

IMPACT OF ECOTOURISM IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – A CASE STUDY OF KOTI-KANASAR VILLAGE (UTTARAKHAND)

Subhash Chandra Kannaujiya and Ajay Arora

Department of Tourism Kumaun University, Nainital U. K, (India)

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 4th March, 2019

Received in revised form 25th

April, 2019

Accepted 18th May, 2019

Published online 28th June, 2019

Key words:

Ecotourism, Socio-cultural impact, Economic Impact, Environmental impact, Community Development

ABSTRACT

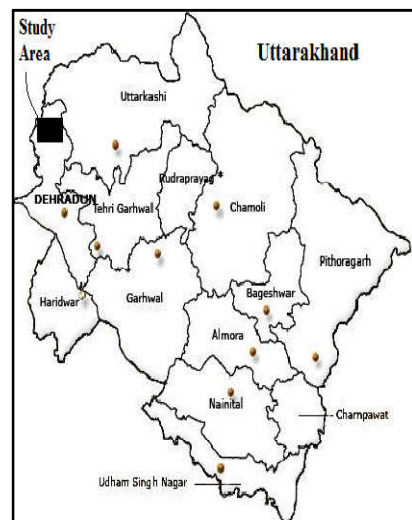
Some of states from our country are promoting Ecotourism for the community development of the nation. In the same way, Uttarakhand is also promoting ecotourism for the community development. Uttarakhand has so many ecotourism sites because of its geographical location. The present research area (Koti-Kanasar) is also an ecotourism site, which was selected by Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India as Ecotourism destination in 2005. This Paper aims to check the impact of Ecotourism at Koti-Kanasar and explores the current trends, challenges and development in the Ecotourism at Koti-Kanasar. This paper also analyses the role of the participation of the Private tour operators, NGO's, local community and the Government in the development of ecotourism. Further, this paper also aims to assess the potential to develop the existing natural and ecotourism resources in the area. Since, several methodologies are applied throughout the world by different researchers for assessing Ecotourism, we are trying to assess the impact of ecotourism on environment, socio-culture and economy of the destination. Because, due to the high rate of beneficial impacts, ecotourism will be helpful in the overall development of the community.

Copyright © 2019 Subhash Chandra Kannaujiya and Ajay Arora. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

INTRODUCTION

Koti-Kanasar is totally surrounded by mountain and forest. Here is the largest belt of Deodar trees in Asia. Some tree is such old as more than 6 meters. God have given complete natural things such as River, Forest, and Mountain which fulfil the need of eco system of that area. The views of deodar trees are very beautiful eye- seeking. Air of that area very fresh and cold which gives different felling. The Hilly state of Uttarakhand is covered by 64.76% from the forest of its total geographical area, where we find rich biodiversity, various types of flora and fauna which attracts a lot of nature lover tourist. The area has been selected by ministry of Tourism Government of India as Ecotourism destination in 2005. Koti-Kanasar the hilly Village, in the lap of nature is, approx 120 km away from Dehradun district, Uttarakhand. Koti-Kanasar is a part of 'Jaunsar-Bawar' region. Jaunsar-Bawar is geographically located in hilly region; it comes under Chakrata Tehsil and block. The distance of Jaunsar-Bawar from famous hill station Mussoorie is 85 km only. The 'Jaunsari' tribe, living in this particular region whose traces its root from the Pandavas of Mahabharata. Jaunsar-Bawar is the mix of two regions, inhabited by the Jaunsari tribes. Jaunsar lies in the lower part, while the snow-covered upper part is called Bawar which includes several peaks like Kharamba. The height of this peak is 3084 meter above from sea level.

Mangtar, Gorchha, Lokhandi, Sahiya, Mathela, so many more. Geographically the area lies between 77.45' and 78.7'20" East to 30.31' and 31.3'3" North. Jaunsar-Bawar is surrounded by the river Yamuna from east, from the west by river Tons and the north part comprises Uttarkashi district, and some parts of Himachal Pradesh (Sirmaur), in the south Dehradun district. It is a 'Tribal Region' declared by former Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi in 1967.



*Corresponding author: **Subhash Chandra Kannaujiya**
Department of Tourism Kumaun University, Nainital U. K, (India)



Figure 1 Road-Map of Uttarakhand & Research Area

Koti-Kanasar as an Ecotourism destination

Uttarakhand Government has identified more than 35 natural sites having forest guest houses. Some of them include villages also like Koti-Kanasar, but these forest guest houses cannot accommodate more than 15 guests. According to our survey this approach will be developed by joining the hands together between government and Host Community. Home stay should be encouraged to enrich tourist experience as well new Eco Huts should be constructed. To develop and promote this village as ideal Indigenous, Rural and Eco tourism sites, participation of local community should be ensured with proper allocation of funds. Capacity Building program should be organized specially for local youth who will be key player in this project in area of entrepreneurship, assessing the impacts, adventure tours and guiding. Very strict and rigid guidelines should be framed for tourist as well host to avoid any kind of negative impact. Encourage sensitive tourist for this tour who follow the orientation to protect the nature.

Koti-Kanasar is a very beautiful village. Around the village there is rich Deodar tree and well planted Apple orchid. The main occupation of villagers is agriculture & apple gardening. Kanasar is a beautiful tourist point situated very close to Chakrata in Uttarakhand. It is also called as Koti-Kanasar. Basically, it is a small village which is around 120 kms away from Dehradun and is densely populated by rain forests. Other than this, the village is also an abode to oak, Alps and rhododendrons trees which are found here in large numbers. The entire place seems to be decorated by nature’s pure beauty and serenity. Mangtar, Tyuna village is also situated near to this place and Sarasvati peak is one of the most amazing ones giving natural scenic views of the beauty. It has been selected by Ministry of Tourism Govt. of India under as Eco-Tourism 2005.

Table 3 Tourists Status in Dehradun Districts (2005-2017)

Year	Indian	Foreigner	Total
2007	1422578	18483	1441061
2008	1558715	17051	1575766
2009	1966942	20699	1987641
2010	1978962	19864	1998826
2011	1978962	19864	1998826
2012	2175851	21884	2197735
2013	2383783	18202	2401985
2014	2397197	18549	2415746
2015	2374527	18722	2393249
2016	5163801	30933	5194734
2017	5585867	34636	5620503

Table 4 Percentage of Tourists Visiting Dehradun district from Various Places

S. No.	States	Percentage of Tourists
1	Delhi	15%
2	Uttar Pradesh	13.5%
3	Punjab	12%
4	Uttarakhand	9%
5	Haryana	7.5%
6	Himachal Pradesh	7.5%
7	Maharashtra	6.5%
8	West Bengal	4.5%
9	Others	14.5%
10	Foreigners	10%
Total		100%

Literature Review

Ecotourism is not a new concept in the tourism industry of India. But the different aspect of tourism impacts is seen gradually in India. There are many researchers who have highlighted the impacts of tourism and ecotourism.

Ly and Anh (2011) have Studied on the Environmental Impact of Ecotourism in Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere. According to them Vietnam has great advantages for Ecotourism with natural scenic attraction and diverse ecology. Can Gio is emerging ecotourism destination with unique mangrove forest, multiform fauna & flora along with nice beach. It is one of the UNESCO listed natural heritage site. They have tried to study the positive and the negative, both environmental impacts of ecotourism in Can Gio biosphere reserve. For that they have done survey from Tourists, Local NGO’s and Tour Operators, who are responsible for tourism activities on the site. They have collected both qualitative and quantitative data to reach at the conclusion. From the researcher’s perspective, the situation in Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere is progressive but not satisfactory. Local people are not well educated and poverty is one of the major causes which made local communities behave non-environment friendly. The Negative impacts only can be minimized, if local people will be educated and behave environment friendly.

Das (2013) has tried to assess the ecotourism resources in Nameri National Park of Assam-India. He has tried to identify the potential for ecotourism sites within the park which can speed up tourism infrastructure development. They also tried to highlight the possibilities on the basis of assessment of ecotourism resources of the Nameri National Park during field experience gained in the different parts of the study area.

Fiagbomeh & Arndt (2006) have highlighted the different dimensions of ecotourism’s impact. According to them, ecotourism is promoted in the developing country as a means to financing the biodiversity conservation and supporting local people. In spite of these perceived benefit of ecotourism, there are many problems associated with the local people. The impact of ecotourism is varied according to place to place. There is also laciness in practical assessment of the ecotourism status and the real impacts. Therefore, they have set to analyse the ecotourism impacts in terms of socio-economic and environmental impacts in Kakum Conservation Area (KCA) in Ghana. The findings have been used as a base for further development of ecotourism and to recommend alternative management options where necessary for the study area. Thryambakam (2013) has assessed the Impact of Tourism on Community Development and Sustainability in Maredumilli, East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. This research is a

case study, which highlight the tourism growth and potential in Andhra Pradesh. According to him tourism in Andhra is growing and generating considerable amount of employment, infrastructure development. Which, positively influencing the social and economic development of the state. But there are many issues also associated with the sustainability of tourism in the state in the long term. Apart from economic, social and environmental/ physical impacts, there are impacts on population structure, transformation of forms and types of occupations, transformation of values, influence on traditional lifestyle, and modification of consumption patterns, and benefits to tourists. In his conclusion, he pointed out the need of developing sustainability of tourism impacts with the synchronized efforts of tourism stakeholders.

These all are some of the researches which highlighted the different aspect of impact of ecotourism. With the help of these researches we have tried to highlight the different aspect of impact of tourism at Koti-Kanasar region.

Research Approach

This is pure descriptive research. The data has been collected from the secondary sources, Similarly, Primary data were also collected from the forest guest house office Kanasar. References from various published research papers, books, and articles have been taken for interpretation and elaboration of data. To discuss about the impact of ecotourism on existing environment and economy, observations and discussion with key local people during research area visits on the time of data collection in Koti-Kanasar.

Impact on Economy

Tourism as well as ecotourism has multiplier impact on the economy. It helps in increasing living standard of the local people, employment for the local people and increasing in national income. In India, tourism is the second-largest source of foreign currency behind the gem and jewelry business. In Himalayan region also, tourism has enormous influence on the local economy. Uttarakhand earned between 10-15% of its revenue from tourism. Koti-Kanasar is also got influenced by the economic impact of tourism. Tourism provide additional income for locals apart from agriculture. Many studies reveal that, the villages lie on the tourist's routes are now fully dependent on the income coming from the tourist by providing them accommodation and other basic facilities at their stay. The same trend now developing in Koti-Kanasar. Many people started providing accommodation facilities and other basic facilities to the tourists and through that they are earning.

Impact on Environment

Generally, the most obvious and visible impact of tourism is the impact on the ecology and environment. Deforestation, pollution (air, water, land and sound), garbage problem, water scarcity, crowd and disturbance in local flora & fauna are common negative impact of tourism on environment. But there are also some common positive impacts on environment. Tourism also help in improvement of environment and ecology. Tourism help in funding for conservation and management of environment. In Koti-Kanasar also we can see both positive and negative impact on environment. Many villagers are cutting the trees to clear the space for building resorts and other tourist facilities. There are also some positive incidents where earning from tourists are spending on conservation of forest by forest department.

Impact on Socio-Culture

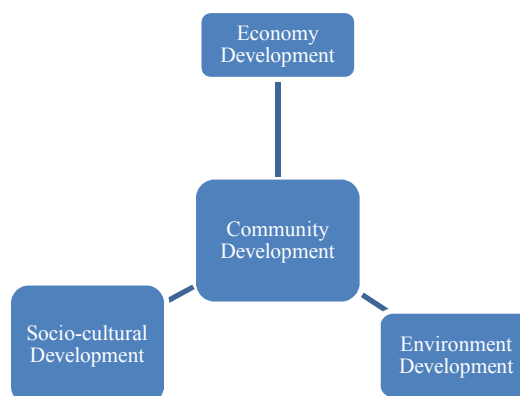
Tourism has one of the major factors which influence/impact the society through contact of local and tourists. Through tourism local and tourist interact each other and get influenced with each other. The major impact we can see mostly on local community. This impact can be both positive and negative. It is in tourism planner hand to control the impact. Tourism Planner has to ensure that, there should be positive impact than the negative impact. They should always try to maximize the positive impact and minimize the negative impact.

In India, Tourism planner has not so far success in minimizing the negative impact. They mostly consider the economy benefit of tourism. But in many developed country scenarios is totally difference. They mostly consider the socio-culture impact first and economy impact later. Despite it, Ecotourism sites in India is more concern about socio-cultural impact but not as developed country.

Koti-Kanasar is also a typical example of Indian tourism destination. But due to ecotourism site, it is little bit sensitive towards socio-cultural impact. But due to overall development in country they are also developing. Almost all kind of modern facilities are available there. People lifestyle has been changed, the way of celebrating religious festivals has not been changed but other aspect of lifestyle has been changed. Those changes, we can't clearly blame on tourism. We can't say that it is because of only tourism.

Overall Community Development

Tourism as a whole has been seen a tool for community development in many parts of the world. In same way, In India also, we are seeing tourism as a tool for community development. Among tourism Specially, ecotourism is one of the most effective tools for the local community development in various places in India. The concept of ecotourism itself depicting the nature and culture conservation as well as economy development of the local community. The environment conservation lead to environment development. The cultural conservation lead to socio-cultural development. The tourism economy leads to economy development. This way, ecotourism is working as overall community development where ever it is followed properly. The framework of community development is prescribed below in the figure form.



Ecotourism impact on any destination

Challenges for Tourism Development at Koti-Kanasar

- ✓ Foreigners are not allowed to travel in this area.
- ✓ Accessibility from Dehradun during Rain is risky.
- ✓ Less accommodation and food facilities.
- ✓ Lack of awareness about the site importance and the need for local guides.
- ✓ Lack of awareness about their unique indigenous culture.
- ✓ Lack of promotion by government authorities.
- ✓ People are not so much aware about tourism benefits.

Suggestions to Overcome the Hurdles or to Improve

- ✓ In these villages, day by day people are moving towards Cash Crops (Apple, Rajma, Potato, and Walnut) for their source of income which is affected by seasonality and weather. If community will encourage tourism activity then it will generate additional income to support their livelihood.
- ✓ Create employment, especially for rural youth, like guiding, local hospitality, arranging services for tourist etc.
- ✓ Rise in income level will lead to better education and health facilities for community.
- ✓ After visibility of site, Government will also allocate more funds for development as it will generate more revenues for government also.
- ✓ Development of small-scale enterprises based on local resources like apple, wood, medicines etc.
- ✓ Promotion of dying art & handicrafts.
- ✓ Restoration of wooden heritage houses.
- ✓ Exchange of culture which benefits each other

Suggestions for the Development of Ecotourism

1. A seasonal dispersal and regional diffusion of the trekkers could help in taking pressure off the local ecosystem. This could be achieved by either regulating the number of tourists allowed in a certain area, or, by introducing a more dynamic pricing policy, creating incentives to visit less frequented areas or to visit outside of the peak season.
2. The use of alternative energy sources such as micro-hydro can help in reducing the use of firewood by locals and tourists and, thereby, reducing the pressure on local forests.
3. When designated campsites are created that offer certain amenities (such as washing facilities, for example), the amount of "wild" camping along the trails could be reduced.
4. The management of the environment can involve an enormous amount of money. The revenue from user charges and mountaineering royalties should not only help the governments, but should be shared between the governments and the areas where this revenue is created.
5. Training programmes can help the local people to develop the skills needed to guide tourists. This, in turn, can give these people the confidence to get involved in the tourism business and start an own enterprise. Additionally, by setting a minimum skill level for porters through training, the service to the tourists is improved and a higher income can be expected.

6. The creation of community-based, participation-oriented tourism management committees allows locals to participate in the decision-making process and influence the decisions that have a direct effect on their lives. At the same time, participation increases the support and co-operation of the locals for protection projects. Additionally, the amount of knowledge that the locals have of their environment and the ways to save it should not be underestimated.
7. At the same time, participation by the private sector and the local communities in the decision-making process has increased and there has been a 50% rise in the number of households involved in tourism-related activities. This rise can be partly attributed to training courses and enterprise support of porters, guides, etc. These training courses have also increased the base daily rate for porters and pack-animal.

CONCLUSION

The Koti-Kanasar is unique destination for its charming and beautiful landscapes as it forms an integral part of the Himalaya. The magnificent and panoramic view attract the tourism from far places. The natural beauties, indigenous people and their culture are the major attraction, which further enhance the growth of tourism in this land. In a nutshell, we can conclude that the Koti-Kanasar has a major potential for tourism development. Tourism will grow as time passes, but it has been noticed that tourism has not only enhanced the economy and society of the destination but also has an impact on the environment. Tourism in the Koti-Kanasar has a long tradition. But the dawn of modern tourism, induced by the extension of modern transportation and other tourism facilities deep into the region, will affect the local ecology, economy and society. Thus, the responsibility lies on the all stakeholders of tourism to minimize the negative impact and maximize the positive impact.

References

1. Bansal, S. P., & Gangotia, A. (2010). Perception of Tourist: A case study of Utrakhand. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Systems*, 3(1).
2. Gupta, S. K., & Bhatt, V. P. (2009). Community based tourism development: a case-study of eco village Sari in Kedarnath sanctuary region. *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Systems*, 2(1), 135.
3. Rajasenan, D., Varghese, M., & Bijith, G. A. (2012). Socio-Economic Aspects of Sustainable Ecotourism Development: The Case of Kerala.
4. Eraqi, M. I. (2007). Ecotourism resources management as a way for sustainable tourism development in Egypt. *tourism analysis*, 12(1-2), 39-49.
5. Tran, L., & Do, A. (2011). Impact of Ecotourism: A Study on the Environmental Impact of Ecotourism in Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere, Viet Nam.
6. Appiah-Opoku, S. (2011). Using protected areas as a tool for biodiversity conservation and ecotourism: A case study of Kakum National Park in Ghana. *Society and Natural Resources*, 24(5), 500-510.
7. Cobbinah, P. B., Black, R., & Thwaites, R. (2015). Biodiversity conservation and livelihoods in rural Ghana: Impacts and coping strategies. *Environmental Development*, 15, 79-93.

8. McKeone, E. (2011). Ecotourism in Costa Rica: Environmental impacts and management.
9. Thryambakam, P. (2013). Impact of Tourism on Community Development and Sustainability in Maredumilli, East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh–A Case Study. *Global Journal of Management and Business Studies*, 3(11), 1253-1260.
10. Pechlaner, H., & Reuter, C. Is Ecotourism a Strategy for Regional Economic Development in India? The Case of Mussoorie and Asan Barrage.
11. Lai, P. H., & Nepal, S. K. (2006). Local perspectives of ecotourism development in Tawushan Nature Reserve, Taiwan. *Tourism Management*, 27(6), 1117-1129.
12. Bagri, S. C., & Kala, D. (2016). Residents' attitudes toward tourism development and impacts in Koti-Kanasar, Indroli, Pattayur tourism circuit of Uttarakhand state, India.
13. Fetene, A., Bekele, T., & Tiwari, G. B. G. (2012). The contribution of ecotourism for sustainable livelihood around Nech Sar National Park, Ethiopia. *Int J Environ Sci*, 1, 19-25.
14. Nelson, F. (2004). *The evolution and impacts of community-based ecotourism in northern Tanzania* (No. 131). London: International Institute for environment and development.

How to cite this article:

Subhash Chandra Kannaujiya and Ajay Arora (2019) 'Impact of Ecotourism in Community Development – A Case Study of Koti-Kanasar Village (Uttarakhand)', *International Journal of Current Advanced Research*, 08(06), pp. 19226-19230.
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijcar.2019.19230.3698>
