding regarding guests' perception in terms of their satisfaction with respect to the Servuction Model of service delivery in various types of accommodation providers. As explained earlier, satisfied guests' may undertake repeat visits to the same accommodation providers in future. This would guarantee continuous cash flows and profitability of such entities in the coming years. Thereby, these findings may help in filling the significant research gaps (as mentioned in the section Need for the Study) as far as tourism and hospitality industry is concerned. In addition, the aforementioned findings have demonstrated

the applicability of the above Servuction Model in other types of accommodation providers other than hotels within the sphere of this industry. This would indeed contribute towards valuable expansion of the existing body of knowledge for this industry globally and for the Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Kamrup (Rural) districts of Assam in particular.

Scope for future Research:

The findings of this study are expected to aid in exploring other major research gaps and unearthing additional valuable findings in the tourism and hospitality industry. Similar studies may be conducted in the future involving a much larger sample size covering more aspects of different types of accommodation providers falling under the aforementioned industry. Such studies may also be carried out in other parts of India and the world in general.

Conclusion:

The views, as propounded by the Servuction Model of service delivery are significant in order to arrive at proper understanding of guests' perception as far as their satisfaction is concerned in case of different types of establishments in the tourism and hospitality industry. As noted earlier, the findings of this study have illustrated the utility of the aforesaid Servuction Model in different types of accommodation providers including hotels, resorts, guest houses, rest houses etc. It is expected that proper emphasis on this model may help in augmenting guests' satisfaction that may increase chances of their repeat visits to the same accommodation provider(s) with consequent benefits in future. This is also true for such firms in the state of Assam in India and the districts of Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Kamrup (Rural) in particular.

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ANNEXURE

Table-A-1: Important Accommodation Providers within Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Kamrup (Rural) districts of Assam
(Star Category is applicable as present during the period of study)

Sr. No.	Name of the Hotel	Star Category	Source	Sr. No.	Name of the Hotel	Star Category	Source
1	Airport Guest House	NC	FHRAI	14	Hotel Nandan	NC	FHRAI
2	Brahmaputra Jungle Resort	3 Star	OFS	15	Hotel Nakshatra	3 Star	OFS
3	Hotel Ambarish	NC	OFS	16	Hotel Novotel Guwahati	5 Star [#]	FHRAI
4	Hotel Ambarish Grand Regency	NC	OFS	17	Hotel Paramount Palacio	NC	FHRAI
5	Hotel Agneedeeep Continental	NC	OFS	18	Hotel Prag Continental	NC	FHRAI
6	Hotel Atithi	NC	OFS	19	Hotel Rajmahal	4 Star	OFS
7	Hotel Brahmaputra Residency	NC	FHRAI	20	Hotel Rituraj	2 Star	OFS
8	Hotel Dynasty	4 Star	OFS	21	Kiranshree Portico (Hotel)	3 Star	OFS
9	Hotel Ginger	3 Star	OFS	22	Radisson Blu Hotel Guwahati	4 Star [#]	FHRAI
10	Hotel Grand Starline	4 Star	OFS	23	The Lily Hotel Guwahati	4 Star	OFS
11	Hotel Kuber International	NC	OFS	24	Viswaratna Hotel	NC	FHRAI
12	Hotel Maruti	NC	FHRAI	25	Vivanta Guwahati (Hotel)	5 Star Deluxe	FHRAI
13	Hotel Millennium	3 Star	OFS				

Note: [#] with Alcohol; *Abbreviations:* NC-No Classification, FHRAI-Federation of Hotels and Restaurants Association of India, OFS-On the Field Source; *Sources:* FHRAI, 2019; On the field source

Table-A-2: Important Tourist Destinations within Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Kamrup (Rural) districts of Assam

Sr. No.	Tourist Destinations	Sr. No.	Tourist Destinations
1	Accoland (Theme Park)	13	Guwahati Planetarium
2	Assam State Museum	14	Hayagriva Madhava Temple
3	Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden	15	Janardana Temple
4	Ashvaklanta Temple	16	Kamakhya Temple
5	Balaji Temple	17	Madan Kamdev Temple
6	Basistha Ashram Temple	18	Nabagraha Temple
7	Brahmaputra River (for cruising)	19	Powa Mecca
8	Chandubi Lake	20	Regional Science Museum
9	Christ Church	21	Shrimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra
10	Dipor Bil Bird Sanctuary	22	Sualkuchi
11	Dirgheshwari Temple	23	Ugratara Temple
12	Dreamland Amusement Park	24	Umananda Temple

Sources: IITG, n.d.; Maps of India, 2012a; Maps of India, 2012b; ITDC, 2018; On the field source

Table-A-3: Types of Accommodation Providers wherein the Respondents stayed

	Types of Accommodation Providers						Total
	Hotels	Resorts	Heritage Hotels	Lodges	Guest Houses	Rest Houses	
Frequency	145	58	3	3	8	7	224
Percent	64.73	25.89	1.34	1.34	3.57	3.13	100

Table-A-4: Profile of the Respondents

Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Gender			Place of residence			Sector of employment		
Male	166	74.11	Inside North East India	203	90.63	Private sector	48	21.43
Female	58	25.89	Outside North East	21	9.38	Public sector	56	25.00
Total	224	100.00	Total	224	100.00	Entrepreneur	51	22.77
Marital status			Purpose of visit			Self-employed/Professional	16	7.14
Married	191	85.27	Official	21	9.38	Others	53	23.66
Unmarried	33	14.73	Leisure	73	32.59	Total	224	100.00
Total	224	100.00	Both official and leisure	111	49.55	Monthly income		
Educational Qualification			Others	19	8.48	Below Rs.10,000	45	20.09
12th Board Passed	1	0.45	Total	224	100.00	Between Rs.10,000 to Rs.25,000	23	10.27
Graduate	159	70.98	Age			Between Rs.25,000 to Rs.40,000	111	49.55
Post Graduate	64	28.57	Below 20 years	2	0.89	Between Rs.40,000 to Rs.1,00,000	42	18.75
Total	224	100.00	Between 20 to 30 years	32	14.29	Between Rs.1,00,000 to Rs.1,50,000	3	1.34
			Between 31 to 40 years	44	19.64	Total	224	100.00
			Between 41 to 50 years	112	50.00			
			Between 51 to 60 years	20	8.93			
			Above 60 years	14	6.25			
			Total	224	100.00			

Table-A-5: Results of One-Way ANOVA and Independent Sample t-test- Impact of Different Parameters under Various Factors of the Servuction Model (IV) on Respondent Guests' Satisfaction Level (DV)

Parameters					Above Average Impact	Average Impact	Below average Impact	Least Impact		Results of One-Way ANOVA				
(Abbreviations used: ANOVA- One-Way Analysis of Variance, IST- Independent Sample t-test, DV- Dependent Variable, IV- Independent Variable)										p-value	Decision on Null Hypothesis (H_0)	Presence of Impact on DV	Presence of Positive Linear Relationship between DV and IV	
Factor: Servicescape														
1	Food and beverage quality (A ₁)	ANOVA	Frequency	109	94	21	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.44	4.28	4.00								
2	Availability of food and beverage variety (A ₂)	ANOVA	Frequency	69	135	20	0	0	224	0.003	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.39	4.35	4.00								
3	Hygiene of food and beverage (A ₃)	ANOVA	Frequency	48	130	46	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	5.00	4.20	4.00								
4	Food and beverage at reasonable price (A ₄)	ANOVA	Frequency	43	121	60	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.49	4.44	4.00								
5	Quality of the restaurant (A ₅)	IST	Frequency	74	150	0	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.72	4.14									
6	Location (A ₆)	ANOVA	Frequency	74	81	69	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.72	4.00	4.30								
7	Physical appearance (A ₇)	ANOVA	Frequency	42	135	47	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.00	4.55	4.00								
8	View of surrounding areas (A ₈)		Frequency	69	47	108	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
9	Welcoming atmosphere (A ₉)	ANOVA	Frequency	48	156	20	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.56	4.30	4.00								
10	Room furnishings and appearance (A ₁₀)		Frequency	0	205	19	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
11	Quietness of the room (A ₁₁)		Frequency	0	135	89	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
12	Overall cleanliness and tidiness (A ₁₂)	ANOVA	Frequency	26	133	65	0	0	224	0.001	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.00	4.36	4.40								
13	Comfort of beds/ mattresses/ pillows (A ₁₃)		Frequency	21	91	112	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
14	Quality of in-room temperature control (A ₁₄)	ANOVA	Frequency	26	114	84	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.00	4.46	4.25								
15	In-room entertainment including television/ video/ audio (A ₁₅)	ANOVA	Frequency	21	136	67	0	0	224	0.003	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.00	4.39	4.31								
16	Internet connection (A ₁₆)	ANOVA	Frequency	67	43	47	47	20	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.40	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00						
17	Reasonable price for the room (A ₁₇)	ANOVA	Frequency	21	115	88	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.00	4.46	4.24								
Factor: Contact Personnel														
18	Room service (A ₁₈)	ANOVA	Frequency	27	132	65	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	5.00	4.16	4.40								
19	Helpful pre-transaction information (A ₁₉)		Frequency	19	95	110	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
20	Convenient and reliable reservation system (A ₂₀)		Frequency	0	183	41	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
21	Friendliness and helpfulness of the staff (A ₂₁)		Frequency	0	112	112	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
22	Availability of staff to provide prompt service (A ₂₂)		Frequency	0	111	86	27	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
23	Courtesy of the staff (A ₂₃)		Frequency	0	178	46	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
24	Special attention (A ₂₄)		Frequency	27	68	109	20	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
25	Language proficiency of the staff (A ₂₅)	ANOVA	Frequency	69	114	41	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.70	4.23	4.00								
26	Neat appearance of staff (A ₂₆)		Frequency	0	182	42	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
27	Convenient payment method (A ₂₇)	ANOVA	Frequency	21	115	88	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	5.00	4.23	4.30								
28	Efficient check-in and check-out (A ₂₈)		Frequency	21	95	108	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
29	Availability of reliable wake-up call (A ₂₉)	ANOVA	Frequency	27	128	48	21	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	5.00	4.37	4.00	4.00							
30	Availability of staff for transportation arrangements (A ₃₀)	ANOVA	Frequency	48	113	63	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.56	4.42	4.00								
31	Availability of meeting facilities (A ₃₁)	ANOVA	Frequency	47	109	68	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.00	4.44	4.38								
32	Availability of convenient parking facilities (A ₃₂)	ANOVA	Frequency	68	114	22	20	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.31	4.46	4.00	4.00							
33	Security of belongings including valuables (A ₃₃)		Frequency	69	69	86	0	0	224		No further analyses carried out			
			Mean											
34	Availability of efficient laundry service (A ₃₄)	ANOVA	Frequency	21	141	62	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Absent	
			Mean	4.00	4.52	4.00								
Factor: Invisible Organizations and Systems														
35	Prevailing rules applicable to guests (A ₃₅)	ANOVA	Frequency	27	177	20	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	5.00	4.27	4.00								
36	Other prevailing rules (A ₃₆)	ANOVA	Frequency	48	135	41	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	5.00	4.19	4.00								
37	Prevailing service delivery processes (A ₃₇)	ANOVA	Frequency	21	114	89	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	5.00	4.46	4.00								
38	Information forms to be completed (A ₃₈)	ANOVA	Frequency	68	115	21	20	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	4.69	4.23	4.00	4.00							
Factor: Fellow guests														
39	Fellow guests (A ₃₉)	ANOVA	Frequency	27	177	20	0	0	224	0.000	Rejected	Present	Present	
			Mean	5.00	4.27	4.00								

Table-A-6: Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc Tests for Dependent Variable, Respondent Guests' Satisfaction Level in case of Different Parameters of Servicescape

Independent Variable- Impact of food and beverage quality (IV ₁)			Independent Variable- Impact of availability of food and beverage variety (IV ₂)			Independent Variable- Impact of hygiene of food and beverage (IV ₃)		
(I) IV ₁	(J) IV ₁	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₂	(J) IV ₂	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₃	(J) IV ₃	MD (I-J)
Average impact	Above average impact	-0.28*	Average impact	Above average impact	-0.35*	Average impact	Above average impact	-0.20*
	High impact	-0.44*		High impact	-0.39*		High impact	-1.00*
Above average impact	Average impact	0.28*	Above average impact	Average impact	0.35*	Above average impact	Average impact	0.20*
	High impact	-0.16*		High impact	-0.04*		High impact	-0.80*
High impact	Average impact	0.44*	High impact	Average impact	0.39*	High impact	Average impact	1.00*
	Above average impact	0.16*		Above average impact	0.04*		Above average impact	0.80*

Independent Variable- Impact of food and beverage at reasonable price (IV ₄)			Independent Variable- Impact of welcoming atmosphere (IV ₅)		
(I) IV ₄	(J) IV ₄	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₅	(J) IV ₅	MD (I-J)
Average impact	Above average impact	-0.44*	Average impact	Above average impact	0.30*
	High impact	-0.49*		High impact	-0.41*
Above average impact	Average impact	0.44*	Above average impact	Average impact	-0.30*
	High impact	-0.05*		High impact	-0.72*
High impact	Average impact	0.49*	High impact	Average impact	0.41*
	Above average impact	0.05*		Above average impact	0.72*

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Note: MD denotes Mean Difference

Table-A-7: Results of Discriminant Analysis - Impact of Different Parameters of Servicescape on Respondent Guests' Satisfaction Level

Parameters		Results of Discriminant Analysis											
		Above Average Impact	Average Impact	Below Average Impact	Least Impact	p-value of Box's M	Eigen Value	Canonical Correlation	Wilk's Lambda	Chi Square	Degree(s) of Freedom (df)	p-value	% of correct classification
Hygiene of food and beverage (A ₃)	Codes	5	4	3	2	1	0.705	0.928	0.694	0.52	145.36	1	0.000
	Discriminant Score (D ₃)	5.12	2.98	0.85									
	Group for A ₃	1	0	0									
	Probabilities for Group Membership for DV	Group 0	0.03	0.68	0.99								
		Group 1	0.97	0.32	0.01								
Welcoming atmosphere (A ₉)	Codes	5	4	3	2	1	0.444	0.110	0.314	0.90	22.99	1	0.000
	Discriminant Score (D ₉)	1.71	-0.24	-2.20									
	Group for A ₉	1	0	0									
	Probabilities for Group Membership for DV	Group 0	0.25	0.56	0.84								
		Group 1	0.75	0.44	0.16								

D₃ = (-8.554) + 2.134A₃

D₉ = (-8.060) + 1.954A₉

Table-A-8: Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc Tests for Dependent Variable, Guests' Satisfaction Level in case of Different Parameters of Contact Personnel

Independent Variable- Impact of language proficiency availability of the staff (IV ₂₅)			Independent Variable- Impact of availability of staff for transportation arrangements (IV ₃₀)		
(I) IV ₂₅	(J) IV ₂₅	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₃₀	(J) IV ₃₀	MD (I-J)
Average impact	Above average impact	-0.23*	Average impact	Above average impact	-0.42*
	High impact	-0.70*		High impact	-0.56*
Above average impact	Average impact	0.23*	Above average impact	Average impact	0.42*
	High impact	-0.47*		High impact	-0.15*
High impact	Average impact	0.70*	High impact	Average impact	0.56*
	Above average impact	0.47*		Above average impact	0.15*

Independent Variable- Impact of availability of reliable wake-up call (IV ₂₉)		
(I) IV ₂₉	(J) IV ₂₉	MD (I-J)
Below average impact	Average impact	0
	Above average impact	-0.37*
	High impact	-1.00*
Average impact	Below average impact	0
	Above average impact	-0.37*
	High impact	-1.00*

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Note: MD denotes Mean Difference

Table-A-9: Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc Tests for Dependent Variable, Respondent Guests' Satisfaction Level of Different Parameters of Invisible Organizations and Systems

Independent Variable- Impact of prevailing rules applicable to guests (IV ₃₅)			Independent Variable- Impact of other prevailing rules (IV ₃₆)			Independent Variable- Impact of prevailing service delivery processes (IV ₃₇)		
(I) IV ₃₅	(J) IV ₃₅	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₃₆	(J) IV ₃₆	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₃₇	(J) IV ₃₇	MD (I-J)
Average impact	Above average impact	-0.27*	Average impact	Above average impact	-0.19*	Average impact	Above average impact	-0.46*
	High impact	-1.00*	impact	High impact	-1.00*	impact	High impact	-1.00*
Above average impact	Average impact	0.27*	Above average impact	Average impact	0.19*	Above average impact	Average impact	0.46*
	High impact	-0.73*	High impact	High impact	-0.81*	High impact	High impact	-0.54*
High impact	Average impact	1.00*	High impact	Average impact	1.00*	High impact	Average impact	1.00*
	Above average impact	0.73*	impact	Above average impact	0.81*	impact	Above average impact	0.54*
Independent Variable- Impact of information forms to be completed (IV₃₈)						* The mean difference is significant		
(I) IV ₃₈	(J) IV ₃₈	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₃₈	(J) IV ₃₈	MD (I-J)			
Below average impact	Average impact	0	Above average impact	Below average impact	0.23*			
	Above average impact	-0.23*	impact	Average impact	0.23*			
	High impact	-0.69*		High impact	-0.46*			
Average impact	Below average impact	0	High impact	Below average impact	0.69*			
	Above average impact	-0.23*		Average impact	0.69*			
	High impact	-0.69*		Above average impact	0.46*			

Table-A-10: Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc Tests for Dependent Variable, Respondent Guests' Satisfaction Level in case of Other Fellow Guests

Independent Variable- Impact of fellow guests (IV ₃₉)								
(I) IV ₃₉	(J) IV ₃₉	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₃₉	(J) IV ₃₉	MD (I-J)	(I) IV ₃₉	(J) IV ₃₉	MD (I-J)
Average impact	Above average impact	-0.27*	Above average impact	Average impact	0.27*	High impact	Average impact	1.00
	High impact	-1.00	impact	High impact	-0.73*	impact	Above average	0.73*

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Note: MD denotes Mean Difference

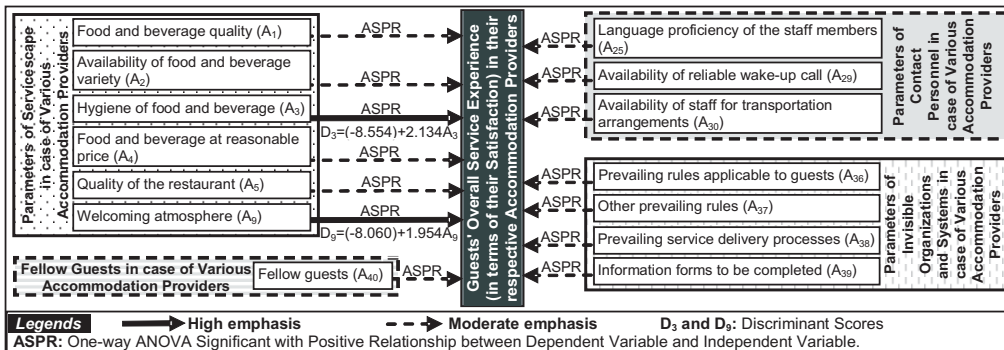


Figure-A-1: Servuction Model based on Guests' Perception between Different Parameters of Services in Various Accommodation Providers and their Overall Experience in Terms of their Satisfaction

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Key Words

**community support;
community involvement;
perceived benefits;
perceived costs; community
based waste management;
sustainable tourism
development**

A Sustainable Approach to Community based waste management in the Backwaters of South Kerala

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Abstract

The article is intended to comprehend the influence of community support, Community involvement, Perceived benefits and Perceived costs of Community based waste management on Sustainable tourism development in the Backwater Regions of Kerala, India. The researcher gathered data through census survey that were conducted in major three backwater destinations of South Kerala, India i.e. Kottayam, Alappuzha and Kollam. In total, 277 usable questionnaires were collected from the survey. SEM analysis was used to interpret the data collected. The results suggest that community support and Community involvement in Community based waste management are essential for Sustainable tourism development. Local Community involvement and support are always intervened with Perceived benefits and Perceived costs. Perceived benefits positively support and involve the Local Community whereas Perceived costs negatively support and involve the Local Community.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, Backwater Tourism Destinations of Kerala have developed considerably well, attracting both foreign and domestic tourists. This unique destination offers tourists a wonderful experience to enjoy the natural beauty of the backwaters. Thus tourism has become an important economic activity benefitting the local communities and has been able to create a good number of employment opportunities in and around the Backwater Destinations of South Kerala (Narayanan, 2014). Despite this phenomenal growth, negative impacts on the destination have been inevitable. Solid waste is a commonly identified and ever increasing negative impact of Backwater Tourism Destinations. It has also led to direct as well as indirect impacts on the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability as studied by Ezeah, Fazakerley, and Byrne (2015).

As a solution to sustainability challenges of backwater tourism, it is vital to integrate all stakeholders of the destinations to mitigate the problems of waste management. Therefore, community based waste management could be a practical solution to alleviate the intricacies of waste management related to Backwater tourism, as this plan integrates all the stakeholders of the respective destination. The stakeholders get the opportunity to take charge of all the activities and programs related to this task. There are different groups of stakeholders in backwater tourism, from houseboat owners to resort owners, government officials to host communities. Their active support and involvement is mandatory to ensure social, economic and environmental sustainability.

In the light of this thought, the study intended to comprehend the impact of Community Based Waste Management on Sustainable tourism development in the Backwater Regions of South Kerala.

Literature review

Sustainable tourism development

Recent developments in the field of technology and the sophisticated life of human beings have led to an increased interest in tourism. Mearns (2012) emphasizes that this has led to an increase in the amount of waste generated in tourism destinations. Therefore, it is imperative for the tourism industry to sustain its basic elements for the development of tourist destinations in three dimensions, namely social, economic and environmental. Various studies highlight the fact that every concept that has the potential to reduce the complexities of waste management related to tourism industry can be considered as 'Sustainable tourism development'.

Butler (1999) in his article "Sustainable Tourism: A State of the Art Review" clearly defines the origin and development of the concept of Sustainable tourism development. He refers to the original definition of Sustainable Development that was given by the Brundland Commission of 1987 in "Our Common Future":

"Sustainable tourism development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

A good number of the present studies relating to Sustainable tourism development, focus mainly on the descriptive aspects with emphasis on the idea, history and principles of the concept. However, Cristian, Maria, Artene, and Duran, (2015) suggest that Sustainable tourism development takes into consideration the long term needs of natural environment and the social needs of local community. "Therefore sustainable tourism is not a form of tourism, but rather a standard or set of principles suitable for good practice in tourism" as also studied by Guerrero, Diaz, and Martinez (2017). Hunter (1997) states that it is not a rigid framework but an adaptive paradigm that explains the different approaches suitable

for different circumstances. This encompasses principles, policies, methods, and prescriptions that will help to protect tourism development for the future.

According to Hunter (1997), Sustainable Tourism is an important component of tourism and its acceptance will solve many issues that negatively impact tourism industry as a whole. Angelevska, Najdeska, and Rakicevik (2012) also state that planning sustainable development will help to overcome the challenges of tourism industry.

In a study by Cristian et al. (2015) sustainable tourism development has been recognized as the main tool for development of the human society and it plays an important role in resources conservation in many parts of the world. Ross and Wall (1999) also mention that it strikes a fine balance between environmental conservation and community development as it includes the factors of environmental protection, local community consideration and economic development, as also studied by Janusz and Bajdor (2013). However, simply adopting the concept will not ensure success.

As a solution, Community based waste management has been identified as an effective tool for improving solid waste management sustainably in tourism destinations.

Community based waste management

Many researchers including Chengula (2015) suggested that Community based waste management is the practical solution for sustainable tourism especially overcoming waste management problems that can therefore benefit the host community, protect the natural resources and bring about economic development. Gotame (2012) defines Community based waste management as the activities and programmes that are undertaken by the stakeholders of the destination in order to solve waste management issues. The core group members for Community based waste management include all the stakeholders'

public, private and non-governmental organizations. The main objective of Community based waste management is to empower local communities in every aspect of waste management in tourism, and to emphasize on the environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The views of local communities regarding tourism impacts were important because they influenced the involvement of the communities in the projects as said by Bansal and Kansal (2018). In the study by Candido and Cabrido (2006) there are different strategies to improve Community based waste management such as training the general public, campaigning, distributing useful guidelines, assigning roles and responsibilities, educating local communities, making evaluations and monitoring. In addition to this, Cebu (2012) also includes partnership with women SHG (Self Help Group), household associations, local Non-Governmental organizations, academic institutions, private ventures that can strengthen the Community based waste management process.

Hence, Community based waste management is the collective responsibility of stakeholders and local community members as studied by Gracia and Mendoza (2006). It will also include various elements like community involvement, community support, Perceived benefits, and Perceived costs.

Community involvement, Community support, Perceived benefits and Perceived costs

According to Lee (2013), Community support and Community involvement are essential for the development of Sustainable Tourism in any tourist destination. Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2011) studied that it is required to measure the role of the community in tourism development in any destination, and Gursoy and Dyer (2010) had earlier studied that the local community always decide whether to go for benefits or costs of the tourism activities. Due to conflicts, negative attitudes within local

communities decrease local support for initiatives for sustainable tourism as explained by Rastegar (2018).

According to Shinwari (2000), Community involvement offers a general and broad understanding of community action in tourism activities. In a study by John (1998) it can be regarded as the stakeholder's participation in various tourism activities and it also explains the stakeholder's involvement in various issues relating to waste management and how much they support sustainable tourism development, according to Lee (2013).

Gursoy, Jurowski, and Uysal (2002) studied that Community involvement is necessary and the degree of willingness by the community to support tourism can also influence the waste management issues of the destination. Lee (2013) defines 'Community support' as the support of the community for tourism development within the communities that they live in. Studies have also found that local residents' support is required for tourism to thrive in the destinations, as explained by John (1998). Community support and Community involvement for waste management in a destination are influenced by the Perceived benefits and Perceived costs. Perceived benefits talk about the stakeholder's perception of benefits from Community based waste management, whereas Perceived costs are about the cost of Community based waste management practices (Gursoy et al., 2002).

Research studies in the past two decades have shown that tourism involves both costs as well as benefits, and that the Perceived Cost is negatively related to stakeholders' reactions to development, while Perceived benefits are positively related to stakeholders' reactions. The relationship between the attitude of residents towards tourism impacts and the satisfaction of the community, resulting in the positive attitude of residents towards tourism growth" as studied by Singh (2017). Therefore, Perceived benefits and

Perceived costs have significant roles to play in determining the sustainable development in tourism activities. Economic Benefits have been identified as the main Perceived Benefit for the community to get involved in the tourism sector, while legal, social and environmental factors are identified to be Perceived costs as researched by Sook, May, Songan, and Nair (2014).

Lee (2013) states that if the local community perceives benefits from waste management activities than costs, then the community is likely to support Community based waste management initiatives. However, if the local community perceives costs rather than benefits, then the community is likely to oppose Community based waste management actions. Similarly, if the Perceived benefits are more from any destination, the stakeholders would like to support and involve themselves in Community based waste management initiatives as already substantiated by Jurowski, Gursay, and Uysal (1997).

Therefore, understanding Community support and Community involvement towards Perceived benefits and Perceived costs is necessary to understand their support towards Sustainable tourism development. At the same time, understanding Perceived benefits and Perceived costs of Backwater Tourism Destinations is also necessary to understand their impacts on Sustainable tourism development. To compensate for this research gap, the study identifies and explains the following research hypotheses:

H₁: *Community support* has a negative and significant influence on Perceived costs

H₂: *Community support* has a positive and significant influence on Perceived benefits

H₃: *Community involvement* has a negative and significant influence on Perceived costs

H₄: *Community involvement* has a positive and significant influence on Perceived benefits

H₅: *Perceived benefits* have a positive and significant influence on Sustainable

tourism development

H₆: *Perceived costs* have an inverse and significant influence on Sustainable tourism development

Methodology

Study Context

The Backwater Regions of South Kerala in India were chosen as the geographical area for the study. This was mainly because of the fact that Backwater Tourism has met with great success in the tourism sector of Kerala, which has led to tremendous growth of tourism facilities like houseboats, home-stays and resorts on the shores of the Backwaters. Backwaters are nothing but wetlands which are places where rivers meet the sea or where freshwater mixes with sea water & where tides occur.

The Backwater Region of Kerala stretches over a total expanse of 1500 kms across the districts of Alappuzha, Kottayam, Trivandrum, Kollam, Kozhikode, Kasaragod and Ernakulum of Kerala, India. Out of them, Kumarakom Backwaters, Kollam Backwaters and Alappuzha Backwaters are prominent on the tourist trail for Backwater Tourism (Figure 1, 2, 3, 4). The study area encompasses these prominent Backwater Destinations.

The area offers important attractions to tourists, both domestic and international as there are 29 major lakes on the Backwaters of which, seven drains into the sea, and the area has a network of 44 rivers, lagoons and lakes from north to south. It lie between 09°00' -10°40'N and 76°00'-77°30'E. Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram airports are situated just 90 km from Alappuzha and Kottayam districts. Alappuzha Town and Kottayam Junction are main railway stations in the Indian Railway Network, for all trains connected to South Kerala, where it is necessary to conform to Alappuzha Backwaters and Kumarakom backwaters respectively. Kollam Junction is a main railway station situated in the core of Kollam Town where it is possible to achieve Ashtamudi-backwater tourism. Similarly, most of the

backwater areas are interconnected each other with national highways and state highways. Regular cruises also call the port of Kochi from where visitors can reach Vembanad Lake either by vehicle or by

yachts or by light cruisers. The major livelihood activities of the host community in the backwater region include agriculture, tourism, fishing, inland navigation etc.

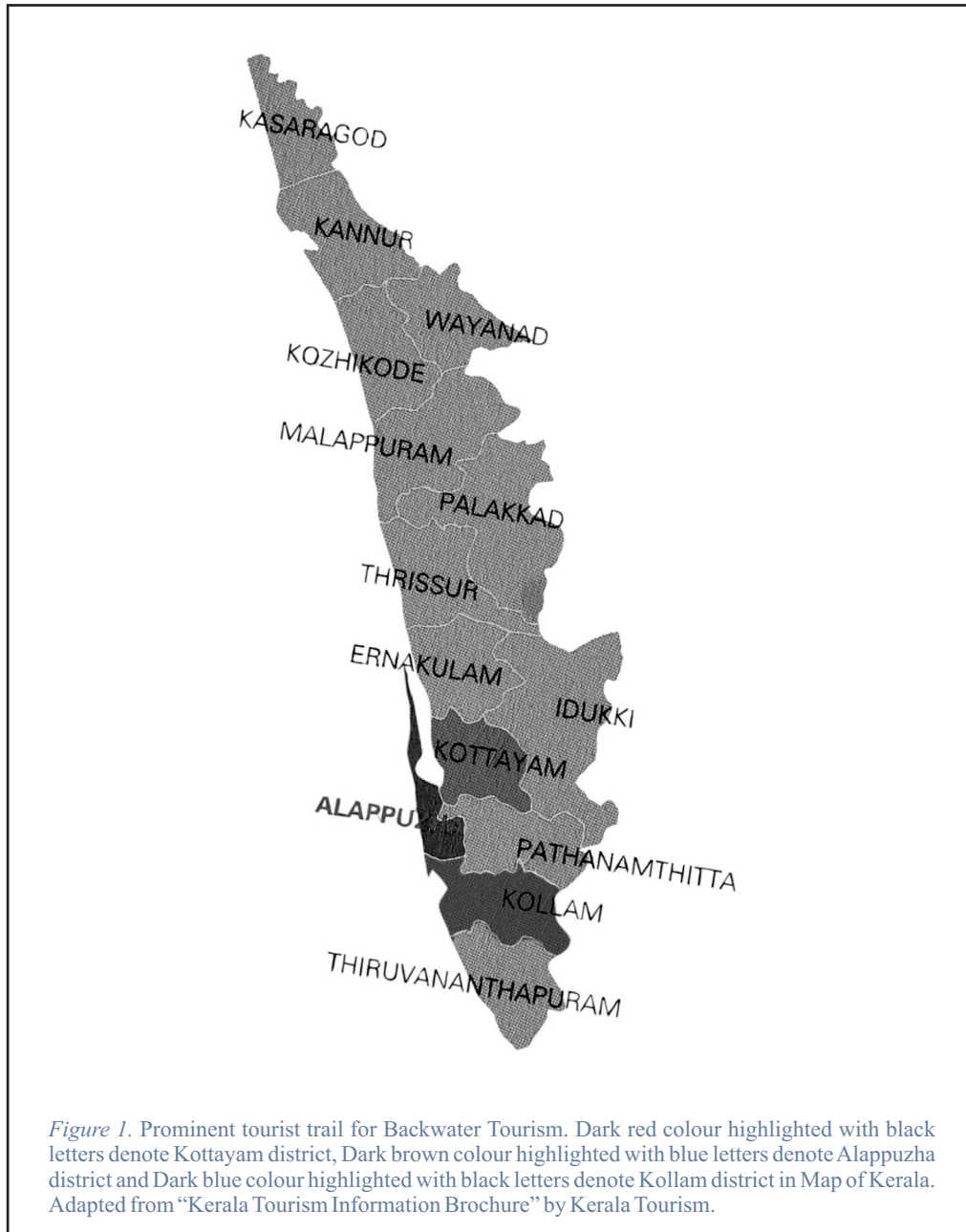




Figure 2. Map of Kumarakom Backwaters. Thick orange line denotes the National Highway, Brown colour line denotes the state highway, Blue colour shows Rivers and Backwaters, and the red spot denotes tourist attractions. Adapted from “Kerala Tourism Information Brochure” by Kerala Tourism



Figure 3. Map of Kollam Backwaters. Thick orange line denotes the National Highway, Brown colour line denotes the state highway, Blue colour shows Rivers and Backwaters, and the red spot denotes tourist attractions. Adapted from “Kerala Tourism Information Brochure” by Kerala Tourism.



Figure 4. Map of Alappuzha Backwaters. Thick orange line denotes the National Highway, Brown colour line denotes the state highway, Blue colour shows Rivers and Backwaters, and the red spot denotes tourist attractions. Adapted from “Kerala Tourism Information Brochure” by Kerala Tourism.

Sampling and Surveying

In the first stage of the study, three major destinations that were located within the Backwater Region of Kerala and that were involved in Backwater Tourism were stratified for the study: those are Kottayam, Alappuzha and Kollam. Then, the study clustered the stakeholders in the Backwater Region into Public and Private, namely as Houseboat Officials, Hotels and Resorts Officials, Local Community and Government Officials. The sample size for

each community was determined through a Census Survey and through Convenience Sampling Strategy.

The list and the information on various stakeholders were collected from the Office of the District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC) and from the Department of Tourism (DOT of the respective Backwater destinations.

Houseboats that were registered under the concerned District Tourism Promotion Councils (DTPC) were selected as samples

for the Houseboat Stakeholders. There were 99 Houseboat Operators registered under the different DTPCs (Kollam: 24; Kumarakom: 44; Alappuzha: 31).

The Hotels or Resorts which were located on/close to the Backwater Regions were selected as samples for the Hotels and Resorts Stakeholders. There are 68 famous Hotels and Resorts (Kollam: 23; Kumarakom: 21; Alappuzha: 24) located on/close to the Backwater Regions.

The Local Community included the members of the Clean Destination Campaign in the Backwater Region under the District Tourism Promotion Council. Clean Destination Campaign staff members are the local people and the members of the SHG Groups around the Backwater Regions. Their role is to ensure that the Backwater Environments are neatly maintained. The researcher has collected the list and the information of the Clean Destination Staff Members from the office of the District Tourism Promotion Council, concerned with each destination. Twelve Government Officials were also considered for the study from the respective Backwater Destinations.

Thirdly, one local resident from each selected Community was hired to act as a Guide to search for and to identify the target Stakeholders so as to conduct the questionnaire surveys.

The questionnaire was administered at three of the sites under the study using the direct face-to-face survey methodology because of the strength of this method in achieving high response rates. The researcher spent around 10 to 15 minutes at the site providing a brief explanation of the study to the respondents who were willing to answer the questionnaires and waited at the site until the task was completed by all participating respondents. To minimize the possible bias that could arise due to the researcher-participant interactions, it was communicated to the respondents that their participation was purely voluntary and would remain anonymous, and they were

encouraged to state their own personal opinions as truthfully as possible. In total, 277 usable questionnaires were collected from the survey.

Research Instrument

On the basis of review of literature, the research gaps were identified. From the research gaps, the items that measured Community involvement, Community support, Perceived benefits, Perceived costs and Sustainable Tourism were selected for the development of the questionnaire.

The Items coded under Community involvement were based on the findings of Mongkolnchaiarunya (2005), Furqan and Umum (2013), Nicholas, Thapa, and, Ko (2009), Malik et al. (2015), and Nair and Ramachandran (2013).

For Community support, the findings presented by Lee (2012), and Muresan et al. (2016) were modified. Items on Perceived benefits were based on the findings of Jamal (2016) and Muresan et al. (2016), and items for Perceived costs were based on the findings of Dangi and Jamal (2016) and Muresan et al. (2016).

Along with them, minimum demographic information was also included in the questionnaire. Prior to the actual data collection, a pilot study was conducted. In total, 277 samples were collected. The questionnaire used a 5 Point Likert Scale and the reliability of the tool was assessed by examining the Cronbach's Alpha Score.

The findings of the Reliability Test revealed that most of the constructs displayed a score that were higher than the required Reliability Score, with Cronbach's Alpha of Sustainable tourism development at 0.805, Community involvement at 0.714, Community support at 0.777. Perceived benefits had a Cronbach's Alpha Score of 0.826 and Perceived costs had a score of 0.788.

Data Analysis

The items on Community based waste management which involved Community involvement, Community support, Perceived benefits, and Perceived Cost

were added to the SPSS Software. Descriptive Analysis was then used to understand the basic characteristics of the respondents of the Backwater Destinations. CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) and SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) were then analysed using the AMOS Software, Version IBM 20. This was done in order to assess the effectiveness and so as to ensure the quality of the Measurement Model.

Findings and Results

Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the stakeholders are presented in Figure 3. The survey stakeholders included 59.9% males and 40.1% females. Most of the stakeholders (35%) were aged 30-39 years old, followed by 40-49 years (31.8%), 50-59 years

(18.4%) and 20-29 years (14.8%). Stakeholders were from different educational backgrounds. Approximately 35% of the stakeholders had an educational degree, followed by High School (27.8%), Primary School (21.3%), Master's Degree (9.4%) and 5.8% of the stakeholders had not gone to school. Of the stakeholders, 35.7% of the stakeholders were Houseboat Officials followed by the members of the Local Community (35.4%), Resort / Hotel Officials (24.5%) and Government Officials (4.3%).

With respect to the Stakeholders' Regions, 36.1% of the stakeholders belonged to the Kottayam Backwater Region, followed by 33.6% from the Alappuzha Backwater Region and 30.3% from the Kollam Backwater Region.

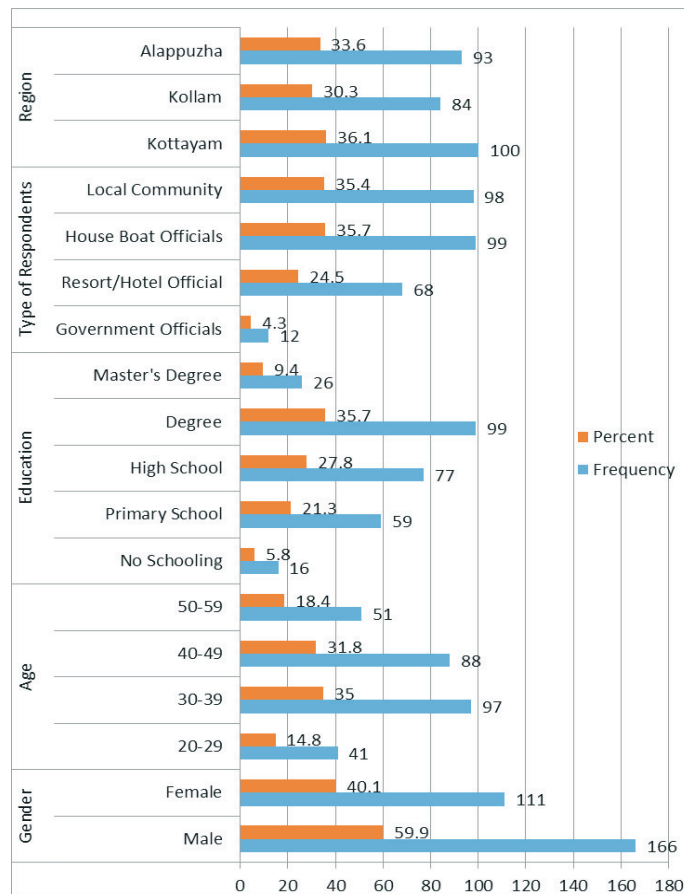


Figure 3. Demographic profile of the Stakeholders

Table 1 displays the factors of community based waste management on a Five-Point Likert Scale for Perceived benefits, Perceived Cost, Community involvement and Community support in the Backwater Regions of Kerala.

From Table 1, it is clear that the respondents considered Income ($M = 4.57$, $SD = 0.659$) as the most important Perceived Benefit of Community based waste management initiatives in the Backwater Region; followed by Opportunities for Women ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 0.656$), Employment Opportunities ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.689$), Opportunities to Preserve the Natural Environment ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.673$), Community Participation in Waste Management ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.635$), Increase in Environmental Awareness ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.651$) and Significance of Local Community Participation.

With respect to Perceived costs, respondents considered the Threat of Poorly Managed Waste ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.813$) as the most important Perceived Cost in the Backwater Region followed by the Explosive Growth of Tourism ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.935$), Water Pollution ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 1.292$), Large Quantity of Solid Waste Products ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 1.085$), and finally Tourist Littering ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.197$).

Stakeholders in the Backwater Region considered Innovative Waste Treatment Methods ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 0.724$) as the most important factor under Community support followed by Submission of Plans for Waste Disposal ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.673$), Local Community Empowerment ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.654$), Local Government Support ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 0.723$), Requirement of a Coordinator ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 1.184$), and Regulatory Initiatives ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.184$).

Environmental Protection ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.577$) was the most important factor preferred under Community involvement by stakeholders in the Backwater Region, followed by Value of Waste Materials ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.876$), Promotion of Reusable Materials ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.817$), Reducing and Recycling of Waste Products ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.892$), Environmentally Friendly Products ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 1.148$), Use of Public Litter Bins ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 0.999$), Reduction of Paper ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.293$), Development of Waste Segregation Mechanisms ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.484$), Environmental Impact Assessment ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.542$), and Practicing Environmental Impact Assessment ($M = 1.95$, $SD = 1.333$).

Table 1: Factors of Community based waste management

Variables	Code	Factors of Community based waste management	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perceived benefits	PB1	Community Participation	4.41	.814
	PB2	Community Participation in SWM	4.48	.635
	PB3	Income	4.57	.659
	PB4	Employment Opportunities	4.53	.689
	PB5	Facilitate to Preserve	4.48	.673
	PB6	Environment Awareness	4.46	.651
	PB7	Opportunities for Women	4.55	.656
Perceived costs	PC1	Water Pollution	2.81	1.293
	PC2	Tourism Produce Solid Waste Products	2.63	1.085
	PC3	Tourists Littering	2.15	1.197
	PC4	Explosive Growth	3.14	.935
	PC5	Poorly Managed Waste	4.40	.813
Community support	CS1	Local Government Support	4.44	.723
	CS2	Regulatory Initiatives	4.10	1.184
	CS3	Local Community Empowerment	4.46	.656

Community involvement	CS4	Waste Treatment Method	4.54	.724
	CS5	Submit Plans	4.53	.673
	CS6	Coordinator	4.17	1.184
	CI1	Promote Reusable Materials	4.13	.817
	CI2	Reduce and Recycle	4.08	.892
	CI3	Waste segregate mechanism	3.34	1.484
	CI4	Reduce Paper	3.51	1.293
	CI5	Public Litter Bins	3.96	.999
	CI6	Environment Friendly Products	3.99	1.148
	CI7	Waste has Value	4.36	.876
	CI8	Environment Impact Assessment	2.80	1.542
	CI9	Undergone EIA	1.95	1.333
	CI10	Improve Environmental Protection	4.61	.577

Measurement Model

Table 2 depicts the Goodness-of-fit and the Incremental Indices of Measurement Model for Community involvement, Community support, Perceived costs, Perceived benefits and Sustainable tourism development Dimensions. From the results, it was clearly observed that the Composite Reliability and AVE Values exceeded the threshold limits, thereby demonstrating a high level of internal consistency, convergent and discriminant validity. The other Model Fit Indices used for the study were Chi-Square/df (χ^2/df) that was 2.149 (which is less than 3) and the Goodness of

Fit Index (GFI) that was 0.875 as against the recommended value of above 0.90; The Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) was 0.844 as against the recommended value of above 0.80; The Normed Fit Index (NFI), Relative Fit Index (RFI) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) were 0.871, 0.839 and 0.861 respectively as against the recommended value of above 0.90. RMSEA was 0.065 and it was well below the recommended limit of 0.10. Hence, the model exhibited an overall acceptable fit and it could be considered as an overidentified model.

Table 2: Factor Loading, Average Variance Extracted and Composite Reliability of the Measurement Model

Latent Variable	Items	Standardized Loadings	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Community involvement (CI)	CI_1	0.717	0.694	0.714	0.333
	CI_2	0.712			
	CI_3	0.639			
	CI_4	0.364			
	CI_5	0.321			
Community support (CS)	CS_1	0.602	0.768	0.777	0.367
	CS_2	0.319			
	CS_3	0.739			
	CS_4	0.604			
	CS_5	0.659			
Perceived costs (PC)	CS_6	0.625	0.780	0.788	0.426
	PC_1	0.686			
	PC_2	0.787			
	PC_3	0.723			
	PC_4	0.603			
	PC_5	0.391			
	PB_1	0.556			
	PB_2	0.675			

Perceived benefits (PB)	PB_3	0.595	0.824	0.826	0.441
	PB_4	0.787			
	PB_5	0.724			
	PB_6	0.619			
	STD_1	0.463			
	STD_2	0.323			
Sustainable tourism development (STD)	STD_3	0.532	0.729	0.737	0.237
	STD_4	0.467			
	STD_5	0.374			
	STD_6	0.429			
	STD_7	0.626			
	STD_8	0.633			
	STD_9	0.446			

Figure 4 displays the Path Coefficients of the SEM Model and the Consolidated Diagram of the SEM Result.

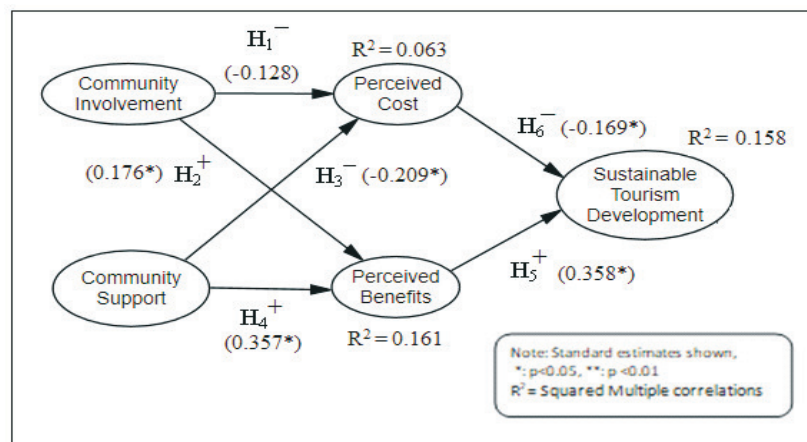


Figure 4: Consolidated diagram displaying the Path Coefficients and the Squared Multiple Corrections of Sustainable tourism development through Community based waste management

Table 3: Regression Results of the overall SEM

Relationships between Variables			Standard Estimate	S E	C R	P Value
Perceived costs	<---	Community Involvement	- 0.122	0.160	-1.477	0.140
Perceived benefits	<---	Community Involvement	0.197	0.183	2.290	0.022*
Perceived costs	<---	Community Support	- 0.191	0.072	- 2.339	0.019*
Perceived benefits	<---	Community Support	0.368	0.080	4.468	0.000*
STD	<---	Perceived benefits	0.366	0.060	3.962	0.000*
STD	<---	Perceived costs	- 0.213	0.063	- 2.438	0.015*

The SEM Analysis exhibits a significant relationship between Perceived benefits and Community support (H_2), Community involvement and Perceived costs (H_3), Community involvement and Perceived benefits (H_4), Perceived benefits and Sustainable tourism development (H_5), and Perceived costs and Sustainable tourism development (H_6). This indicated that the factors of Community based waste management could create a positive impact on Sustainable tourism development of Backwater Tourism Destinations of Kerala. Moreover, Community support and Community involvement would enhance Perceived benefits and decrease Perceived costs. Further, Perceived costs can negatively affect Sustainable tourism development whereas Perceived benefits can positively influence Sustainable tourism development.

Discussion

Backwater tourism offers a wonderful experience to the tourists to experience the natural beauty of Backwaters of Kerala. Even though it is the sustainable source of income for local community, the present situation is pathetic and unregulated which cause adverse impact on social, environmental and economic aspects. Sewage and plastic waste is regularly being dumped into the backwaters. A comprehensive plan with the concerned people involved in tourism sector is the only plan to overcome this huddle. Therefore, the study was intended to understand the influence of Community support and Community involvement and perception on benefits and costs on Community based waste management Practices for Sustainable tourism development in the Backwater Regions of Kerala. In the study, Perceived benefits was a positive variable that supported Sustainable tourism development whereas the variable, Perceived costs had a negative influence on Sustainable tourism development. The findings of the study confirmed that Perceived benefits,

Community involvement and Community support significantly influenced Community based waste management towards Sustainable Tourism. Statistical evidence concluded that the Perceived benefits of Sustainable tourism development through Community based waste management in the Backwater Destinations were directly proportional to Community involvement and Community support. The findings were able to fill the research gap regarding Community based waste management and indicate the similarity to the findings from previous studies, which means the influence of Community support and Community involvement in Community based waste management is essential for the development of Sustainable Tourism as also identified by Eshliki and Kaboudi (2012).

Previous studies had found that the Local Community could be influenced by the Perceived benefits of tourism in three major areas, namely social, economic and environmental factors. At the same time, Perceived costs negatively affected the Local Community and their Local Environment as studied by Gursoy et al. (2002). In essence, there was statistical evidence to conclude that the higher the Perceived benefits, the higher would be the Sustainable tourism development Initiatives through Community based waste management in the Backwater Destinations. However the higher the Perceived costs, the higher would be the decline towards Sustainable tourism development initiatives through Community based waste management Practices in the Backwater Destinations. Therefore, the study substantiates that the Local Community involvement and support was always interlinked to the Perceived benefits and to the Perceived costs. Perceived benefits positively supported and involved the Local Community whereas Perceived costs negatively affected and involved the Local Community in the Backwater Tourism Destinations.

Limitations

Despite its contribution, this study has

several limitations that need to be addressed in future research. First, this study focused only on registered stakeholders under each DTPC of backwater destination of south Kerala. Different other stakeholders of the backwater destination might be having disagreements and different opinions about the development of sustainable tourism. Second, only stakeholders involved in tourism development are sampled. It would be interesting to investigate the non-stakeholders also. Third, only waste management aspects of backwater tourism were addressed.

Implications of the Study

In the context of the Backwater Tourism Destinations of Kerala, factors of Community based waste management that include Community involvement, Community support, Perceived benefits and Perceived costs could solve the Waste Management Problems and contribute to Sustainable tourism development. Therefore, efforts should be focused on designing a programme that can foster Community based waste management among stakeholders. In addition, it is clear from the study that Community involvement has an important role to play in increasing the Perceived benefits and in decreasing the Perceived costs. Hence the stake holders of the Backwater Destination should also focus on activities and initiatives that can increase the Perceived benefits and decrease the Perceived costs for Sustainable tourism development programmes.

Furthermore, Community support increases the Perceived benefits of Backwater Tourism Destinations. Therefore, stakeholders can foster more programmes to ensure enhanced Community support for Community based waste management. They can be involved in planning and policymaking, which could lead to an increase in the level of Community support. Stakeholders of Backwater Tourism Destinations should also focus on activities that can increase the Perceived benefits and reduce the Perceived costs for Sustainable

tourism development among the Local Community of the Backwater Tourism Destinations. This can be achieved by developing opportunities through various social, environmental and economic activities and initiatives. By increasing the Perceived benefits, the stakeholders can ensure that the Local Community in the Backwater Tourism Destinations would be more likely to support Sustainable tourism development.

From a sustainable perspective, it can also be inferred that by increasing the Perceived benefits and by decreasing the Perceived costs from tourism, the Community involvement and Support for tourism development can be enhanced.

The results of the study can be used by various stakeholders to review and improve policies on Waste Management Proposals. The action plans can be highlighted in such a way that the major participation is from the stakeholders so as to achieve higher sustainability in Waste Management. The study only focused on the famous Backwater Destinations of South Kerala. Other Backwater Tourism Destinations may hold differing conditions regarding Sustainable tourism development. Moreover, only Communities involved in Tourism Development were sampled. It would be interesting to survey Communities that are not directly involved with the Tourism Industry.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is important to understand the role of Community based waste management and its influence on Sustainable tourism development. The four variables of Community based waste management can be used to measure and to check the effectiveness of Sustainable tourism development of Backwater Tourist Destination with regard to Solid Waste Management Issues. This is mainly due to the major role played by stakeholders in the Tourism Industry, which can lead to favourable as well as unfavourable Tourism Performance in the destination, as inferred by Tatoglu et al. (2000).

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Key Words

**Community participation,
destination development,
sustainability**

Examining the Factors Influencing Community Participation In Destination Development

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Abstract

For any successful tourist destination development, a positive attitude & perception of local residents' are imperative. The present paper examined the factors affecting community participation and its impact on destination building in the form of economic, social and tourism development. Data for the study were collected through a questionnaire and administered on community members residing with 500 meters of destination and reduced through SPSS and analysed using AMOS on the effective sample size of 214 respondents. SEM results revealed that destination building was highly reflected by the economic development (SRW= 0.897) followed by tourism development (SRW= 0.743) and finally by social development (SRW= 0.656). It was suggested that effective awareness promotional campaign to create awareness regarding benefits of destination building particularly among lower strata of community, building competency of community members through skill based training, linking public policy with other activities like creation of recreational parks, wellness centres, tourist reception centres etc. to make destinations attractive for tourists.

INTRODUCTION

The role of tourism in economic and social development of communities around destination is empirically established both in developing and under developed countries across globe. Community participation results in locating development area, procedure to be followed to achieve desired objectives besides creating psychological content among community members (Khoshnam et al., 2015, Tasci et al., 2014). Khani (2012) suggested that community participation is instrumental to achieve sustainability for tourism through planned destination building. Pin yu et al. (2018) found that community participation results in conservation of natural resources and restraining over exploitation of resources, thereby preserving environment and ecology of area. It also promote health of tourism industry besides promoting cultural transition in the socio-economic life of dependent community (Muganda et al., 2013, Mak et al., 2017). Earlier studies have focused on different factors viz. personal economic benefits, community attachment (Huong & Lee, 2017), motivation, opportunity, awareness & knowledge (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017), access to information, political will and civic education (Tesda et al., 2015), domicile, gender, acknowledgement & duration of stay (Sawee, 2015), social capital, skill & knowledge, training, external support, access to utilities & employment (Provia et al., 2017), economic, social & future support (Hanafiah et al., 2013), social demographic characteristic, level of personal involvement, level of education & accountability (Safari et al., 2015), knowledge about tourism, intrinsic motivation, community attachment, religiosity & socio-cultural cost (Meimand et al., 2017), urban issue, community economic strength, family & personal well being, community well being & community awareness (Liang & Hui, 2016), state of local economic & residents' degree of welcoming tourist (Ribeiro et al., 2017), family encouragement, interest, confidence, opportunity & income (Salleh et al., 2016), education, income occupation, land size & demographic variables (Mugizi et al., 2017) and tourism development potential, perceived impacts & sense of place (Zhu et al.,

2017) influencing attitude of community members toward tourism development. Further, few studies have established the relationship between antecedents of community participation and its outcomes (Liu et al., 2015; Meimand et al., 2017; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017; Tesha et al., 2015; Kamellah, 2016;). Thus, from the extant literature it is evident that antecedent of community participation and its outcome on destination building is still unexplored. The present paper examined the factors influencing community participation and its impact on destination building in terms of economic, environmental and socio-cultural aspects of community residing in district Poonch of J&K state.

Poonch is one of the 22 districts of the state of J&K and also known as mini Kashmir. It is bounded by a line of control on the north, west and southern sides. Poonch valley is separated from the Kashmir valley by the Pir Panjal ranges, specifically its peer-ki-gali which bifurcate Jammu province from Kashmir province. Located at 33.77°N 74.1°E, Poonch has an average elevation of 981 metres above sea level. The district has four tehsils namely, Haveli, Mendhar, Surankote and Mandi. As per the 2011 census, the Poonch district has a population of 4,76,826 and the largest ethnic group of the area is the Gujar tribe which makes up 48% of the population. The region has great historical significance being ruled by various foreigner as well as local rulers. The district has remained backward due to its location on Indo-Pak border, distant from state capitals, rugged topography resulting in limited area available for agriculture, negligible industrial structure, limited tourist infrastructure in terms of hotels, restaurants, transport, inadequate tourism policies etc. Lack of development has manifested in mass poverty, unemployment, sustenance living, migration to towns etc. Along with this, scanty research work has been done in the field specifically on Poonch tourism &

destination building as an instrument to uplift masses from the present state of underdevelopment and backwardness.

II. Tourist Destinations In District Poonch

District Poonch is bestowed with dynamic landscapes, rivers, lakes, waterfalls, springs and glaciers. Some of the major tourists destinations are **Noori Chamb:** Situated at the distance of 45 Km from district headquarter, the place is named after Noor Jahan, wife of famous Mughal emperor Jahangir. It is famous for picturesque location, scenic beauty & a striking waterfall and many inhabitants call it milky waterfall due to its white coloured vapors.

Girjan Dhok and Lakes: It is a valley with seven lakes located at an altitude of 12000ft. in the Buffliaz belt. It lies about 70 Kms from Poonch. **Poonch Fort:** Its foundation was laid by Raja Adbul Razaq Khan but the construction was started by his son Raja Rustam Khan who was a connoisseur of architecture. The place is considered to be one of the historically rich castles of Jammu and Kashmir. The architecture of this fort is reflective of a Mughal influence and some parts of the fort also bear Sikh and European architectural designs. **Buddha Amarnath:** It is located near the confluence of two streams Gagri & Pulsta and surrounded by steep hills and green meadows. It is about 20 Kms from Poonch and is home to the Mandir of Swami Buddha Amar Nath which is also most popular pilgrimage destination of Shiva devotees. There are four gates to the mandir which depict that it's open for all the four castes of Hindus. **Loran:** This is a small village located at top of a hill and 35 Kms away from Poonch on the Pir Panjal range. The flowing Loran Nallah makes it more captivating and attract tourists. Upto 1542 AD, Loran was a capital of Hindu rulers, Loran-Kote and the ruins of the fort can still be seen here. **Nandishool:** It's a beautiful waterfall as high as 150 feet and located approximately 12 Km away from Loran and 6 Km from Sultan pathri, which

is also famous for green pasture and high peaks. **Surankote:** Surrounded by Peer panjal range and river suran, the place offers scenic views of snow capped mountains, lush green meadows and waterfalls and popularly known as Pahalgam of Poonch. In Rajtrangi, this place is mentioned by the name of Sarvanik kot and was historically famous for its musloona tea. **Pir-ki-gali:** It is a beautiful attractive site located at the distance of 44 Kms from Bufliaz in Surankote tehsil. The place acts as a central point which bifurcate Kashmir valley from Poonch valley. **Dehra-Gali:** It is a tourist destination located at the elevation of 6300ft. and bounded by thick forest and high mountains. Located at 45 Kms from Poonch, it provides good climate and enchanting view of snow clad peaks and dense forests. **Ramkund Mandir:** It is situated approximately 68 Kms from Poonch and 4 Kms from Mendhar. There are three springs in temple: Ramkund, Sitakund and Lakshman kund and legend says that Shri Ram during the enroute to Kashmir took halt here. On the first bright half of the month of Chaitra, people visit this temple and take holy dips in these Kunds. **Shri Dashnami Akhara Mandir:** Poonch is also known for the famous Shri Dashnami Akhara Mandir, which lies in the southern part of the town. As per the legends, Swami Jawahar Giriji came to this town in 1760 AD and started meditating here. Thereafter, a temple and large complex was constructed where his successor Swami Shamaya Nand Ji used to deliver sermons and spiritual insights to the people of the town. **Ziarat Sain Miran Sahib:** Sain Miran Sahib was one of the highly respected saints of the region originally hailed from Pakistan. This place every year is visited by thousands of devotees. The influx is considerably high during the annual death anniversary also known as Urs Shareef. **Ziarat Chhote Shah Sahib:** Historically, it is believed that ancient architecture of the city of Pandavas

is located within the hundred yards of the Ziarat. The place is known as Chottey Shah after the famous saint Sakhi Peer Choota Shah. The annual three day Urs is celebrated here and devotees in large number visit this place to pay their respect to the great saint of the area. Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs regularly visit this place throughout the year. **Ziarat Sain Illahi Bakash Sahib:** 37 Kms north of Poonch, lies the famous shrine of Sain Illahi Baksh sahib. The shrine is located in village Balakote, the last village having human settlements before LOC. The site offers spectacular view of the Peer Panchal range, lush green meadows, snow capped mountains and thick forest cover. **Gurudwara Nangali Sahib:** This Gurudwara is considered as one of the most scared Sikh religion centre situated on the banks of Drungali Nallah, just 7 Kms from Poonch. It was constructed by Thakur Bhai Mela Singh in 1803 and attracts devotees of all religions every year. **Trekking sites:** Poonch is a paradise for trekkers and nature lovers because all the important peaks of Pir-Panjal range are found here like Tata Kutti (15660), Chor Panchal Peaks (14370), Sunset Peaks (15550) and Chandan Peaks (15200). Due to lack of means of communication to this area, locals, visitors, pilgrims and Europeans often have to trek these hills to reach Kashmir valley. **Wildlife attraction:** Poonch district is rich in wildlife due to the geographical and climatic conditions. Rare mammals of this area include the markhor, musk deer, brown bear, leopard, ghoral etc. Some of the birds which inhabit different parts of this district include the pheasant, black partridge, chakurs and snow cock kohlas. Thus, there is immense scope for the development of tourism and tourist destinations in district Poonch. The foremost important reason for highlighting the important tourist destination in Poonch district is that tourists are fed up by routinely visiting Ladakh and Kashmir province. So this is an opportunity for the tourism industry to develop and

promote alternate tourist attraction sites so that burden could be shifted to these areas which are bestowed with immense tourism potential. Mostly the inhabitants of Poonch district are engaged in manual labour or other farming activities for their livelihood. As there is immense tourism potential in the pir-panjal range, but unfortunately that is not yet properly explored and developed whatever development work has been done that too is done by the local inhabitants in the form of hotels, restaurants, guest houses etc. if it's available resources would be effeciously utilized under a grand master plan with sustainable practices by involving the local community members. This region can become a role model for rest of the word, both in term of sustainable tourism development and resulting economic gain. There is vast scope for adventure tourism, pilgrim tourism, spiritual tourism, and health tourism leaving aside the traditional recreational tourism. So far the tourists visiting to these destinations are pilgrimage tourists and the numbers have gradually increased with the construction of mugal road connecting Poonch valley with the Kashmir valley. The major influx of tourists is generally of pilgrimage nature and there is need to promote the natural landscape at a larger level so that economic conditions of the local inhabitants can be improved. Being located on indo-Pak border with rugged topography it's not easy to establish and run any kind of industry except tourism industry. Due to lack of infrastructure development this region has not reached where it need to be and the inhabitants of this region have realized the importance of tourism and consequently the local community of this regions are getting engaged into tourism related activities.

III. Review of Literature and Hypotheses Development

Social exchange theory delineates that resident's perception and attitude for future tourism development largely depends upon the tourism impacts (Afthanorhan et al., 2017, Hanafiah et al., 2013)).During the

course of tourism development,some people benefit while others are negatively affected but a positive attitude of host community is considered as a tool to achieve sustainability in tourism sector (Zhu et al., 2016). Community participation besides significant contributor towards poverty alleviation among local community (Mrema, 2015), would benefit people economically, environmentally and culturally (Tesda et al., 2016, Hussein 2017). Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017) found benefits accruing to community members in the form of increase in household income, improvement in standards of living and employment opportunities. For successful destination development, community participation be planned by involving all the key stakeholders (host community, tourism entrepreneurs and community leaders). Andriotis & Vaughan (2003) found positive impact of tourism development on economy of their region, employment and public revenue. It also provides opportunities to the local inhabitants to sell their local crafts to the tourist and infrastructural development (Provia et al., 2017). Within the tourism literature some studies conclude that residents who benefits economically from tourism tend to hold a more favorable attitude of the impact then those who receive lesser or no benefits (e.g. Hanafiah et al., 2013; Khoshnam et al., 2015). The social and environmental impacts from tourism significantly affect attitudes of local community for tourism development. Jurowski et al. (1997) found “Perceived Social Impact” is an important factor supporting tourism development. Community participation helps to create more recreational activities and it is the foremost reason of entertainment for the local inhabitants. Social development begins not with the integration of local people but involvement of local people in formulation of policies and programme related to areas affecting them. It also involves cross-cultural exchange and

understanding of old age traditional culture (Zhu.et.al., 2017). It impels the local community members to provide more recreational activities, sporting events, maintenance of roads and public facilities, restoration of historical buildings & parks, regular supply of portable water etc. (Munhurrin & Naidoo 2011, Safari et al 2015). It also gives opportunities for better understanding of local cultural exchange and culture dynamics. Economic development is the transformation of low income economy to higher income economy and tourism development acts as a catalyst for the national economy (Mike et al., 2018) Empirically, it has been found that tourism development attracted more investment and spending in the region, create more jobs and improves the economic as well as the living standard of people (Yoon et al., 2001, Hanafiah et al., 2013, Mastura.et.al., 2015) and additional tax revenue. Safari et al (2015) found improvement in the standard of living of community members and development micro units. Revenue from tourism enhances forex reserves (Mugizi et al., 2017). It has been argued that successful tourist destination is totally dependent upon the cooperation and willingness of host community. This is also supported by the United Nation World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), The Earth Council, Manila Declaration 1980, and Osaka Tourism Forum. There are few national level initiatives which have been taken up by the government of India their main focus were upon sustainable tourism development. It stressed upon that every corner of a country can accomplish economic goal, maintain good environmental conditions, increase resources and equity simultaneously but there is need to prepare plan for it and that plan must be prepared on changing the way we develop and use technology. Community participation in tourism development is imperative for achieving

sustainable growth and development. Initiatives which were taken up by the government were National Committee on Tourism 1988, Himalayan Tourism Advisory Board (HIMTAB), Tourism Policy 1982, Kerala Tourism Policy Draft 2011 and Tourism Policy Draft 2015 etc. Based on aforesaid literature review, following hypotheses have been set for the study.

Hyp¹: Community participation is positively influenced by economic factor

Hyp²: Community participation is influenced by social factors

Hyp³: Personal factors significantly influence community participation

Hyp⁴: Community participation is significantly impacted by environmental factors

Hyp⁵: Community participation significantly contribute toward destination building.

Objectives of the study

The study was undertaken with following three objectives:

Obj¹: To explore the factors impacting community participation in destination building.

Obj²:To measure the impact of community participation on destination building.

Obj³:To identify the impact of community participation on tourism development, social development and economic development of local resident

IV. Research Design and Methodology

Questionnaire design and sample size

The primary data for the study were collected from the local communities residing within the radius of 500 metres of a specific tourist destination and engaged in providing some kind of services to the tourists. Respondents were contacted on judgemental basis criteria being some service rendered to tourists and willingness to respond and it was conducted during the month February to march. After administering questionnaire on 300 persons, the effective response was received from 214. The secondary data were gathered

from various books, journals, reports, theses, newspapers and internet etc. A self-designed questionnaire was used for collecting requisite information. It was divided into three sections. Section A focused on demographic profile of respondents and nature of engagement in tourism related activities. Section-B comprised of ordinal scale statements influencing community participation in destination building. Section C was devoted to statements of outcomes of destination building in the form of economic, social and tourism development. The justification for selecting judgemental sampling technique was to entice, segregate and contact respondents engaged in rendering tourism related services only from the masses.

Generation of scale items

The items for measuring economic construct were further expanded to 18 items considering researches of Riberio et al. (2017), Houng & Lee (2017), Hanafiah et al. (2013), Khoshnam et al. (2015) and Peters et al. (2018). Fourteen items for measuring social construct were extracted from research work of Liang & Hui (2016), Huong & Lee (2017), Hanafiah et al. (2013) and Meimand et al. (2017). The ten items for measuring environmental construct were taken from Liang & Hui (2016), Hanafiah et al. (2013), Pin et al. (2018), Afthanorhan et al. (2017) and Peters et al. (2018). Further, the items for measuring personal construct were also extended to 18 items based on the works of Zhu et al. (2017), Liang & Hui (2016), Safari et al. (2015), Huong & Lee (2017), Khoshnam et al. (2015) and Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017). The items included in the outcomes of destination building were taken from the literature review of various papers of Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017), Hussein, (2017), Garcia et al. (2016), Pin et al. (2018), Afthanorhan et al. (2017), Huong & Lee, (2017), Hanafiah et al. (2013), Riberio et al. (2016) and Zhu et al. (2017). The

items further were modified to fit within the context of community participation in destination building of district Poonch.

Data reduction and scale purification

Factor analysis was administrated on seven constructs using SPSS version 20.0 in order to minimise the factors and number of items therein (Peters et al., 2018). In the present study, principal component analysis (PCA) along with varimax rotation was used to extract the factors from collected data from the respondents and is displayed in table 1. Items were reduced on the basis of Eigen values (>1), communalities ($>.50$) and factor loadings ($>.50$). Items with communality below 0.50 were deleted so that the factors explain all the variance. KMO and Bartlett's test was used to verify the factor and items pertaining to community participation in destination building and consequences of destination building for the local inhabitants (Table 2). After EFA, the items retained were 12, 11, 16 and 06 under social construct, economic construct, personal construct and environmental construct respectively. Further, the factors extracted through EFA were 3 (social construct), 2 (economic construct), 4 (personal construct) and 2 (environmental construct). The KMO value for each dimension arrived was 0.64 in case of social construct, 0.65 for economic construct, 0.61 for personal construct and 0.60 for environmental construct which were satisfactory for factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010, Hadi et al., 2016). The relationship between destination building and its outcomes were also assessed through factor analysis and the items retained were 7 in economic development, 7 in social development and finally 8 in tourism development. Internal consistencies for all construct were computed with the help of cronbach's alpha and the values were above the benchmark criteria (Ursachi et al., 2015).

Factor confirmation through SEM

Subsequent to EFA, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied to confirm the

fitness, reliability and validity of the various constructs of community participation and outcomes of destination building (Table 3 & 4). A second order CFA was run on 'social construct' which consisted of three factors and the values produced by the model were CMIN/DF= 1.68, GFI= 0.96, AGFI= 0.91, TLI= 0.90, CFI= 0.94, RMR= 0.038 & RMSEA= 0.062. Further, the reliability and validity for the same construct was computed through composite reliability (CR) and average variances explained (AVE) and were 0.76 and 0.95 respectively. Thereafter, a second order CFA was performed on 'economic construct' which consisted of four factors. The measurement model produced good fitness as delineated by the fitness indices i.e. CMIN/DF= 1.14, GFI= 0.96, AGFI= 0.93, TLI= 0.98, CFI= 0.98, RMR= 0.031 and RMSEA= 0.028. This measurement model was also found valid and reliable as delineated by AVE (0.82) and composite reliability (0.76). Again second order CFA was performed on the 'personal construct' which consisted of four factors and the model produced excellent fit indices after deletion of a factor (CMIN/DF= 2.32, GFI= 0.95, AGFI= 0.89, TLI= 0.93, CFI= 0.96, RMR= 0.049 and RMSEA= 0.060). Validity and reliability were also found satisfactory as depicted by AVE (0.85) and composite reliability (0.76). Finally, second order CFA was applied on 'environmental construct' which comprised of two factors and the model depicted excellent fitness results as all the fit indexes were within set benchmark levels (CMIN/DF= 1.34, GFI= 0.98, AGFI= 0.94, TLI= 0.95, CFI= 0.98, RMR= 0.025 and RMSEA= 0.044). In addition to this, reliability and validity of this construct was confirmed through composite reliability (0.82) and AVE (0.84). A second order CFA was run on economic development which consisted of three factors and the results derived of goodness fit were CMIN/df= 1.91, GFI= 0.971, AGFI= 0.918, TLI= 0.928, CFI= 0.966, RMR= 0.034 &

RMSEA= 0.072. Composite reliability and average variance explained were used to assess reliability and validity of the data and the value derived were CR= 0.79 and AVE= 0.84 respectively. Further, same procedure were followed for other two constructs i.e. social development and tourism development. Goodness fit indices were CMIN/df= 2.99, GFI= 0.946, AGFI= 0.874, TLI= 0.701, CFI= 0.829, RMR= 0.062 & RMSEA= 0.096 and AVE and composite reliability values were 0.84 and 0.79 respectively. The construct tourism development comprised of two factors and goodness fit indices were CMIN/df= 1.75, GFI= 0.927, AGFI= 0.870, TLI= 0.776, CFI= 0.851, RMR= 0.072 & RMSEA= 0.084. The model showed excellent validity and reliability as evident from the composite reliability CR= 0.48 and AVE=0.61.

Descriptive characteristics of respondents

The respondents were classified into seven categories namely, gender, age, marital status, family size, qualification, occupation and monthly income of the respondents. Of 214 respondents, 98.3% are male and 1.6% are female. Age-wise, 13.08% fall in age group-I (below 20 years), 56.54% fall in age group-II (20-30 years), 25.23% fall in age group- III (30-50 years) and rest 5.14% fall in last age group- IV (above 50 years). According to marital status of the respondents, 57.47% respondents are married and rest 42.52% are unmarried. Monthly income-wise, 8.41% respondents fall in income group-I (below Rs. 15,000), 50.46% respondents fall in income group-II (Rs. 15,000- Rs. 30,000), 29.90% respondents fall in income group III (Rs. 30,000- Rs 40,000) and 10.74% falls in the last income group IV (Rs.40,000 and above). The respondents falling in four educational sub-groups include 14.95% respondents in group-I (below primary), 38.31% respondent in group-II (upto matric), 40.65% respondents in group-III (graduation) and 6.07% respondent in group-IV (post-graduation). Further

according to family size, 19.62% respondents fall under group- I (2-4 members), 53.27% respondents in group- II (4-6 members), 22.42% respondents fall under group- III (6-8 members) and rest 4.67% falls under group (above 8 members). Demarcation according to profession, 8.41% respondents fall under group- I (govt.job), 5.60% falls under group- II (private job), 55.60% falls under group- III (business), and rest 30.37% falls under group- IV (other professions) respectively. The last category is about whether local residents were engaged in tourism related activities or not, 99% respondents fall under the category of engagement in tourism related activities.

V. Data Interpretation and Hypothesis Testing

After running EFA and CFA, SEM (structural equation modeling) was used to check the fitness of structural model & to verify the proposed hypothesis of this study and the results are shown in Fig.1 & table 5. The hypothesized model of economic construct influencing community participation revealed good results as indicated by the fitness indices i.e. chi-sq/df = 2.42, RMSEA= 0.087, RMR = 0.062, GFI= 0.91, AGFI = 0.86, CFI = 0.84 and TLI = 0.736. The results of SEM delineated the SRW values either close or above the set limit of 0.5 which confirmed the acceptance of first hypothesis i.e. *'Community participation is positively influenced by economic factors'*. Further, the second hypothesis i.e. *'Community participation is influenced by social factors'* also produced goodness fit indices which were chi-sq/df = 1.98, RMSEA= 0.069, RMR = 0.072, GFI= 0.92, AGFI = 0.86, CFI = 0.91 and TLI = 0.87 and the SRW values derived out of it also stands above the threshold criteria. Similarly for the third and fourth hypotheses i.e. *'Personal factors significantly influence community participation'* and *'Community participation is significantly impacted by environmental factors'* also produced good results as

evident from chi-sq/df = 2.75, RMSEA= 0.067, RMR = 0.059, GFI= 0.93, AGFI = 0.86, CFI = 0.93 and TLI = 0.89 from personal factor and chi-sq/df = 1.42, RMSEA= 0.065, RMR = 0.044, GFI= 0.87, AGFI = 0.83, CFI = 0.93 and TLI = 0.88 from environmental factor. The SRW values derived from both the hypotheses were above the threshold criteria which signify the acceptance of both the hypotheses. Thus, community participation is highly predicted by economic factor (SRW= 0.782) followed by personal factor (0.702), social factor (SRW= 0.683) and finally environmental factor (SRW= 0.576). The hypothesized model of destination building delineate good results as depicted by the derived values which were as CMIN/df= 2.75, GFI= 0.931, AGFI= 0.874, TLI= 0.882. The hypothesized model of destination building delineate good results as depicted by the derived values which were as CMIN/df= 2.75, GFI= 0.931, AGFI= 0.874, TLI= 0.882, CFI= 0.926, RMR= 0.083 & RMSEA= 0.079. The values derived confirmed the acceptance of proposed hypothesis i.e. *'community participation significantly contribute toward destination building'*. Further outcomes of destination building were highly reflected by the economic development (SRW= 0.897) followed by tourism development (SRW= 0.743) and finally by social development (SRW= 0.656) as delineated by the SEM results. On the basis of *p value* and SRW values, all the hypotheses stands accepted.

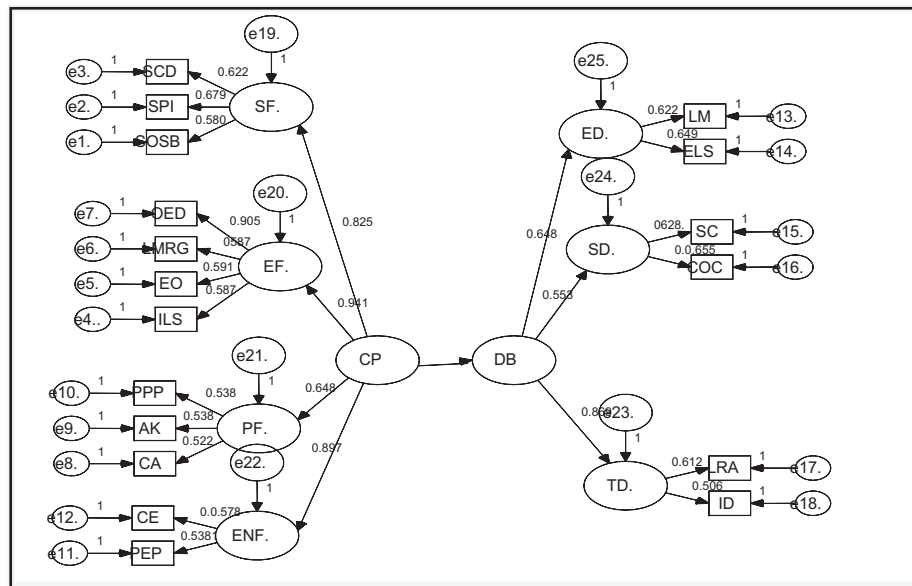


Fig 1: Impact of community participation on destination building

Note: CP- Community participation, EF- Economic factor, SF- Social factor, ENF- Environmental factor, PF- Personal factor, DB- Destination building, ED- Economic development, SD- Social development, TD- Tourism development, IEA (Improved economic activities), ELS (Employment and living standard), SC (Social capital), COC (Conservation of old culture), LRA (Leisure and recreational activities), ID (Infrastructure development) are the observed variables, e1- e25 are the error terms

VI. Discussion and Strategic Implications

The present research work validated destination building through community participation i.e. community based tourism. The study has contributed towards literature by following ways. *Firstly*, the study has supported the available past literature and has presented more detailed information regarding economic, personal, social and environmental factors as significant predictors of community participation toward destination building. *Secondly*, the study has measured the perceived outcomes expected by local residents from destination building.

However, slight above mean values were found for the statements 'Increase economic activities in other sectors (M= 3.92)', 'Leads to poverty eradication (M= 3.85)', 'Generate revenue for local authority (M= 3.95)', 'Awareness about tourism development programs (M= 3.63)', 'Improves local skills

& knowledge (M= 3.65)', 'Get involved with tourism authority (M= 3.07)', 'Aware about tourism and tourism allied development programs (M= 3.74)', 'Service recognition (M= 3.75)', 'Opportunity to stay with family (M= 3.75)', 'Reduction in threat to local environment (M= 3.94)', 'Protection of wildlife and forest area (M= 3.98)', 'Improvement in living standard and quality of life (M= 3.94)' etc. High mean values were noticed for most of the statements of two factors namely, 'Social pride & involvement' and 'Impetus to participatory spirit & belongingness'. Statement-wise, values recorded were 'Create a group of socially active (M= 4.00)', 'Strong recommendations from others (M= 4.20)', 'Makes people socially responsible (M= 4.21)', 'Induces establishment of new micro units (M= 4.15)', 'Creates market for local products (M= 4.29)', 'Creates more employment opportunities (M= 4.46)' and 'Involvement would promote tourism

development (M= 4.18)'. Regarding outcome of community participation on destination building, slight above mean values were recorded for the statements 'More recreational activities (M= 3.89)', 'Increase in cultural activities (M= 3.64)' and 'Polarization of traditional culture and practices (M= 3.89)' falling under the factors social capital and conservation of old culture. Similarly, moderate mean values were observed for the items 'Conservation of heritage (M= 3.80)', 'Growth of micro units' falling under the factors employment opportunity & living standard and leisure & recreational activities. Respondents were found optimistic about economic development of the area due to 'Increase in the value of land (M= 4.20)', 'Creation of market for local products (M= 4.17)', 'Generates revenue for local authority (M= 4.14)', 'Improvement in employment status (M= 4.00)', 'Enhanced quality of life (M= 4.31)', 'Increase in social interaction process due to destination building (M= 4.00)', 'Need for conservation and reservation of some historical monuments and heritage development (M= 4.01)', 'Promotion of recreational activities (M= 4.05)' and 'Attraction of more investment in tourism sector (M= 4.40). Tourism development through community participation would make heritage sites well known among public in a fast track manner (M= 4.28).

Though community participation in destination building is a feasible approach for overall development of district Poonch, the benefits from destination building would not percolate to lower strata of community unless it make people socially secure and contribute to their livelihood. Along with tourism promotion, economic activities which guarantee increase in income for residents must be explored and encouraged. Skill based training for local art & craft, ethnic food, tourist guide etc. should be imparted through skill development initiatives of government of India so that these people aid in tourism

development which would ultimately increase living standard and reduction in poverty. District official site must promote tourist destination of district Poonch and helpline numbers to attract potential tourists. Government through policy must link tourism development with other activities like creation of recreational parks, wellness centers and tourist reception centers to make destinations attractive for tourists. To avoid overcrowding and congestion of destinations, a planned layout for each destination must be framed in advance so that it could be implemented in phased manner. For the proper development & sustainability of tourism, the surrounding area around the historical monument and heritage places must be kept for the beautification. During survey, it was found that there is lack of coordination between the authorities and local residents. The authorities should adopt a holistic approach while designing and promoting a particular destination. The authorities must focus on promoting the local products and resources at the macro level, thereby making it a unique attraction for the tourist. Furthermore, the government agencies especially the tourism department should look to provide financial assistance through micro credit schemes so that the local inhabitants can convert the available opportunities into reality and to empower the local communities. In order to improve the performance of tourism industry, cultural centers should be opened and regular interaction meet between the local inhabitants and Tourism Association across the globe be organised. Destination building and its maintenance is expensive and needs long term policy initiatives. Collaboration with private parties or its outsourcing to private investors selectively can be seen as an alternative to meet expenses.

VII. Conclusion

This study empirically studied factors influencing local community participation towards destination building and benefits accrued from it by the local inhabitants. It

also tested the relationship of destination building impacts with perceived community participation. As a result it is hoped that the findings of this research study has made valuable contribution to the insights about factors inducing local community members to get involved in destination building. Based on the findings, the study concluded that the level of community participation in tourism development projects was moderate due to lack of access to information and absence of community representation in framing policies regarding development projects. The most influencing factor for community participation in tourism development is economic factor followed by other factors. Accessibility of information regarding development projects is somehow lacking and its open for only government employees and inadequate information could lead to misunderstanding, mistakes and deviation of public project directions. The current study reveal how

community participation is important in delivering the services to the tourists and in order to enhance community participation the local residents need to be trained, guided and their ideas and suggestion required to be employed more effectively in order to survive and achieve sustainability. Such tactics will not only be effective in redressing the grievances, but will also boost the performance of tourism sector.

There are few limitations pertaining to this study specifically to small sample size and limited geographical area. In future, research could be expanded to other districts of J&K state. Further, the actual level of participation of local inhabitants earlier excluded could be included on the basis of Arnstein's ladder. Perception of other stake holders and tourists' in terms of their expectations from the host community could be researched for improving the overall tourist experience.

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Table 1: Summary of results obtained using rotated component method

Constructs & Factor	Item	Mean	S.D	Factor loading	Variance explained	C.V
Social factor					28.80%	
F1: Socio-cultural development						
Socially more secure	A16	3.60	1.16	0.78		0.71
Encourages a variety of cultural activities	A11	3.92	0.83	0.72		0.54
Reduction in family crisis	A14	3.22	1.18	0.69		0.76
Create a group of socially active people	A5	4.00	0.70	0.53		0.69
Strong recommendations from others	A17	4.20	0.53	0.91		0.86
F2: Social pride & involvement					16.31%	
Makes people socially responsible	A7	4.21	0.69	0.76		0.61
Induce people to become socially responsible	A13	4.02	0.83	0.72		0.60
Encouragement from family	A15	4.09	0.73	0.52		0.71
Improvement in quality of life	A6	3.92	0.75	0.81		0.73
Frequent interaction among stakeholders	A9	3.84	0.75	0.70		0.69
F3: Impetus to participatory spirit & belongingness					13.43%	
Brings social recognition	A4	4.21	0.69	0.81		0.74
Induce a sense of participation	A1	4.09	0.73	0.73		0.66
Promotes cultural exchanges and education	A12	4.06	0.76	0.77		0.73
Increases belongingness among community member	A2	4.20	0.53	0.59		0.71
Economic factors						
F1: Overall economic development					19.41%	
Accelerate economic growth of district	B2	4.09	0.72	0.59		0.64
Increase in living standard	B4	4.00	0.76	0.77		0.70
Induces establishment of new micro units	B7	4.15	0.68	0.73		0.60
Increases economic activities in other sectors	B12	3.92	0.90	0.65		0.64
Development of better tourism infrastructure	B9	4.02	0.87	0.57		0.62
F2: Local market & revenue generation					17.06%	
Create market for local products	B5	4.29	0.65	0.73		0.67
Leads to poverty eradication	B10	3.85	0.85	0.73		0.67
Generates revenues for local authority	B11	3.95	0.77	0.63		0.55
F3: Employment opportunities					13.46%	
Increases occupational opportunities	B3	4.26	0.67	0.76		0.67
Helps in removing community backwardness	B13	4.10	0.76	0.66		0.63
Creates more investment opportunities	B8	4.09	0.68	0.60		0.55

F4: Improvement in living standard					11.86%	
Creates more employment opportunities	B1	4.46	0.55	0.69		0.54
More monetary incentives	B6	4.22	0.68	0.67		0.52
Overall economic development of local families	B14	4.07	0.79	0.70		0.65
F1: Positive personal perception					28.07	
Awareness about tourism development programs	C18	3.63	1.01	0.70		0.52
Improves confidence level in decision making	C1	3.95	0.85	0.84		0.77
Improves local skills & knowledge	C7	3.65	0.94	0.69		0.76
Motivates to be part of development schemes	C17	4.07	0.77	0.69		
Opportunity for overall personal improvement	C9	4.00	0.88	0.84		0.61
Tourism aids in community development	C11	4.06	0.66			
F2: Awareness & knowledge					18.23	
Motivation for active participation	C14	3.92	0.74	0.81		0.69
Aware about tourism & tourism allied development programs	C03	3.74	1.06	0.73		0.70
To get involved with tourism authority	C10	3.07	1.24	0.55		0.69
F3: Community attachment					12.06	
Motive for more recognition	C15	4.04	0.75	0.81		0.74
Promises for bright future	C12	3.89	0.86	0.70		0.69
F4: Support for additional tourism development					11.06	
Feel more responsible	C2	4.17	0.62	0.70		0.69
Support from tourism authority	C5	4.04	0.86	0.77		0.68
Lack of awareness	C6	4.15	0.82	0.77		0.68
Service recognition	C4	3.75	0.89	0.53		0.74
Opportunity to stay with family	C16	3.75	0.83	0.85		0.75
Environmental factors						
F1: Conservation of environment					40.22%	
Protection of wildlife and forest area	D3	3.98	0.83	0.83		0.72
Conservation of local resources	D1	4.00	0.69	0.83		0.70
Reduction in threat to local environment	D8	3.94	0.69	0.71		0.61
F2: Positive environmental perception					32.81%	

Involvement would promote tourism development	D6	4.18	0.72	0.79		0.66
Local resource utilization for development	D9	4.00	0.69	0.79		0.65
Improvement in living standard and quality of life	D7	3.92	0.68	0.95		0.91
Economic Development						
F1: Improved economic activities					24.67%	
Increase in the value of land	E9	4.20	0.71	0.85		0.73
Create market for local products	E2	4.17	0.69	0.75		0.59
Generated revenue for local authority	E7	4.14	0.81	0.70		0.54
F2: Employment & living standard					23.07%	
Improved income status of community	E1	4.01	0.72	0.76		0.66
Enhanced quality of life	E4	4.31	0.74	0.75		0.57
More employment opportunity for locals	E3	4.00	0.73	0.61		0.52
Growth of micro units	E10	3.92	0.97	0.59		0.53
Social development						
F1: Social capital						
More recreational activities for tourist	F1	3.89	0.75	0.78	37.53%	0.62
Overcrowding and congestion	F6	3.72	1.03	0.71		0.59
Development of tourism allied activities	F3	3.96	0.70	0.69		0.67
Increase in cultural activities	F8	3.64	0.95	0.57		0.57
F2: Conservation of old culture					27.89%	
Increase social interaction process	F5	4.00	0.74	0.83		0.71
Promotion of traditional culture	F4	3.45	1.16	0.68		0.65
Polarization of traditions culture and practice	F10	3.89	0.93	0.84		0.73
F1: Leisure & recreational activities					41%	
Conservation of heritage	G11	3.80	1.03	0.83		0.70
Preservation and restoration of historic monuments	G1	4.01	0.89	0.79		0.66
Promotion of recreational activities	G8	4.05	0.86	0.57		0.69
Tourism development						
F2: Infrastructure development					31%	
Makes heritage sites well known among public	G6	4.28	0.64	0.81		0.78
Helped in exploring new tourist spots	G3	4.31	0.69	0.70		0.68
Attracts more investment in tourism sector	G10	4.40	0.65	0.84		0.79
Increased tourist inflows	G7	4.26	0.66	0.82		0.79
Generation of economic activities in the area	G2	4.15	0.58	0.64		0.62

Table 2: Results of KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.609
Approx. Chi-Square		14649.728
Bartlett's Tesst of Sphericity	Df	4095
	Sig.	.000

Table 3: Fit indices of measurement models

Dimension/construct	Chi sq/df	GFI	AGFI	RMR	RMSEA	TLI	CFI
Economic construct	1.141	0.96	0.93	0.031	0.028	0.98	0.98
Social construct	1.684	0.96	0.91	0.038	0.062	0.90	0.94
Personal construct	2.328	0.95	0.89	0.049	0.060	0.93	0.96
Environmental construct	1.346	0.98	0.94	0.025	0.044	0.95	0.98
Economic development	1.913	0.97	0.91	0.034	0.072	0.92	0.96
Social development	2.990	0.94	0.87	0.062	0.096	0.70	0.82
Tourism development	1.754	0.92	0.87	0.072	0.084	0.77	0.85

Table 4: Reliability and validity of the scale

Dimension / constructs	AVE	CR
Social construct	0.95	0.76
Economic construct	0.82	0.76
Personal construct	0.85	0.76
Environmental construct	0.82	0.84
Social development	0.84	0.79
Economic development	0.84	0.79
Tourism development	0.61	0.48

Table 5: Results of hypotheses testing through SEM

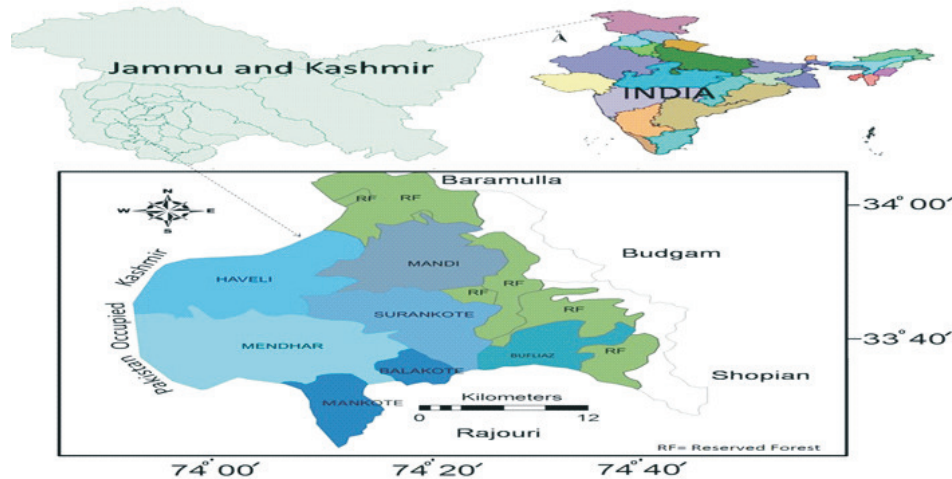
Hypotheses	p-value	Accepted/Rejected
Hyp ¹ : Community participation is positively influenced by economic factor	<0.01	Accepted
Hyp ² : Community participation is influenced by social factors	<0.01	Accepted
Hyp ³ : Personal factors significantly influence community participation	<0.01	Accepted
Hyp ⁴ : Community participation is significantly impacted by environmental factors	<0.01	Accepted
Hyp ⁵ : Community participation significantly contribute toward destination building.	<0.01	Accepted

Table No:6 The Number Of Tourists Who Visited Pir-panjal District

Years	No of tourist in lakhs	Growth rate
2013	6.92	...
2014	8.11	17.2
2015	9.35	15.35
2016	12.4	32.4
2017	15.46	24.6

Source: Ministry of tourism 2017.

Figure 3: Poonch district on the map of India



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Key Words

**mixed methods,
sustainable tourism
development, Prism of
Sustainability, protected
areas, benefits of PAN Parks**

Abstract

This paper examines the benefits of Protected Area Network (PAN Park) status for communities and tourism development near Bieszczady National Park (BNP), Poland. The central question was *Does PAN Parks benefit local communities in PAN Park locations?* Thirty-six self-administered surveys and 18 semi-structured interviews were conducted in November, 2005 among stakeholders representing BNP staff, local authorities, PAN Park business partners, tourism businesses, and NGOs. Both approaches explored tourism development, sustainability of tourism in the context of socio-cultural, economic, environmental and institutional capacity building and the role of PAN Parks on beliefs about sustainable tourism development. PAN Park's sustainable tourism development strategy is viewed as a driving force for sustainable development combining protected area concern for environmental protection with active involvement of tourism businesses.

Benefits of Protected Area Network Status: Pilot study at Bieszczady National Park, Poland

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INTRODUCTION

Protected areas such as national parks and *Natura 2000* sites in Europe can be negatively affected by mass tourism. *Natura 2000* refers to an ecological network of protected areas in the European Union (EU) and it serves as the center of the EU's policy on nature conservation (Berg, Bree, & Cottrell, 2004; Font & Brasser, 2002). The purpose of this network is to maintain and restore habitats and species at a favorable conservation status in their natural range. Tourism has been noted as one of the largest and fastest growing industries (Gunn & Var, 2002; Swarbrooke, 1999) and has significant environmental, cultural, social, and economic impacts (Mowforth & Munt, 2003; Sirakaya, Jamal, & Choi, 2001), which could significantly effect *Natura 2000* locations (Font & Brasser, 2002). *Natura 2000* will involve 20-25 European countries and it is important to know how tourism will affect these sites. The Protected Area Network (PAN Parks) project, started in 1997 by the World Wide Fund for Nature, was an initiative listed as one of the two most relevant management practices for *Natura 2000* sites (DG Environment, 2001; Font & Brasser, 2002) in Europe. PAN Parks was implemented as a means to encourage synergy between nature conservation and tourism in Europe's protected areas.

PAN Parks aims to balance tourism and nature conservation via partnerships with conservation organizations, travel agencies, business communities and other groups on a local, national and international level. For PAN Park's verification, a protected area must meet five principles each with specific criteria (i.e., nature values, habitat management, visitor management, sustainable tourism development strategy, and business partnerships) (Font & Brasser, 2002; PAN Parks, 2007). There are nine PAN Park locations including Bulgaria, Georgia, Finland, Sweden, Poland, Romania, Russia, and Italy with new parks targeted for verification in 2008. A sustainable tourism strategy is necessary to combine tourism's potential and socio-economic development with overall nature conservation goals of protected areas (Cottrell & Cutumisu, 2006).

PAN Park principles include guidelines to develop and implement a *Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy* (STDS), which is a framework to achieve a balance between the conservation goals of certified PAN Parks and sustainable tourism development in the PAN Parks region. Sustainable tourism development can be a valuable option for a protected area only if net benefits for nature protection and local communities can be obtained and if those benefits stay in the PAN Parks region. The PAN Parks Foundation formed a research network to develop a research program to monitor the effectiveness of PAN Parks. Bieszczady National Park (BNP) in Poland was verified as a PAN Park in 2002 with the approval of an STDS in 2005; BNP provided an opportunity to conduct a baseline study to field test the PAN Parks monitoring protocol.

Purpose

As a pilot study, the goal was to field test a protocol to monitor benefits of PAN Park status for communities and tourism

development in the BNP region to be used at other PAN Park locations for an ongoing research program. The central question was Does PAN Parks benefit local communities in PAN Park locations? A local PAN Park advisory group developed a sustainable tourism development strategy (STDS) to link the park to tourism development in the region. The prism of sustainability (Figure 1), a holistic framework of sustainability was used as the theoretical lens to examine the economic, socio-cultural, environmental and institutional aspects of tourism development (Eden, Falkheden, & Malbert, 2000; Faulkner & Tidswell, 1997; Spangenberg & Valentin, 1999). Secondly, a mixed methods approach was used which is not commonly found in the tourism literature. Study outcomes are intended to help create a PAN Parks research program to monitor the effectiveness of PAN Parks for park management and nature conservation to apply to all PAN Park locations in Europe.

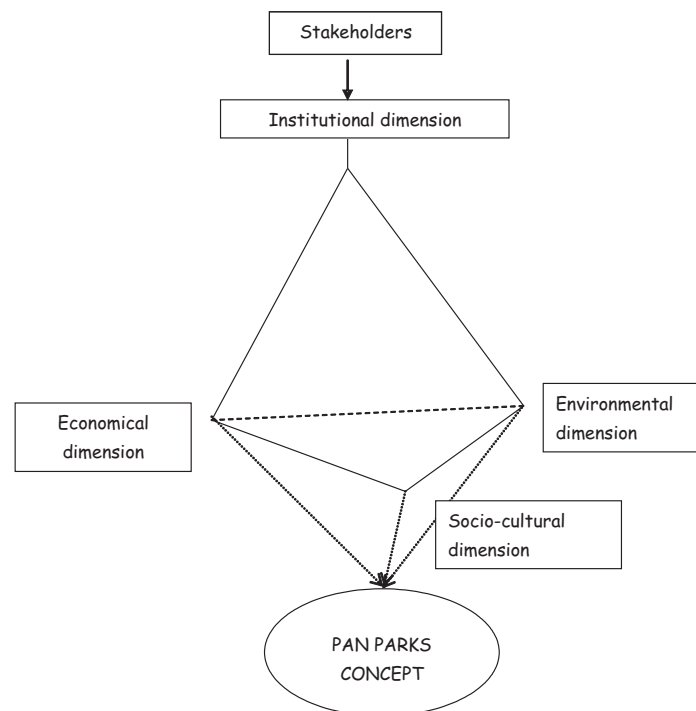


Figure 1. Prism of Sustainability (adapted from Eden et al., 2000; Spangenberg & Valentin, 1999)

Research Questions

To address the central question of the study, secondary research questions were posed to structure the investigation. Secondary questions identify the stakeholder groups, their degree of familiarity with PAN Parks and address perceptions about the benefits of PAN Park status from a socio-cultural, economic, environmental and institutional context.

1. What is the profile of tourism stakeholders in the BNP region?
2. To what extent are tourism stakeholders familiar with the PAN Parks concept?
3. What are the benefits of PAN Park status?
4. Who benefits most from PAN Park status?
5. To what extent are stakeholders satisfied with the institutional, economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects of tourism to the PAN Parks region?
6. To what extent is local participation in sustainable tourism development evident?
7. Is there a relationship between PAN Parks status of BNP and stakeholder satisfaction with tourism development?

Prism of Sustainability

Figure 1 (adapted from Spangenberg & Valentin, 1999) shows those dimensions important to a holistic approach to Sustainable Tourism Development (STD). STD is difficult to obtain without consideration of some aspects of the economic, social, environmental, and institutional dimensions of sustainability (Cottrell & Cutumisu, 2006; Eden et al., 2000; Spangenberg et al., 2002). The environmental dimension emphasizes the need to reduce pressure on the physical environment (Mowforth & Munt, 2003; Spangenberg, Pfahl, & Deller, 2002; Swarbrooke, 1999; Valentin & Spangenberg, 2000). The economic dimension considers human needs for material welfare (e.g., employment) in a framework that is competitive and stable (Roberts, 2002; Sirakaya et al., 2001). An economic system is environmentally

sustainable only as long as the amount of resources utilized to generate welfare is restricted to a size and quality that does not deplete its sources for future use. The social dimension refers to individuals' skills, dedication, experiences and resulting behavior. Institutions (such as the PAN Parks network) represent organizations within a system of rules governing interaction among members (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Mitchell & Reid, 2001). The institutional dimension calls for strengthening people's participation in political governance (in this case the institution is PAN Parks with STDS as the mechanism) (Gunn & Var, 2002; Speck, 2002; Waldon & Williams, 2002). As acceptance of and identification with political decisions increase, public participation may be strengthened via empowerment and the ability to contribute to decision-making.

As it pertains to PAN Parks, the starting point in the PAN Parks Sustainable Tourism concept is environmental sustainability which links well with the environmental imperative found in the prism. Meanwhile, many nature conservation organizations understand that socio-cultural and economic sustainability in a region with protected areas is important when it comes to nature preservation. Controlled tourism can be an instrument to sustainable development and nature protection, providing 'nature' economical value and as such incentives for nature protection. Meanwhile, nature protection can lead to sustained environmental integrity thereby providing socio-cultural sustainability benefits (e.g., improving quality of life and maintaining natural/cultural heritage). In addition, careful planning, collective strategy formulation, and responsible management as part of the institutional mechanisms make it possible to minimize negative yet maximize positive impacts of tourism development (PAN Parks, 2007).

Valentin and Spangenberg (2000) suggest that the four dimensions can be linked to

potential indicators (in this case, resident beliefs in benefits of PAN Park status). Sustainable tourism indicators developed in the context of the prism of sustainability over a range of studies (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Cottrell & Cutumisu, 2006; Cottrell & Vaske, 2006; Cottrell et al., 2004, 2007; Shen, 2004; Sirakaya et al., 2001) were applied in this study (see Table 3).

Methods

A mixed methods approach involving a concurrent nested strategy with quantitative and qualitative techniques (Creswell, 2003) was used in a pilot-study conducted over a 5-day period in November, 2005. Mixed methods were used to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a single study with quantitative and qualitative methods done simultaneously. The quantitative method was predominant with the qualitative method embedded to get more details and background information on results from the quantitative phase (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). A five-page self-administered questionnaire with both English and Polish versions was administered among 36 stakeholders to solicit responses about familiarity with PAN Parks, PAN Parks status of BNP, participation in tourism planning, tourism to BNP, satisfaction with tourism development (indicators of sustainability), and socio-demographics. Thirty-seven items representing the four dimensions of

sustainability were used as indicators to assess beliefs about the benefits of tourism to BNP (see Table 3). Eighteen semi-structured interviews were completed among stakeholders representing BNP staff, local authorities, PAN Park business partners, tourism businesses, and NGOs to represent the PAN Parks region. Interviews explored tourism development, sustainability of tourism in the context of socio-cultural, economic, environmental and institutional capacity building and the role of PAN Parks on beliefs about sustainable tourism development. Interviews were conducted and taped in Polish by an interpreter with translations made directly onsite. Study participants as a convenience sample were selected by the local PAN Parks coordinator via telephone a few days prior to the interview period to make an appointment. The researcher, coming from the United States, was only available during those five days to conduct the onsite interviews. Criteria for selection were based on sector representation (e.g., park employee, accommodation, tour operator, local government) and availability. Five respondents completed both the survey and participated in an interview.

Study Setting

Bieszczady National Park (BNP) is situated in the far southeast of Poland on the border with Slovakia and the Ukraine (Figure 2). It



Figure 2. Map of Bieszczady National Park Region

is famous for its unique fauna of rare and threatened animals. BNP began the certification process in 2000 resulting in PAN Park certification in September 2002. The draft STDS adopted in April 2005 was well supported by the stakeholders and presents a good framework for future cooperation and activities in the PAN Park's region including the municipalities of Cisna and Lutowska.

The two municipalities that form the PAN Parks Region, Cisna and Lutowska, view nature based sustainable tourism as their main development opportunity for the future (Berg et al., 2004). Visitor infrastructure is managed by the park and partner organizations and enables quality experience without serious adverse impact on the conservation goals or nature itself. The park operates two visitor centers outside the park and 21 information points at the entrance of hiking trails inside the park. Tourist accommodation is provided in some small hotels, mountain huts and a growing number of family bed and breakfasts. The number of service providers such as tourist agencies, mountain, wildlife and horseback guides has increased. The park and region have sufficient tourism potential and carrying capacity for sustainable tourism, especially with the development of visitor infrastructure in the buffer zones surrounding the National Park. Through the work of the Local Pan Parks Group (LPPG) and implementation of the STDS, the park has begun to build partnership for sustainable development of the region with the municipalities, forest authorities, NGOs and local business people active in tourism. This research focused primarily on those individuals representing the STDS process.

Analysis

Following a descriptive profile of stakeholders, percentage of beliefs in benefits of PAN Park status (Table 1), mean satisfaction scores for the economic, institutional, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable tourism and PAN Park status (Table 3), and percentage

participation in tourism planning were determined (Table 4). Non parametric tests included Kruskal Wallis tests (non-parametric equivalent to one-way analysis of variance) for differences between perceived benefit of PAN Park status on beliefs in the value of PAN Park status (Table 2) and Mann Whitney U tests (non-parametric equivalent to t-test for independent sample means) to examine the relationship between familiarity with PAN Parks and the various aspects of sustainable tourism. Non-parametric tests were used because of the type of ordinal data collected in this study. Non-parametric tests do not require the data to be normally distributed and still provides a powerful test for the comparison of means for small samples (Fluker & Turner, 2000; Meisel & Cottrell, 2008).

Semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and organized per interview question. Open coding was used to establish themes across the interviews to corroborate survey findings. The qualitative findings including summaries and direct quotes are given in the results section along with the quantitative results to provide more depth to understanding stakeholder feelings about tourism impacts to the region and the benefits of PAN Park status.

Limitations

The most obvious limitation was the small sample size ($n=36$; response rate = 72%) taken during a 5-day period. A purposeful sample includes mostly those people involved in tourism directly, LPPG members, and park personnel. The sample does not include indirect tourism business owners such as from the border patrol, restaurants, and grocery stores. Yet, one aspect of the study was to assess the impact of PAN Parks on sustainable tourism development and the concept is still new to the region. Thus, the overall purpose was to test the methodology and this was best done by surveying those people familiar with PAN Parks, involved in tourism or work with the park. A further limitation was language. The local translator, who is not a

professional translator by trade, translated the survey from English to Polish. However, an item-by-item discussion of the survey items was done onsite and several Polish people completed the survey as a pre-pilot to clarify survey questions. Back translation by a third party would be recommended for future use of the survey.

Results

Stakeholder Profile

For research question 1, the survey sample (n=36) represents an active group with 75% working in tourism. Mostly residents, 40% were business owners and 26% members of NGOs. Only 14% were PAN Park business partners; however, they only recently became PAN Park business partners (i.e., legal enterprises committed to the goals of the certified PAN Park and the PAN Parks Foundation, and actively cooperates with LPPG) with new partners expected in the near future. Relatively young and well educated, this group forms a strong advocate network for sustainable tourism development as noted from the qualitative data. Interviewees implied that STDS has brought many of these stakeholders together providing incentive for further collaboration towards sustainable tourism development. For research question 2, a majority (81%) was familiar with the PAN Park concept and 89% knew BNP was a certified PAN Park.

Benefits of Pan Parks

For research questions 3 and 4 concerning what and who benefits from PAN Parks, several questions inquired about PAN Park

status effect on the value of the tourist experience, quality of life in the area, contribution to nature conservation, and environmental values (Table 1). Forty-eight percent of the stakeholders agree that BNP status as a PAN Park increases the value of the tourist experience while 56% believe it will attract more tourists to the area. Fifty percent felt that it increases the quality of life in the area while 29% disagreed. A majority (85%) agree PAN Park status contributes to nature conservation. Meanwhile, 68% do not feel that tourism is a threat to nature conservation. One interviewee stated that,

“As I observe, the mentality of business owners is positively changing step by step. This is due to influence of Pan Parks in this area, as well the group I represent 'Bieszczady Park Foundation'. Thus, 'yes' you can say that Pan Parks has a positive influence in the region.”

“More locals need to be aware of the PP concept and what it possibly brings to the park. More partnerships are developing and this is attributed to the last few years from STDS development and the work of the PAN Park contact person.”

When asked if they benefited directly or indirectly from PAN Parks, a majority said no (67%; n = 24) while 22% said indirectly and 11% directly (Table 2). To assess the effect of perceived benefit of PAN Parks, an additional test was run to examine differences between those who selected no benefit, indirect benefit and direct benefit from PAN Park status (independent

Table 1 Benefit of PAN Parks

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
	%	%	%
a. BNP PAN Park status increases the value of the tourist experience	19	32	48
h. PAN park status of BNP attracts more tourists	13	31	56
b. PAN Park status of BNP increases the quality of life of the area for locals	29	21	50
c. PAN Park status of BNP contributes to protecting nature conservation	6	9	85
d. Tourism to BNP is a threat to environmental values in the area	68	9	24

variable) on average scores for each of the belief statements about park PAN Park status (see Table 2). Using a nonparametric test (Kruskal Wallis), differences were found on four of five statements. This implies that Perceived benefit of PAN Parks has some effect on how stakeholders responded to those questions. Those who received indirect and direct benefits agreed (Average = 4 to 4.3) with the statement that park PAN Park status increases the value of the tourist experience while those who said no were neutral (Average = 3.1). Those with direct benefit felt that PAN Park status attracts more visitors (statement h). Those with indirect benefit felt strongly that PAN Park status increases quality of life while those with no benefit felt it has more or less no effect (statement b). Those with indirect benefit strongly agree (Average = 5) that PAN Park status contributes to nature conservation. Those who implied direct benefits had the lowest score of 3.8 which represents slight agreement with the statement.

Does PAN Parks benefit local communities? The answer is “to a slight degree for some people.” PAN Park status

has some benefit (direct or indirect) for 33% of the sample on beliefs concerning the more inherent values of PAN Park status on quality of life and nature conservation issues. Further, PAN Park status is believed to enhance the quality of the tourist experience among those people who perceive direct or indirect benefit from PAN Park status.

From the interviews, the park is seen as a major contributor to community development for the region. It creates jobs (140+) and attracts tourists to the area, thus it is considered the main attraction. The PAN Park concept is not very visible to local residents at the moment due to awareness and visibility issues. Among the stakeholders, those most actively involved in tourism development are either PAN Park partners, part of the LPPG or have participated in the STDS process. They see the potential of PAN Park's for BNP to strengthen community development especially if park administration follows the PAN Park principles. PAN Park's visibility is an issue. Overall, benefits of PAN Parks are still too early to assess and further visibility and extension of the sustainable

Table 2 Relationship between perceived benefit of PAN Park status on the value of PAN Park status (Kruskal Wallis test)

Beliefs statements about PAN Park status ¹	Benefit from PP	N	Average ²
a. PAN Park status increases value of the tourist experience	No	21	3.1
	Yes, Indirectly	7	4.3
	Yes, directly	3	4.0
	Total	31	3.5
h. PAN park status attracts more tourists	No	20	3.6
	Yes, Indirectly	8	3.6
	Yes, directly	4	4.8
	Total	32	3.7
b. PAN park status increases life quality for local population	No	23	2.9
	Yes, Indirectly	7	4.3
	Yes, directly	4	3.3
	Total	34	3.2
c. PAN Park status contributes to nature conservation	No	23	4.1
	Yes, Indirectly	6	5.0
	Yes, directly	4	3.8
	Total	33	4.2

¹Statement measured on 5 point agreement scale 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree

²Scores range from 1 to 5: Average of 3.3 to 5 is agree; 2.8 to 3.2 is more neutral and 1 to 2.7 disagree

tourism network is necessary according the interviewees.

Satisfaction with various aspects of sustainable tourism

To address research question 5, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with 37 statements reflecting the four dimensions of sustainability on a 1 to 5 agreement scale (Table 3). In essence, the items represent indicators for sustainable tourism development. Items with a score of 4 or higher perform well. A 3.5 to 3.9 is satisfactory while anything less than a 3.5 is less satisfactory to neutral or less.

For the economic dimension, scores ranged

from a low of 2.64 to 4.04. Tourism is perceived to create new markets, bring new income, while diversifying the local economy, and creating new jobs. Tourism is obviously thought to contribute economically to the community. There was only slight satisfaction with product availability and improvements to local infrastructure. Tourism does not seem to increase the price of local products.

From the qualitative interviews, the economic contribution of BNP is well known in the form of employment in the region. Overall, there was less stress among respondents on the economic aspects of

Table 3 Average performance (satisfaction) scores for aspects of sustainable tourism

Dimensions of Sustainability		
Economic	Mean	STD
j. Tourism to BNP is a strong economic contributor to community	4.03	1.08
i. Tourism to BNP creates new markets for our local products	4.00	0.93
b. Tourism to BNP diversifies the local economy	3.94	0.86
a. Tourism to BNP brings new income to local communities	3.94	3.94
c. Tourism to BNP creates job opportunities for local people.	3.89	1.14
h. Tourism businesses should hire at least 50% of their employees from within community	3.77	1.11
g. BNP contributes to increased value of local property.	3.53	1.23
e. Products and services have become better available in general from tourism to BNP	3.42	0.97
f. Thanks to BNP the region gained importance to the government resulting in improvements to infrastructure (e.g. roads)	3.42	1.30
d. Prices of local products (food, medicine) and services (services) increased from tourism to BNP.	2.64	1.07
Institutional		
g. We need to take a long-term view when planning for tourism to BNP	3.81	1.01
h. Tour Guides to BNP are well trained	3.78	1.12
a. Communities' residents have an opportunity to be involved in tourism decision making	3.58	1.32
j. BNP must monitor visitor satisfaction	3.58	1.16
e. Participation in the development of tourism development plans is encouraged by local authorities due to BNP.	3.28	1.06
c. Entrepreneurship in tourism to BNP is encouraged by local government	3.08	1.34
k. Tourism facilities are developed in cooperation with local businesses in the BNP region	3.03	1.03
f. I feel I can access the decision-making process to influence tourism development in the BNP area.	2.75	1.34
b. There is good communication among parties involved in policy/decision making process of tourism to BNP	2.61	1.10
Social		
g. My quality of life improved (deteriorated) because of tourism to BNP*	4.44	1.08
b. More people visit here because of BNP.	4.42	0.69
d. Tourism to BNP decreases (increased) criminal activity in the region around the park *	4.33	1.01
j. Visitors to BNP are encouraged to learn about local cultures	4.08	1.02
e. Local traditions become more (less) important because of tourism to BNP*	4.03	1.16
c. Tourism to BNP positively (negatively) influences norms and values in the area *	3.92	1.18
h. The quality of the environment in my community increases (deteriorated) because of tourism*	3.69	1.35
a. There are more educational opportunities for locals due to tourism to BNP	3.50	1.11
f. Women gain more economic freedom due to tourism to BNP.	3.14	1.17
Environmental		
h. The diversity of nature at BNP must be valued and protected	4.44	0.69
j. Good examples of environmental protection are shown at BNP	4.42	0.69
f. BNP area tourism must be developed in harmony with the natural and cultural environment	4.39	0.96

e. As a result of BNP, people's awareness of environmental protection has improved.	4.22	0.83
b. BNP strengthens efforts for environmental conservation	3.72	1.00
g. Tourism activity to BNP is channeled into areas with suitable facilities	3.58	1.13
a. Tourism to BNP does not cause pollution of environment (water, soil and air).*	3.39	1.25
d. Increasing exhaustion of water and energy resources was not caused by tourist activities to BNP *	3.22	1.17
c. The number of visitors to BNP results in positive (negative) impacts on plants and animals *	3.06	0.95

*Items were recoded to a positive direction as reflected by word added in bold.

Performance (satisfaction) measured 1=strongly disagree; 2 disagree; 3=neutral, 4=agree; 5=strongly agree

tourism as compared to the socio-cultural and environmental aspects. The expectation that PAN Parks would bring short term economic benefits was not as apparent as it had been during the 2003 study (Berg et al., 2004), meaning that local people realize that it will take time and that perhaps too rapid growth is not good for the sustainable development of the region. PAN Parks was given some credit for this positive perspective.

Respondents are only slightly satisfied with the institutional aspects of tourism with scores ranging from 2.61 to 3.81 and mostly below the 3.5 mark. The communication and decision making opportunities with local communities are not satisfactory at present. From the qualitative interviews, open communication between the park and local communities received mixed reports. Respondents implied that STDS has created a new dialogue about development issues in the region associated with the park and tourism. Park employees feel that they are open for public communication; however, some stakeholders feel improvements can still be made. Some stakeholders feel this will take time and opinions are hopeful that PAN Parks will visibly contribute to this process. Responses for the social-cultural aspects were more positive overall as noted from both the survey and interviews with scores ranging between 3.14 and 4.4 (see Table 3). Many felt that quality of life has improved because of tourism (M = 4.4) with a decrease in criminal activity (M = 4.3). Local attitudes seem to improve because of tourism and more people visit the area because of BNP. Tourism seems to have led to an improved environment while local traditions have become more important.

Overall tourism development is wanted and believed to be helpful to improve the quality of livelihoods for the region. The only slightly negative result had to do with economic gains for women receiving the lowest score of 3.1 yet still above the neutral point. The item was noted as an odd question for the Polish context where gender equality is not an issue.

From the qualitative interviews, the socio-cultural contribution of BNP was also strongly noted. It was acknowledged that BNP does a lot for communities in terms of public outreach (environmental education, festivals & events, and for developing sustainable tourism responsibly). The direct contributions were unknown for some because PAN Parks is a new concept; however, hopes were that this would become more visible in the future. Although new billboards have been posted in key access points to the park, further visibility is noted as important to inform locals about the PAN Parks concept. Visibility should be more than the printed propaganda such as park sponsored guide training, news clips in the local newspaper, and some public forums attended by park officials. The post card entrance fee receipt which was discontinued due to funding was noted as an important form of visibility and should be continued.

For the environmental dimension, scores ranged from 3.06 to 4.44. The park protects environmental values and nature and such policies are generally respected among the stakeholders. Awareness and local attitudes about nature protection have improved. Those questions with negative wording received slightly lower scores with a greater degree of variation with standard deviations greater than 1. There is a general concern

that increased visitor numbers will lead to more negative impacts on the environment and natural resources. Tourism according to many stakeholders should be channeled more into the buffer zone areas.

From the qualitative interviews, the environmental contribution of BNP was the most important among respondents and general improvements supporting environmental conditions in the park area have been made. Reference was made to PAN Park's positive contribution to environmental protection and hopes were stressed that local attitudes about nature conservation would continue to improve because of PAN Park status.

In sum, environmental protection aspects received the highest scores followed by the social-cultural. Economic aspects were marginal with signs of improvement. Respondents were not happy overall, with the institutional aspects of sustainability. This was also supported by findings from the semi-structured interviews.

Participation in tourism planning

For research question 6, several questions explored stakeholder knowledge about tourism planning, their wish to become involved in decision making and complaints to authorities. As depicted in Table 4, 53% (n=19) know of opportunities for participation in tourism planning while 58% would like to become involved. Thirty-six percent have complained about tourism development to local authorities while 25% would like to.

Fifty-eight percent of the stakeholders believe they have an opportunity to be involved in tourism decision making, yet only 31% felt they could actually access this process. Only 19% felt that communication for policy decision-making was good and 39% believe that local authorities encourage planning participation and entrepreneurship. Thirty-six percent believe that tourism facilities are developed in cooperation with local businesses in the BNP region. Local participation in tourism planning, although perceived possible, appears limited overall. This sample represents stakeholders very much involved in tourism and tourism planning; yet data shows limited perceived opportunity for participation in planning and decision-making for tourism development.

Does PAN Parks influence stakeholder beliefs about participation and communication in the tourism planning process? A Mann Whitney U test was conducted to see if those people familiar with PAN Parks were different than those people not familiar on the question concerning ability to participate in decision making and access to communication processes with the park; there were no differences. From the qualitative interviews, park staff felt that BNP is very open in communication and provides a lot of public outreach. On a personal level, communication with the park is good among staff and with the public, but on the

Table 4 Participation in tourism planning

Knowledge of opportunities to participate in TP planning	n	%
No	19	53
Yes	17	47
Wish to become involved in TP Planning		
No	4	11
Perhaps/maybe	11	31
Yes	21	58
Knowledge of where to complain		
No	11	31
Yes	25	69
Ever complained about tourism to authorities		
No, not at all	14	39
No, but I would like to	9	25
Yes	13	36

official level it is not where it should be according to a few respondents. They are concerned that PAN Parks is only a certification and that the ideals behind it are not supported by park administration. Nature conservation is the park's core business. The park maintains strict policy and locals understand these policies; there is general approval among stakeholders in those communities that have free access to the park. Attitudes among communities in the buffer zone that do not have free access are less positive, especially among state forest personnel. Tour guides from Lesko felt that communication with the park was not good.

"There is no good communication; actually it is really bad...For example there is a lack of education and information: there is a lack of a guide training program and that is the responsibility of BNP. There are so many guides and it would be easy for BNP to organize such a training program."

A few interviewees felt that STDS has enhanced communication among tourism stakeholders because of PAN Parks. Yet, it is just the beginning, and many interviewees feel that communication will continue to improve.

Overall Satisfaction with Tourism Development

For research question 7 concerning PAN Park status and stakeholder satisfaction with tourism development, respondents were asked "how would you rate the quality of tourism development in the BNP region?" The average response on a 10-point scale was 5.92; scores ranged from a low of 2 to 9 high on a 10-point scale; 50% were not satisfied with scores of 5 or less. Approximately 31% were slightly satisfied with scores between 6 and 7. Only 19% were satisfied with their scores ranging between 8 and 9. To determine the link between knowledge about PAN Parks and opinions about the quality of tourism development, those few people who did not know about the PAN Parks concept had low opinions about tourism development.

From the qualitative interviews, when the question was asked "Do you think that tourism development in your area is developed according to sustainable ideals?" opinions ranged from "not at all sustainable" to 'yes it was' on a limited basis. Examples such as the Cisna Community ski lift and the former lake project with its associated support demonstrate, according to some respondents, that sustainable tourism development (STD) is a long way from being good. Local authority attitudes about tourism development need to change according to those interviewees located furthest from BNP. Meanwhile, there seems to be good progress in the last few years in stakeholder development and the STDS of the PAN Park concept seems to have started or at least stimulated this process.

Discussion and conclusions

Results of both qualitative and quantitative methods were compiled to assess the benefits of PAN Parks. For the qualitative method, a partnership for sustainable development among stakeholders was evident supporting an overall vision of sustainable tourism development. PAN Park's primary benefit tends to be environmental sustainability, yet there is evidence that it contributes to aspects of socio-cultural sustainability as well. Institutional benefits regard the development of a sustainable tourism network via linking park policy and activities to that of local businesses and communities. Stakeholders value the PAN Park concept and this may improve and spread to other stakeholders in the future.

PAN Park certification contributed most to environmental protection and an improved community attitude about nature conservation. Socio-cultural aspects for the community were noted as public outreach, environmental education, promotion of the arts, and sustainable development of the region. Open communication between the park and local communities received mixed reports indicating a need for further

awareness building among local residents. It appears that stakeholders are taking the initiative for tourism development with relation to the park with a lack of support from the park authorities.

From the quantitative survey, stakeholders familiar with PAN Parks gave higher satisfaction scores for the cultural, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability than those who did not know about it. Respondents overall were not very happy with the quality of tourism development in the region with more than 50% not satisfied.

Does PAN Parks benefit local communities in PAN Park locations? PAN Parks with its sustainable tourism development strategy process is viewed as a driving force for sustainable development combining local concern for environmental protection in protected areas with active involvement of local tourism businesses on behalf of PAN Parks. Although cause effect (PAN Park concept) cannot be claimed, perhaps those stakeholders familiar with the ideals supported by PAN Parks have a better understanding of what sustainable tourism involves; consequently they tend to value the importance of the various aspects of sustainability more than those people not informed about PAN Parks, a concept supported in the Bulgarian PAN Park study (Mateev, 2007). The tourism stakeholder process in the region is strong and greatly improved as compared to results of the 2003 study (Berg et al., 2004) among a similar stakeholder group as an indicator of the benefit of PAN Park's status.

The PAN Parks Foundation continues to examine the benefits of PAN Park certification with studies at park locations in Bulgaria (Mateev, 2007) and Romania in 2006 (van Hal, 2007) and Finland in 2007. Similar results were found at Central Bulkan National Park in Bulgaria and Retezat National Park in Romania implying that PAN Park status enhances resident involvement in tourism development, improved park management and belief in

the value of nature conservation due to international recognition (Mateev, 2007; van Hal, 2007). BNP can be seen as more than simply a national park, rather as supra-regional (in terms of unifying all regions including park area or adjacent to it) institution with more power and resources, a body that not only manages the protected area, but is responsible for and co-ordinates environmental protection, tourism development and cultural and social aspects in the whole region of the national park, not just inside it. Such a concept alludes to the need to adjust the legal system for protected areas and co-management (van Hal, 2007); a concept worthy of further research.

Recommendations for practice and further research

As it pertains to BNP, study results show a need to focus on the institutional aspects of sustainable tourism development such as enhanced communication processes in the BNP region, further PAN Park feasibility efforts beyond printed propaganda, and training programs for guides and park employees. Training for park ranger visitor assistance is necessary to improve visitor contact. Suggestions were to reinstate the PAN Park postcards as receipts for entrance fees to use as souvenirs and recollection of visitor experiences at the park. Considerations should be given to locating one central visitor center in Ustrzyki Gorne community inside the park region to improve visitor communication, enhance visitor management, and improve BNP visibility. The community visitor center and Lutowska visitor center located within 2 kilometers of each other are redundant facilities and a cost sharing of one center is recommended. BNP's environmental conservation efforts are highly valued and this should be continued.

As it pertains to other PAN Park locations, further baseline studies are necessary. A mixed methodology is proposed for each site, yet with a much more robust sample to include a broader range of stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in tourism

both familiar and not familiar with the PAN Park's concept. In addition, a sample of local residents not involved in tourism yet represent potential park visitors is recommended. The economic benefits of PAN Park status should be assessed which was not done in this study. Similarly, a visitor survey involving similar questions would provide some evidence over time about PAN Park's contribution to the quality of the visitor experience.

This study contributes to tourism research via mixed methods not commonly found in the tourism literature. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) imply that mixed methods provide a more comprehensive approach to

understanding phenomenon in the social sciences. Mixed methods applied in combination with the prism of sustainability (Valentin & Spangenberg, 2000) as a framework to examine the economic, socio-cultural, environmental and institutional benefits of PAN Parks provides much greater understanding of what those benefits entail (Berg et al., 2004; Cottrell & Cutumisu, 2006). Implications for further research imply the need for mixed methods in tourism research under the guidance of a holistic framework to obtain some degree of sustainable tourism development (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Cottrell & Vaske, 2006; Waldon & Williams, 2002).

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