

## Impacts of Nature Tourism in a Destination: A case Study of Bhilangana Valley in Garhwal Himalaya

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of this research paper is to identify and appraise the factors determining impacts of nature tourism in a tourist destination. The villages of Bhilangana Valley in Garhwal Himalayas have been selected for this study. The paper enumerates the physical, economic and social-cultural impacts and their implications on the destination. The region is blessed with natural environs and a unique endemic culture suitable for nature tourism promotion and development. The natural tourism resources at the destinations are the unique selling point and are the key indicators that'll decide the growth of tourism. It is imperative to involve the local folks to enable them to become a tourism stakeholder and assist in holistic development of the rural region. The study makes an effort to propose suitable lifestyle and encourage the stakeholders to work in collaboration to mitigate the adverse impacts of tourism and utilize tourism to their advantage to for their economic and social upliftment.

**KEYWORDS:** *Tourism Impacts, Tourism Promotion, Unique Selling Point, Tourism Stakeholders*

### Introduction

Nature Tourism can be defined as a form of tourism that depends on nature and natural settings (Hall & Boyd, 2005). A natural area is an area of unique ecological, scenic, historic or geologic value usually protected to maintain its natural condition and character (Dudley, 2008). It takes under its ambit all those forms of tourism that are directly dependant on the use of natural resources in a reasonably undeveloped state regarding topography, scenery, wildlife, vegetation and water resources of the particular nature destination. Nature tourism accounts for a large proportion of global tourism industry and is growing faster than the overall tourism sector. Over the past two decades, both nature and adventure tourism have developed to be part of the fastest growing segments within the tourism industry. With an annual growth rate of 10-30%, nature tourism seems to be the fastest growing sector. Its share in the world travel market is currently about 20% (Christ et al, 2003; UNWTO, 2005).

The terms nature tourism or nature-based tourism are used interchangeably in the literature (Kline, 2001; Newsome et al., 2002) and denote “all types of tourism that rely on relatively undisturbed natural environments or natural features” (Buckley, 2009a, p. 5). It can include activities based on: consumptive uses (such as recreational hunting and fishing); outdoor recreation and adventure; passive enjoyment of scenery, geology, flora and fauna; and non-consumptive activities for conservation and research (Coghlan & Buckley, 2012). Nature based tourism is one of the growing forms of tourism today. Tourism which is based on nature is becoming a big international industry with major economic, social and environmental effect on local and global scale (Buckley–Pickering–Waver 2003, 1).

The mountainous state of Uttarakhand - the land of gods, the home of Himalayas and truly a paradise on earth, allures tourists from all walks of life. The region is endowed with vast tourism potential and has the settings idyllic for the development of nature tourism forms such as adventure, wildlife and ecotourism. The state is home to several hill stations, wildlife parks, pilgrimage places and is promoted as a trekker’s paradise. As per the Uttarakhand State Report, June 2017, the state witnessed steep rise in the number of tourist arrivals from 101,970 in 2014-15 to 105,880 in 2015-16. The draft of the state tourism policy aims at developing the state’s image as a safe, secure and friendly destination for tourists. Within a short span of its existence, Uttarakhand has emerged as a significant destination for investments in tourism and hospitality.

The present research paper selected the villages of Bhilangana Valley in Uttarakhand and identified the subsequent physical, economic and socio-cultural impacts of nature tourism. The river Bhilangana originates from the Khatling glacier in the valley and is surrounded by mighty mountains and naturally serene meadows and lakes. The Tourism department of the state has identified nature trails in the region and is effectively promoting the valley as an ideal nature tourism destination suitable for adventure, eco and wildlife tourism. The primary motive is to assess the possible impacts of these forms of tourism on the said destination and the community otherwise known for its rural agricultural lifestyle.

#### **Study Area**

The Garhwal Himalayas situated between the latitude of 29° 26’ to 31° 28’ N and longitudes 77° 49’ to 86° 06’ E is blessed with large number of river system. The river Bhilangna is a major tributary of river Ganga in Garhwal Himalayas. It originates from the Khatling glacier approximately 50 km south of the ice cave at Gaumukh at an elevation of 3717 msl.

Bhilangana valley falls under the Tehri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand. The entrance to the valley is from Gadolia to Khatling Glacier. The Bhilangana valley, draining the river of the same name, is a beautiful and relatively a virgin valley. There is a well – trodden trekking route adjoining to the Bhilangana valley.

The region is well connected by road. Uttarakhand State Transpost buses ply on the region throughout the year. The main town of Ghansali is well connected with the national capital (New Delhi) and the state capital (Dehradun) with the help of daily state transport buses and privately owned shared vehicles and taxis. The town of Ghansali is at a distance of 290 kilometres and 110 kilometres by road from New Delhi and Dehradun respectively. The nearest railway stations are at Dehradun, Haridwar and Rishikesh. The stations are well connected with the rest of the

country and one can easily book a train ticket to the mentioned stations from all major Indian cities. There are two domestic airports in the state of Uttarakhand i.e., Jolly Grant Airport in the Dehradun district and Pant Nagar in the Udham Singh Nagar district. The nearest airport from the study area is at Dehradun and as mentioned earlier, one can easily take a bus or book a taxi from Dehradun to the town of Ghansali, which is situated at a distance of 110 kilometres from the state capital.



**Figure 1.1: Map of Uttarakhand with highlighted Study Area**

### Impacts of Nature Tourism

Various models have been developed by tourism experts describing the impacts of tourism among community. One such model is called Doxey's Irridex Model (1975), a theoretical model which is considered as one of the most important model to state that an increase in number of tourists and a more developed tourism industry at the destination results in irritation in the host community towards impact on community. The irritation can take the form of unfriendly behaviour personified as resentment from the local community towards tourism. In this case the perceptions of the host community vary from 'euphoria' (a feeling of happiness or comfort) to 'apathy' when locals start losing interest in tourism; to 'annoyance' after the number of tourists and the unfavourable impacts have increased; and finally 'antagonism' (a generation of hostile reactions against tourism). Although Doxey's model is a useful approach towards identifying the four stages of tourism evolution at a destination, it has been criticised for its limitations because it is a unidirectional model intended to represent the entire nature of the host community. Having learned about the Doxey's model, the Ap's model (1992) helps us to understand the residents attitude. Similar to Doxey's model, this model describes the way in which tourism development affects local people's attitudes towards

tourism. Embracement takes place when local people, especially those who benefit from tourism, accept it and feel positively about its impacts. Depending on the degree of their involvement in tourism, some of them adjust while others do not. Finally, withdrawal takes place when local people can no longer cope with the impacts of tourism and so their negative perceptions take over. As an exercise to learn the attitudes of the residents, the social exchange theory of Ap's is found to be the most appropriate. It involves considering things as why positive and negative attitudes towards tourism arise among residents and the exchange and sharing of resources between individuals and groups. If residents perceive that the benefits to be gained from such exchanges outweigh the costs, then they will be positive about entering into the exchange process. To elaborate further on this latter point, the only important factor in determining the residents' perception of and attitude towards tourism is that of the value of the outcome. A negative perception and attitude is likely to result, if the social exchange is seen to be negative or even detrimental to the local population. Conversely, if the outcome is seen to be economically and socially beneficial to the local community, the resultant attitude towards tourism will be positive. It is believed that social exchange theory is a valid indicator to explain both positive and negative attitudes of a host population towards tourism. This theory can be used to examine the relationship between the impact of tourism and host attitudes at an individual level and at a group/society level, and can also supplement other theoretical approaches such as examining the methods by which the host population make their own assessments of costs and benefits.

Having analysed the varied impacts likely to happen at tourism destinations, the following part of this paper explains the possible impacts and their implications in the study area. Tourism has paved way for the development of various allied infrastructural facilities including hotels, lodges and camps in Bhilangana Valley. Many linkages including retail and wholesale businesses have also been established to offer various services in the exercise of positioning the Bhilangana valley as potential area. Tourism in the region also provides employment opportunities to local communities and it is a significant source of earning for local community of the region. Despite its positive socio-economic impacts, the industry is beginning to have negative environmental impacts in the area such as the destruction of the area's ecology through different forms of pollution and poor waste management further negatively affecting the culture, economic and other aspects of the region.

### **Physical Impacts**

Uncontrolled tourism is threatening many natural areas around the globe causing negative environmental impacts on air and water quality, vegetation, soil, wildlife, and many other things. It can put enormous pressure on area and lead to impacts such as soil erosion, increased pollution, natural habitat loss, increased pressure on endangered species and heightened vulnerability to forest fires. It often puts a strain on water resources, and it can force local population to compete for the use of critical resources. Because of this reason the total population living in villages has drastically reduced. So in other way tourism is utilized as a way to initiate reverse migration to the villages with sufficient care. In the study area the serious problem is improper waste disposal, acting as a major spoiler of the natural environment – rivers, scenic areas, forests and roadsides. Adventure activities are

prominent in Bhilangana valley region, in these mountainous areas; trekking tourists generate a great amount of waste. Tourists on expedition leave behind their garbage, oxygen cylinders and even camping equipment which are considered a serious consequence to the fragile environment and the species found there. Such practices by tourists degrade the environment. Tourists using the same trail over and over again trample the vegetation and soil, eventually causing damage that can cause loss of biodiversity and other impacts. Such damage can become even more extensive when visitors frequently stay off established trails. Some tourism activities such as trekking and camping have caused environmental pollution from unhygienic disposal of human waste, discharge of sewerage effluent into water resources and littering in the region. Habitat can be degraded by tourism leisure activities. For example, wildlife viewing brings about stress on animals and alters their natural behaviour when tourists come too close. Wildlife watching activities have degrading effect on habitat as they often are accompanied by the noise and commotion created by tourists as they chase wild animals in their trucks.

### **Implications**

The fragmented nature of tourism industry is not conducive to integrated, holistic regulation that encompasses all aspects of the industry. The dispersed nature of the tourism industry produces diffused impacts that fall under the jurisdictions of different federal, state and local agencies. Moreover, enforcement and compliance problems make it particularly difficult to regulate tourist activities. For these reason educational efforts seem more promising than regulation to minimize many of the environmental impacts of tourism that are now regulated. Education can be used to support existing regulations, and to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour where no regulations exist.

Educational efforts to promote environmentally responsible tourism should be framed in accordance with the targeted audience (e.g., tourists, industry sectors). Tourists may be more receptive to educational efforts that focus on the environmental benefits of altering their behaviour than to regulatory prohibitions per se. For example, a sign that prohibits anchoring in a sensitive marine ecosystem could be more effective if accompanied by an explanation of the potential damage a boat can do the ecosystem. However, educational efforts geared towards the industry sectors seem most effective when cost savings and marketing benefits of "being green" are emphasized. Although environmental awareness has had an important impact on the tourism industry, economic motives are still primary. Therefore, educational programs aimed at tourism service providers should emphasize the potential economic and marketing benefits of environmental stewardship.

The environmental impacts of the construction and development of facilities needed to support the industry are both immediate and gradual in the study area. Development associated with tourism includes accommodations, roads, retail stores and restaurants, tourists' attractions, tourists' seasonal waterfront homes, water supplies and waste disposal facilities. Cumulative effects over time are particularly problematic because the developer in question is often out of the picture before impacts become obvious. Tourist infrastructure can also adversely impact putting more pressure on sewage treatment plants or septic systems in the tourist destinations.

Although tourism has been the impetus for much destructive development, it has also been the motivation for preserving sensitive ecosystems. Some of this motivation stems from economic benefits, as natural parks serve as attractions for tourists. Tourism-related development has an impact on wildlife, also. Development in the lower elevations of mountain resorts (where it usually is located) restricts the migratory winter range of certain wildlife. Communities adjacent to such ecosystems that cater to tourists are called "gateway communities". Development of this area is often undertaken without consideration of the natural landscape. Indiscriminate and scattered development tends to detract from the local character of such areas and homogenizes the experiences for the visitor. As the number of tourists in an area increases, the demand for facilities increases, and thus their supply also increases.

While analysing to control the resulting impacts in the fragile areas, it becomes imperative to learn the carrying capacity concept and following and implementing the same effectively can ensure the resulting negative impacts to eradicate from major consequences. With regards to social carrying capacity there were two schools. In one, carrying capacity is considered to be the capacity of the destination area to absorb tourism before the host population feels negative impacts and second contends that tourism carrying capacity is the level beyond which tourist flows will decline because certain capacities, as perceived by the tourists themselves, have been exceeded, and therefore the destination area ceases to satisfy and attract them. According to Mathieson and Wall (1982), carrying capacity is the maximum number of people a site can accommodate without an acceptable alteration in the physical environment and acceptable decline in the quality of experience gained by visitors. However criticism appeared that the contribution of Mathieson only takes into consideration the physical impact of tourism on the destination from an environmental and experimental point of view. Instead he claims that carrying capacities are judged and studied not only from physical perspective, but also from and for the social, cultural and economic subsystems of the destination. However, Mathieson and Wall (1982) define social carrying capacity as the level at which the host population of an area becomes intolerant of the presence of tourists. Social capacity is attained when the community feels that they do not want tourists due to their negative characters such as environment destruction, local culture disturbance and congestion altogether which restricts from doing their work freely.

After carrying capacity, it is the destination life cycle that contributes more to learn the impacts in any tourist destinations. Like that of other consumer goods/products tourism areas too have life cycles and it travels through several stages from the process of evolution, discovery, growth and decline. This was contended by Butler (1980), and described that tourist destination undergoes six stages including the exploration stage, involvement stage, development stage, consolidation by a variety of factors, including changes in preferences and needs of visitors, the gradual deterioration and possible replacement of physical plant and facilities, and the change of the original natural and cultural attractions, which is responsible for the initial popularity of the area. Allen, Long, Perdue and Kieselbach (1998) investigated how resident's perceptions of community life varied with the level of tourism development in their community. The study supported tourism development cycle theories that a lower level of tourism development was

beneficial, but as development continued, resident's perceptions of quality of life declined. Destination with its resource attraction is significantly affected by various impacts as outlined in Table 1.1. The description of the destination and its impacts could be well learned from the below characteristics.

**Table 1.1: Destination Resource Attractions and Impact Assessment**

Stage	Beginning	Growth	Maturity	Decline
Number of visitors	Small number of tourists. Allocentrics Explorer	Tourists equal or exceed the residents.	Heavy reliance on repeat visitation.	No vacationers, but day and weekend trip.
Market	Irregular visitation pattern	Well defined tourist market	Frequent change in ownership	Property turnover is high
Attraction and Facilities	Non-local visitors attracted by natural features. No specific facilities	Natural attraction supplemented by man-made facility. Up to date facility for visitor accommodation.	Well established but no longer in fashion. Surplus beds available.	Tourist facilities disappear. Hotels become condominiums, retirement homes or apartment for the elderly.
Economic significance of Tourism	Little significance to the economic and social life of the residents. Limited amount of receipts.	High contact between locals and tourists. Positive growing travel balance.	Capacity level reached; onset of environmental, social, economic problems.	Negative travel balance.
Involvement of organisation	Low	Heavy Advertising	New development needed	Likely increase
Impacts	Low (Both positive and negative)	Reasonable (Both positive and negative)	Critical stage, where negative impacts towards the community than the positive.	Negative impacts
Life cycle of Tourism destination with impacts, based on Researcher's view				

Note: These data were abstracted from Butler (1980); Haywood (1986); Plog (2001); Toh, Khan & Koh (2001).

### **Economic Impact**

As an economic impact tourism can create job opportunities, enhance foreign exchanges, improve standard of living besides increasing cost of living being considered as one of the negative aspect of economic impacts. Many researchers have been conducted in earlier periods on economic impacts on different parts of the world. People have accepted tourism increases the host community and whole country in gaining more FOREX (Ahmed & Krohn, 1992), gaining employment increases revenue to local business (Backman & Backman, 1997). Incidentally, tourism brings resentment in bringing non locals to various positions in the allied

sectors outlets especially in hotels etc. Also it increases the prices of goods and services and sometimes leads to the shortage of certain commodities. Employment generation is one of the significant benefits applauded by the residents as positive economic impacts. Many studies (Weaver & Lawton, 2001; Tosun, 2002) recognizes employment generation as one of the main economic benefit towards community and suggests to enhance employability to reduce out migration from villages and diverting them to involve in tourism related jobs according to the skills possessed by the resident. He further opines to ensure value chain for community development. However, the massive development and construction activities have misguided the residents to end up with unemployment coupled by the seasonality of business. The presence of tourism activities has brought many benefits to the community members but simultaneously their indigenous nature of the place and people have been damaged. The economic benefits have brought prosperity mainly to urban communities and entrepreneurs. The rate of economic return to rural communities has been low. Here are some of the negative economic impacts of tourism which were carved out in the study:

- Tourism infrastructure facilities like resorts, hotels and tour and travel companies belong mainly to investors from urban areas; who take most of the profits.
- Daily necessities commodities like food, clothing etc., used by tourists are normally imported from outside which can be produced locally.
- Although employment is given to local labour but it is only at a low level which signifies low job retention ratio, meagre salary and undue exploitation by the senior staff. Thus employment opportunities for local people are very limited and not adequate if considered for a longer period of time.
- It has been noticed in the study that over the past several years, rural areas have not benefited much from the multiplier effect from the development of local handicrafts, or agriculture. This undesirable situation is caused by the weak linkage between tourism and local production.

#### **Socio-Cultural Impact**

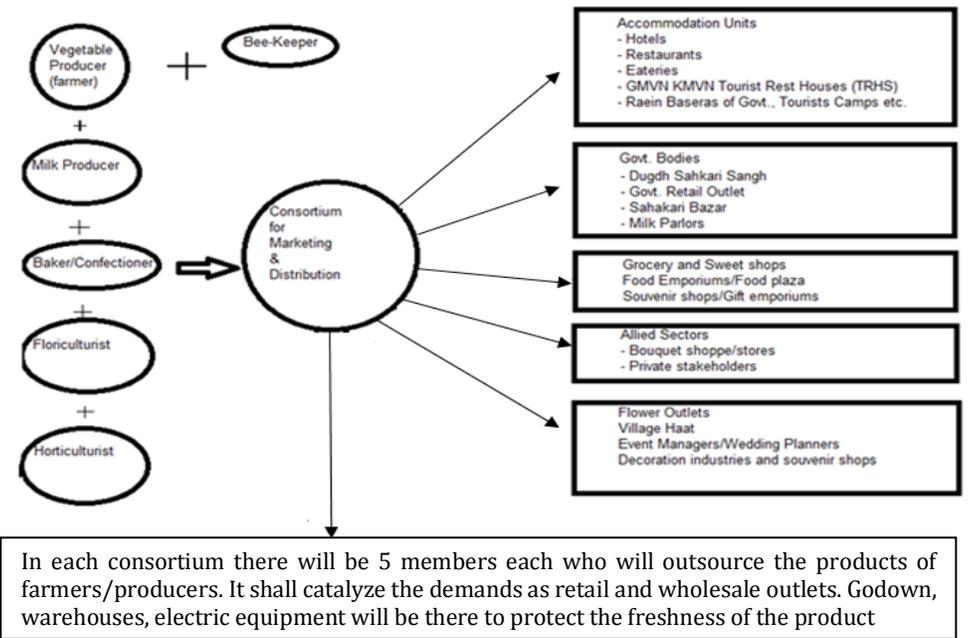
In many ways tourism brings social ills to the community through gambling, drug trafficking, human trafficking, prostitution and other unlawful activities. This results in deteriorating the existing culture of the community and the place as a whole. However tourism brings more facilities including beautification of places, creation of recreational facilities and development of public infrastructure. Economic benefits have disturbed the socio-cultural setup of the community by inviting many problems. Income from tourism is much higher than what rural people can earn from agriculture and allied activities therefore tourism has been accepted willingly in many rural areas of the region in spite of its negative effects. The haphazard tourism planning in these regions has resulted in invasion of indifferent visitors with different values, disrupting rural culture which is followed by a decline in participation in rural traditional and cultural practices in the region. Practice of developing traditional houses is rapidly declining and these houses are now being replaced by modern buildings, as the local culture is eroded. Tourism has reshaped the occupation of the community by making a shift to tourism from agriculture. The higher standards of living in urban tourist destinations have caused emigration from nearby rural neighbours, resulting in changes in the demographic

structure and possible culture shock. Furthermore, employment and education can have a negative social impact. Finally, there happen to be an increase in out migration from the villages.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The perception of various socio-economic, cultural and environmental impacts is related strongly to the level of tourism development. Sometimes, a negative perception of tourism development can itself be the reason that creates resident’s perceptions that community life has declined, particularly as related to public services and opportunities for citizen’s social and political involvement. These life conditions from tourism impact on the community make up the life domain in general. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with living conditions (e.g., employment and income) from tourism impacts spill over vertically to satisfactions in the life domains, and determine overall life satisfaction. In order to ensure the even participation and distribution of income to have positive economic impact on community, a proper value chain has to be followed. Especially, the main problem identified among the community members are uneven distribution of income and leads to misunderstanding among the involved community members. So the following value chain model as elaborated in the fig. 1.1 suggested by Bagri (2010) shall ensure proper involvement of communities which will pave way for even distribution system. It is a multi-stakeholder process that seeks to engage stakeholder group for planning help to develop a common vision and serve a common platform; build ownership and strengthens holistic decision making process for successful execution of plans and projects.

**Fig. 1.1: Value Chain of Local Residents: Multi-stakeholders Involvement Process**



**Source: Bagri, 2010**

**Note:** Above model set benchmark application on how to sail ahead in the midst of

various challenges. Local resident's product shall be marketed by Govt. promotional agencies like District Industrial Centres, Khadi and Village Industries (KVIC's), Department of Rural Development, Horticultural units of Govt., retail outlets, Gandhi Gramodyog etc. Consortium shall act as a wholesaler as well as retailer for products like Onion, Potato, Garlic, Spinach, Chillies etc., to avoid the influence of commission agents. For the active involvement, encouragement (physically/financially) is needed to local residents so that their manual and rigorous efforts could be materialized by channelizing the ultimate share of profit at the door of farmers. Lead banks, Sahakari banks and other banks devoted to the development of villages can provide loans and other benefits to the agriculturists at subsidized rate or unconditional payback policy so that interest can be generated among this segment, often referred as the spinal cord of Indian demography. Emphasis is given on organic farming products. Circled activities led by the farmers/agriculturists and other players are illustrative. More activities can be added to make a comprehensive chain of most viable options for local people livelihood like

- Escort/guides
- Cattle rearing
- Entertainers/theatre artists
- Organic farmers
- Transporters
- Weavers

Various organizations can educate residents to avail facilities for the betterment and self-reliant through sustenance agricultural productivity of the fertile land. It can be at macro or micro level so that initiatives could be taken and this whirling wave of farmer's productivity can set an example of self-dependency among other communities. This product hub will be formed with common consensus where not more than 5 members are selected with prescribed rules and regulations. Nominate members of this consortium can be from agriculturists, govt. representatives and one representative from Agricultural research centre/Krishi Vigyan Kendra or University running agricultural/horticulture courses. This consortium will be sprawling in an open acre of land where warehouses, godowns, protection cells will be constructed with modern equipment to protect the fragility of the product. Each product will be placed in different shelf/refrigerators/locations with respective caretaker for the particular section. Consortium will act as a facilitating agent to sale the products to different government bodies, travel agents, hotels, accommodation units at larger scale and to individuals coming at the retail outlet for purchasing daily need items. The main objective of this consortium is to protect and safeguard the interest of farmers. Government can also promote village based industries through trade fairs, shows, village fairs/festivities. Ministry of Rural development can bring all these activities under one roof so that better premium could be reaped through maximum returns to the agricultural/farmer communities.

To local residents/producers, consortium serves as a facilitating counter where maximum return goes shall be channelized into the pockets of farmers, eliminating hitherto the influence of commission agents and other marketing intermediaries, whose involvement suffice to be commercialized to have a large chunk of monetary benefits. Now, product is carried and accumulated directly from the fields to consortium and outsourced in the markets hassle-free. For hotels, restaurants and

other bodies, easy availability of the product is made available at various retail and other wholesale outlets, rebate in luxury taxes by government to hoteliers, and other private entrepreneurs purchasing goods from this government run consortium only. On the other hand, award and recognition to those entrepreneurs and hoteliers who makes the maximum goods purchase annually from these outlets. In this way, local residents can be encouraged to engage more in agriculture related activities, substantially keeping a harrowing rate of out migration in the mountain regions. Moreover, by resorting to these fair practices, hotel and other stakeholders is helping poor, marginalized and vulnerable people as a part of their corporate social responsibility. While enjoying the advantages of the proposed value chain for the local community, it becomes imperative to create avocational business to ensure continuous income for the community involved. The existing unevenly distribution and absence of the tourist infrastructures like hotels, restaurants operated by the community members administered the researchers to propose avocational occupation for the community. The following avocational occupation model as formulated by Bagri (2010) was duly adopted for the study which exhibits the possibility of establishing certain touristic infrastructure which really facilitates host community in terms of avocational occupation.

**Table 1.2: Proposed additional avocational occupation for the community**

S.No.	Name of the destination	Potential attraction	Existing avocational occupation of host community	Proposed facility/activity as facilitator
1.	Akhori Village	Pilgrimage and Natural attractions	Guest House, Tea shops and eateries	Handicraft/Souvenir emporium museum explaining the history of the Vishwanath temple and artistic works of the region. Cultural theatre for live regional dance and theatre arts performance. Meditation centres
2.	Ghuttu	Natural attractions, serene landscapes and Bhilangana River	Guest House, Tea shops and Eateries	Knowledge centre on educating tourists about the topography and flora and fauna of the region
3.	Gangi	Serene Landscapes, Oak and Pine Forests, Indigenous local community with unique culture and tradition	Eatery and tea shop	Camping, Guide/ Scouts for assistance in the treks. Provide information about the local culture and tradition.

S.No.	Name of the destination	Potential attraction	Existing avocational occupation of host community	Proposed facility/activity as facilitator
4.	Jyundana	Local Temple, Pine forests, Himalaya view	Eatery and Tea shops	Environmental awareness program to tourists, Trekking, Guides/ Scouts
5.	Meghadhar	Nature/Adventure site, Village cultural ethnicity	Teashop, Eatery	Festivals exhibiting rural folk and culture richness of village, Rural museum.

Since Akhori is a pilgrimage destination because of the presence of Vishwanath temple amidst dense forest, handicraft/souvenir shops could be developed effectively with the use of local community artistic skills and a museum could be an alternative for the host community to work with as an avocational occupation. Further possibilities such as establishing cultural theatres for live dances portraying the region's cultural ethos with the active involvement of local community and annual dance festival to allure tourists and finally meditation centres shall also be an effective area for involvement of host community beyond the traditional avocational occupations such as teashops and eateries. These could be performed and organized by host community which will be a value added service to be involved into by the local community other than the eatery. This will enhance the interest among the host population as the said activities could be delivered by them only and for which they shall be rewarded accordingly; and they shall also be considered as an attraction for having the rich knowledge and entertaining the visitors with education.

To get out of the conventional forms of occupation, people of Gangi, and Ghuttu can get involved in varied nature tourism activities such as guides/scouts for the nature trails with having sound knowledge about the area landscapes, history, while local community members who own farms can initiate farm tours and educate tourists about their agricultural practices. This shall arouse interest among the visitors with first-hand information from the producers with personalized experiences. The local community of these villages has unique culture and tradition and the same can be highlighted to attract more tourists to the region. Host community of other destinations like Megadhar and Jyundana shall put themselves into organizing festivals exhibiting rural folk and cultural richness of the village and also explore the possibility of setting up the rural museum showcasing the rural ethnicity, folklore, culture, music, drama and dances whereby entrusting their responsibility in promoting sustainable nature tourism.

### Conclusion

Nature Tourism promotion in the fragile habitat leaves considerable impacts on the environment and other dimensions. However, the well-integrated tourism plan reduces the negative impacts and enhances the positive effects in the region.

Impacts have footprints on all resources and it is the duty of the stakeholders to balance the effects on resources and the community. Local community development should be at the heart of any tourism development and promotion plan. The tourism stakeholders should effectively work in unison to enhance the destination image and community life and mitigate the adverse impacts of nature tourism leading to holistic development of the study area.

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