

## Examining the Perception of Destination Communities towards Rural Tourism Development: A Study of Rural Residents of Kashmir Valley

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### Abstract

*Tourism is considered as a developmental tool for communities especially in the rural areas experiencing economic hardships. Tourism often is considered an instrument for revitalization of a local economy helping to improve their quality of life and protect natural and cultural resources. Hence, research on local residents' perceptions of tourism's impacts related with these issues would make some certain contributions to tourism literature. Thus, the present study endeavours to discover the local community's perceptions towards rural tourism development impacts. A research instrument was developed based on previous literature and was tested for a pilot study to check validity and reliability. Using convenience sampling technique in 03 rural tourism sites located in three different sub-regions of Kashmir region, a total number of 400 usable responses were received. The investigation showed that respondents tended to agree that tourism contributes to standard of living and improves local economy. From an environmental perspective, respondents strongly agreed that tourism development improves the physical appearance of an area and provides incentives for protection and conservation of natural resources. Regarding practical policy and managerial implications, the study suggest that the interests of local community members should be taken as a priority while developing the rural areas for tourism. It is also suggested that efforts should be made to educate the rural residents regarding the potential benefits tourism could bring, so as to gain more residents' support to tourism development.*

**Keywords:** Resident Perception, Tourism Impacts, Rural Tourism, Tourism in Kashmir

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## **Introduction**

Rural Tourism is nowadays used as an important development strategy for improving the social and economic wellbeing of rural communities. In India Rural tourism as a concept was launched in 2002. In the tenth five-year plan (2002-07), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched a pilot initiative to develop rural tourism in India through the Planning Commission. In this five-year plan, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India planned to develop 39 rural tourism sites with funding from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the innovative Endogenous Tourism Project, focusing on the rural tourism experience and the rural art and craft skills, cultural and natural heritage. This project on Endogenous Tourism was aimed to match the Government's commitment to develop tourism sector and UNDP's commitment to provide an enhanced and improved living and livelihood environment for low –income communities in rural areas.

Rural tourism plays a vital role in developing employment and income that can foster socio economic development of rural communities. The development of strong platform around the concept of rural tourism is definitely useful for a country like India, where almost 74% of the population lives in villages with each village having its own distinctive socio-cultural characteristics. Rural tourism can transform attitudes and mindsets, imparting local pride and visitor appreciation of the diverse culture, heritage and its local environment. The Rural Tourism project was initially implemented at 31 rural locations in 20 states with community participation through NGO or Panchayat Partners, District Collectors as focal points and specialized stakeholders. Later on, the projects were expanded to 168 villages scattered in 28 states.

## **Rural Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir**

Jammu and Kashmir is an important tourist destination in India and had been a centre of attraction for tourists since times immemorial. The tourism sector plays an important role in the development of this region. The valley of Kashmir because of its rich natural and cultural diversity and its pleasant climate has remained an internationally acclaimed tourist destination, whereas Jammu region- the land of temples is attracting a large number of pilgrimage tourists to its rich pilgrimage resources. Kashmir is famous for its natural resources and unique culture and is also preferred by the adventure loving tourists because it's unique topographical features.

Jammu and Kashmir is primarily a rural economy, where majority of the people live in rural surroundings. Each village in Jammu and Kashmir has unique set of cultural ethos and the people living therein are very hospitable and open-hearted. On the recommendations of Union Tourism Ministry, the State Tourism Department has initiated 25 rural tourism projects

in the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir (Table 1). Lot of efforts has been put to make these projects successful. The state department in association with many Non-Government Organizations has organized many capacity building programmes in these villages. These projects were monitored by different Tourism Development Authorities established by the State Tourism Department. Despite all these efforts the concept of rural tourism has not been properly implemented in the state. In fact, through proper planning and consultations Jammu and Kashmir can be promoted as a world class Rural Tourism Destination.

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name of the Villages</b>	<b>U.S.P.</b>
1	Drung (District Baramulla)	Adventure
2	Surinsar (District Jammu)	Adventure (Trekking)
3	Gagangir, District Ganderbal)	Adventure
4	Pahalgam, District Anantnag	Pilgrimage
5	Jheri, (District Jammu)	Adventure
6	Akingaam, District Anantnag)	Culture (Folk Dance: Bhand Pathar)
7	Vasaknag (District Kulgam)	Adventure
8	Dori Degair (District Jammu)	Culture
9	Watlab, (District Baramulla)	Adventure (Water Sports)
10	Agar Jitto, (District Udampur)	Culture & Craft
11	Chahel & Sahakote, (District Baramulla)	Gaba Saji Craft
12	Manasbal, (District Ganderbal)	Carpet weaving
13	Rafiabad (District Baramulla)	Craft
14	Nowgam (District Kupwara)	Culture
15	Shar-Shalli (District Pulwama)	Culture
16	Tegar Semor, (District Leh)	Handloom & Craft
17	Marwari karool, (District Doda)	Pilgrimage
18	Wader Wader Bala, (District Kupwara)	Culture
19	Bhawani (District Rajouri)	Culture
20	Naranag, (District Ganderbal)	Culture & Craft.
21	Hirpora, (District Shopian)	Adventure (trekking)
22	Dandmoh, (District Baramulla)	Kangri and basket making and carpet weaving
23	Gohan, (District Baramulla)	Pilgrimage
24	Litter, (District Pulwama)	Pilgrimage
25	Khag (District Budgam)	Adventure

*Source: Ministry of Tourism, GOI*

Rural tourism related activities have been widely regarded as a tool for rural development, especially in India and many other developing countries where majority of the people live in rural areas. For this purpose, rural tourism must be considered like a complex plurality of multi -faced activities, contributing both to growth of other activities in rural areas and to the improvement of life quality for local inhabitants as part of an effective rural development integrated system. With downturns in rural economies over the last three decades, it is perhaps understandable that governments have given a great deal of attention to the economic benefits of tourism, particularly for rural areas attempting to keep pace and adapt to the vigorous globalized economy. Rural tourism is increasingly being used for socio-economic regeneration and diversification (Sharpley and Sharpley 1997)

Kashmir province has historically been an important tourist destination in India having many cultural and natural tourist attractions scattered around different districts. Many world-famous destinations like Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Dal Lake have been the major attraction for tourists visiting the valley. Besides many other secondary destinations attracts a large number of visitors both foreign and domestic to the valley. In a move to diversify tourism and to pave the way towards development of experiential tourism which is sustainable in nature, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India in recent years has initiated number of projects. These projects are aimed at providing tourists a unique experience of community life and to ensure that the socio-economic benefits of tourism are received by the people who are supposedly not in the framework of tourism. In this backdrop, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India started the scheme to promote Rural Tourism in order to popularize not only alternative form of tourism that will attract both domestic and foreign visitors alike, but also to provide opportunities to rural populace to improve their socio-economic condition through the projects. In the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir 25 villages were identified and developed for rural tourism developments (Table 1). In an evaluation study conducted by the ministry in order to evaluate the success of these rural tourism projects Jammu and Kashmir had the maximum number of successful projects. The significance of the study is that Kashmir province where majority of the people live in rural areas possessing rich and unique cultural diversity, can be developed as a world class rural tourism destination inclined towards sustainable development of these areas. Now a day's many tourists are more attentive in comprehending local interactions in order to gain knowledge about the local culture, and to understand the history and heritage, as it is considered as one of the parts of their 'authentic destination experience'. Again, tourists are becoming more responsible and sensitive in behaviour. Therefore, tourists look for places that contribute to conservation and exhibit

harmony tourism and community welfare. Therefore, the tourism development desired by the Kashmir Tourism Authorities, requires a thorough discussion, consultation, proper assessment and planning in order to confer to the needs of tourists and, significantly, to the overall welfare of its local residents.

This study aims to know the local community's perceptions towards rural tourism development impacts in select rural tourist destinations. Having a good understanding of what actually residents perceive could provide valuable insights in drafting rural tourism guidelines specific to local needs and interests. The findings of this study could be very useful to tourism stakeholders and researchers for further improvement in both the conceptual as well as the practical aspects of the rural tourism development.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Tourism Impacts in Rural Areas**

The review of the extant literature indicated that rural tourism has potential to commonly benefit the communities where it is being developed. A comprehensive list of the benefits of rural tourism has been provided by Gannon (1994), Greffe (1994) and Sharpley & Sharpley (1997). The literature suggests that tourism in rural areas acts as a source of employment generation, resulting in a primary source of income for community members or acts as additional income for them (Gannon, 1994; Greffe, 1994; Riberio & Marques, 2002; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997; MacDonald & Jolliffe, 2003; Liu, 2006); Opperman, 1996). Rural tourism development is said to serve as a lever for a whole chain of activities by providing support for existing and new businesses and services as there becomes an increased need for goods and services to meet tourist demands. This results in more diversified and stable economic base for the local community (Gannon, 1994; Greffe, 1994; Opperman, 1996; Huang & Stewart, 1996; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997; Riberio & Marques, 2002). The literature also suggests that rural tourism in addition to the economic benefits can also contribute to large number of social benefits to rural communities. These benefits include the creation of recreational opportunities for the local people, facilities, services and amenities that the local people can benefit from which otherwise would have been unavailable (Gannon, 1994; Opperman, 1996; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). Rural tourism has the ability to foster pride in the community, to provide an opportunity for cultural exchange and also to create environment for safeguarding and enriching local cultural identities Gannon (1994). Again, Sharpley & Sharpley (1997) argues development of tourism in rural communities will enable the revitalization of local customs, crafts and cultural identities. And finally, it will re-populate the area which is often typified as having a declining and older community. Unique physical

environment is an important component to the success of rural tourism which is often the main draw to attracting tourists to these areas. Therefore, a common notion is that developing tourism in rural areas can play a key role in revitalizing the natural, cultural and historical resources of the area (Gannon, 1994; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). It is said that rural tourism has the ability to stimulate the conservation, protection and improvement of these important resources. There is a major gap in the literature and lack of evidence showcasing that the above benefits do in fact materialize on the ground and that they are maintained overtime. Therefore, a need persists to examine if and how these benefits accrue in practice. A number of factors determine the varied level of both the positive and negative impacts of rural tourism, including: how tourism is planned and implemented in an area, who takes part in the process of planning and implementation, the size and importance of the industry to a community, the number of tourists visiting the area and what type of activities they take part in, and the robustness of the local environment and the local community (Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997; Page et al., 2001; Sharpley, 2002). Butler & Hall (1998) figured out that tourism sometimes may not be the most appropriate developmental tool to be introduced in all rural areas. In order to meet the market needs and to sustain tourism for long run, tourism needs specific conditions including current tastes and preferences to succeed effectively in economic, social and environmental terms. Even after offering these specific conditions to tourists, it does not mean the negative impacts may not arise. A rapid growth of tourism initiatives to the point where tourists can outnumber residents may result in a change in dynamics of the community (Reid, Mair & Georg, 2004). A number of negative impacts associated with this changing dynamic of rural communities are congestion, overcrowding, noise, price inflation, pollution, crime, hostility towards tourists and dependence on a single sector of the economy. Academicians in recent times have brought these impacts to light by conducting empirical studies in different rural areas. Riberio & Marques (2002), in their studies found that development of rural tourism had not generated many employment opportunities for the local people, and the job opportunities mostly were seasonal, of low quality and of low pay.

Researchers in different studies have also argued that organizing tourism is costly for rural areas because of lack of local entrepreneurs, capital, service knowledge and expertise (Grefe, 1994; Bramwell 1994; Wilson et al., 2001). This argument is further supported by Dezso (2000) in his study wherein he has examined the impacts of tourism development in one village in Hungary and one in the Slovak Republic and it was revealed that local people were not able to involve in tourism due to the lack of service knowledge and capital. The study concluded by stating that overall, tourism had negative effects on the rural communities and

brought lesser benefits to the local people than claimed by authorities. In conclusion, there is a sense that a dichotomy exists where the literature on tourism development either supports rural tourism as a viable tool for development or denies this notion. Either way, the much of the literature reviewed has assumed “tourism as a pre-existing condition in rural communities” (Lewis, 1996). This means that researchers have not properly examined how tourism was developed, why it was developed, or who played a role in developing it. Researchers have neglected these details and have focused their research towards current state of tourism when entering the field.

### **Rural Tourism Development and Residents’ Attitude**

Residents’ attitude on tourism has been studied from 1960s. The literature began with examining only the positive aspects of tourism impacts, and a decade later the researchers began to study the negative aspects, and then a systematic approach was followed in the 1980s (Jafari, 1986). A wide variety of research has thus been conducted on resident attitudes and perception, including resident support for tourism development, resident characteristics, resident quality of life, and resident attitudes toward sustainable tourism (Dyer, et al., 2007).

The past studies of resident attitudes have focused on tourism impacts and, in many studies, both the terms, resident attitudes and tourism impacts, have been used interchangeably without being clearly differentiated. It should also be noted that the range of resident attitudes that studies address is not restricted to tourism impacts research. By definition, the structure of resident attitudes toward tourism development has been studied within three dimensions: (1) cognitive (perceptions, beliefs, knowledge); (2) affective (likes/dislikes); and (3) behavioural (actions/intentions) (Carmichael, 2006).

Hence, the research on residents’ attitudes toward tourism development should include the perceptions/opinions including perceptions of tourism impacts/quality of life/sustainable tourism development and behavioural intentions relating to support for/opposition to tourism development. Additionally, factors such as resident socio-demographics, distance effect, and dependency on tourism development, should be discussed in the scope of resident attitudes research because these factors influence the resident attitudes toward tourism.

Researchers in various studies have found that resident characteristics may affect residents’ attitudes toward tourism (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2007). In this context researchers have addressed mostly the socio-demographic characteristics, place of residence or distance from tourism centre and dependence on tourism (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Liu & Var, 1986;

Milman & Pizam, 1988; Harrill, 2004; Gursoy, et al., 2002; Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Pizam, 1978; Williams & Lawson, 2001).

These studies on residents, attitude towards tourism in relation to different resident characteristics have inconclusive and varied results. Although most of these findings are inconsistent and have different results in different contexts, but are at the same time very useful for tourism practioners in identifying the varied interests of community members.

### **Research Gap**

Although a number of studies are available measuring the perceived impact of tourism, support and involvement for tourism development but most of these studies have been conducted in urban context and confined mostly to western countries. Whatever little research has been conducted in rural areas, the focus has been solely to study the impacts without investigating the perceived involvement from the residents. This study will be first of its kind to relate the perceived participation of rural residents with perceived impacts of rural tourism development. Also, the novelty of this study is that it is being conducted in communities at different stages of rural tourism development. There are also no significant studies available in Kashmir region concerning the development of rural tourism. This study attempted to explore the phenomenon of developing rural tourism on environmental, socio- cultural and economic dimensions by delving into the perceptions of the rural residents of Kashmir region along with investigating their anticipated participation.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The study describes and explains the perceptions of rural residents towards rural tourism development. The research purpose is to some extent exploratory, since we explore our purpose in order to gain a deeper understanding of how rural residents respond to tourism development in their areas. However, this study is primarily descriptive, since we intend to describe the patterns discovered in the exploratory stage, the deeper understanding gained helped to describe the research area. Moreover, the purpose of this study was clearly structured and this further justifies the descriptive purpose. Thus, the present study is Exploratory-cum-Descriptive in nature as it endeavours to assess the relationship between the rural tourism development impact factors (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental).

#### **Data Collection**

For the present study, the primary data was used to measure the rural resident's perception towards rural tourism development. The primary data was collected through self –



administered questionnaires and were disseminated among the residents of select rural tourism destinations in Kashmir region (J&K), India.

**Sampling Design**

The sample was selected from all three sub-regions of Kashmir Province i.e. Central Kashmir, South Kashmir and North Kashmir. The primary sampling units (PSU) were the three select villages representing the three different regions and the secondary sampling units (SSU) were chosen as the residents of these villages. Table 2 shows the distribution of selected rural tourism destination for the present study.

<b>Table 2: Villages under study</b>			
<b>Region</b>	<b>Name of the Village</b>	<b>Situated in District</b>	<b>USP</b>
A=Central Kashmir	Manasbal	Ganderbal	Carpet Weaving
B= South Kashmir	Pahalgam	Ananatnag	Pilgrimage
C=North Kashmir	Watlab	Baramulla	Adventure

**Sampling Method**

The villages under study were randomly selected on the basis of geographic distribution across the valley and stages of tourism development. The method of collecting quantitative data from the respondent’s sample of these identified and independent sampling units has been the convenience sampling where responses were obtained from the people who were most conveniently available (Zikmund, 2003).

**Sample Size**

Selection of an optimum sample size is the core concern of a researcher to come up with a reliable study. The sample of this research was calculated by using Taro Yamane (Yamane, 1973) formula with 95% confidence level. The calculation formula of Taro Yamane is presented as follows.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where :

n= sample size required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error (%)

The registered population of the select rural tourist destinations was 3391. Thus, on applying the values in the above formula, the required sample size for the present study was 360. However, to increase the reliability of data, sample size was increased to 400.

Number of Villagers selected from Manasbal (A) = 140

Number of Villagers selected from Pahalgam (B) = 130

Number of Villagers selected from Watlab (C) = 130

Total number of Villagers = A + B + C

Hence, total number of villagers selected for the survey (140+130+130) =400

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

For the data screening and normality all questionnaires were scanned to check for unanswered or incomplete questions. Accordingly, responses which were incomplete in any respect were eliminated from the analysis. Similarly, where the same answer was provided for most questions, the questionnaire was considered unusable. The data was then entered into an SPSS file and during preliminary analysis no missing values and outliers were reported.

### Reliability

The reliability of the instrument was checked through Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and measured separately for each construct and overall scale. The results of Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ), as shown in Table 3, are above the threshold value 0.60, indicating thereby the internal consistency.

**Table 3: Reliability of study dimensions**

Dimensions	No. of items	Chronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) Value
Economic Development	09	.767
Environmental Development	05	.853
Socio-cultural Development	05	.749
<b>Overall</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>.803</b>

### Profile of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of respondents in this study were measured by gender, age, education, monthly household income, place of residence and economic dependency on tourism. Respondents were asked to provide their answers to questions that were designed on nominal and ordinal scales. The summary of demographic characteristics of respondents is reported below (Table 4).

As could be seen from table 4, the majority of the respondents under study were males (77.06% approximately) and 22.93% females, indicating thereby that females were less willing to participate in the survey. Age groups have been recorded after merging small segments; the results showed that 60.56 % of respondents were aged between 33 and 47 years, followed by age ranges of 18-32 years (20.61%), then 48 years up to 60 years (18.81%). The results indicated that the majority of respondents (41.9%) were middle-aged (between 33 and 47years old). Furthermore, education levels of rural residents showed that 42.78% of the respondents had completed their study up to college level, 33.76% had high

school degree, while 6.44% had advanced degrees and 2.31% respondents had technical school degree and 14.69% have education less than high school or are either uneducated. This implies that the majority of respondents are college graduates (42.78%). From the monthly household income of the respondents, it revealed that 58.76% have income less than Rs20,000, followed by respondents (36.85%) having income level between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 40,000. Only 4.38% had an income more than Rs. 40,000.

**Table 4: Profile of respondents (Demographic)**

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	299	77.06%
	Female	89	22.93 %
Age	18-32Years	80	20.61%
	33-47Years	235	60.56%
	48years &above.	73	18.81%
Education	Less than High School	57	14.69%
	High School	131	33.76%
	College Degree	166	42.78%
	Advanced Degree	25	06.44%
	Technical School Degree	09	02.31%
Income	Less Than 20,000	228	58.76%
	20,000-40,000	143	36.85%
	Morethan40,000	17	4.38%
Place of Residence	Manasbal	129	33.24%
	Pahalgam	131	33.76%
	Watlab	128	32.98%
Economic Dependency	Not at all	79	20.36%
	Partially Dependent	215	55.41%
	Fully Dependent	94	24.22%

In terms of place of residence, almost equal representation was reported from all the three villages under study. Finally, the descriptive for economic dependency on tourism revealed that total 79.63% (309 in number) respondents' income was fully or partially dependent on tourism.

### Results of Factor Analysis

In order to examine the underlying dimensions of the perceived Rural Tourism Development Impact, Principal Component Analysis along with Varimax Rotation was used to extract the factors after the data were collected from the respondents.

The 19 items were exposed to factor analysis to identify the underlying factors RTDI and latent root criterion (Eigen value) value of above 1.0 (Pett et al.,2003) and a factor loading of 0.40 was used as a threshold for including items into a factor. EFA was performed on the sample using the 19 statements related to the Rural Tourism Development Impacts. From EFA, three factors namely Impact on Economic Development (ECI), Impact on Socio-Cultural Development (SCI) and Impact on Environmental Development (ENI) were extracted which accounted for 66.687 percent of the total variance explained (Table 7).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test shows the suitability of Factor Analysis and is a measure of sampling adequacy. This measure varies between 0 and 1, if it is close to 1.0 then factor analysis is meaningful for the given data. If the KMO value is less than .50, the results of the factor analysis will not be very useful. In the present study KMO measure is 0.848. The results of KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are shown in table 5.

**Table 5: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test**

<b>Results of KMO &amp; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>		
		<b>Rural Tourism Development Impact</b>
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</b>		<b>.848</b>
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<b>Approx. Chi-Square</b>	<b>5132.202</b>
	<b>Df</b>	<b>171</b>
	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>.000</b>

19 items loaded properly on their factors (Factor loadings>0.4) as presented in Table 6. Table 7 illustrate the application of Principal component analysis to Rural Tourism Development Impacts. Only those factors having Eigen Value greater than 1 were retained which are 3 in this case and as is clear from the table 7, 3 factors accounted for 66.687 percent of the total variance.

**Table 6: Rotated Component Matrix of RTDI**

Item No.	Statements	COMPONENT		
		1	2	3
RTDI_1	Increasing the number of tourists visiting an area improves the local economy.	<b>.864</b>		
RTDI_2	Tourism provides desirable jobs for local residents.	<b>.704</b>		
RTDI_3	Tourism related jobs are low paying.	<b>.753</b>		
RTDI_4	Shopping, restaurants, entertainment options are better as a result of tourism.	<b>.721</b>		
RTDI_5	Tourism encourages more private development (e.g., housing, retail).	<b>.763</b>		
RTDI_6	Tourism encourages more public development (e.g., roads, public facilities).	<b>.747</b>		
RTDI_7	Tourism contributes to income and standard of living.	<b>.740</b>		
RTDI_8	Tourism results in an increase of the cost of living.	<b>.857</b>		
RTDI_9	Tourism can be one of the most important economic developmental options for an area.	<b>.732</b>		
RTDI_10	Tourism development improves the physical appearance of an area.			<b>.916</b>
RTDI_11	Tourism development increases the traffic problems of an area.			<b>.867</b>
RTDI_12	Tourism results in more litter in an area.			<b>.903</b>
RTDI_13	Tourism provides incentives for protection and conservation of natural resources.			<b>.724</b>
RTDI_14	Tourism provides incentives for new park development.			<b>.668</b>
RTDI_15	An increase in tourists in my village will lead to friction between residents and tourists.		<b>.874</b>	
RTDI_16	Tourism development increases the quality of life in an area.		<b>.934</b>	
RTDI_17	Tourism helps to preserve the cultural identity and restoration of historical buildings		<b>.914</b>	
RTDI_28	Tourism development increases the number of recreational opportunities for local residents.		<b>.785</b>	
RTDI_19	Tourism development increases the amount of crime in the area.		<b>.918</b>	

**Table 7: Total Variance & Initial Eigen Value (RTDI)**

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative%	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative%	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative%
1	5.304	27.915	27.915	5.304	27.915	27.915	5.291	27.850	27.850
2	3.980	20.949	48.864	3.980	20.949	48.864	3.960	20.841	48.690
3	3.386	17.822	66.687	3.386	17.822	66.687	3.419	17.996	66.687
4	.782	4.117	70.803						
5	.763	4.018	74.822						
6	.671	3.534	78.356						
7	.648	3.413	81.768						
8	.542	2.855	84.623						
9	.454	2.387	87.010						
10	.442	2.327	89.337						
11	.376	1.981	91.318						
12	.358	1.883	93.201						
13	.296	1.560	94.761						
14	.238	1.252	96.013						
15	.190	1.002	97.016						
16	.179	.944	97.959						
17	.159	.838	98.797						
18	.123	.646	99.444						
19	.106	.556	100.000						

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.*

### **Descriptive Results of Rural Tourism Development Impact**

The results of the descriptive statistics analysis for the rural tourism development impact (RTDI) scale are presented in Table 8. This measurement scale consisted of 19 items reflecting the perceived economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts of rural tourism development. Residents were asked to provide answers to each item based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5=strongly agree to 1=strongly disagree.

Based on the descriptive statistical analysis, the mean score of each item shows that from an economic perspective, respondents tended to agree regarding the statements that tourism improves local economy ( $M=3.63$ ,  $S.D= 0.846$ ) and increase in job opportunities for the local residents ( $M=3.68$ ,  $SD=.798$ ), and they also agreed that tourism contributes to income and standard of living ( $M=3.62$ ,  $S.D=.828$ ). However, the residents slightly disagree with some negative items asked like tourism increase the cost of living ( $M=2.79$ ,  $S.D=1.39$ ) and tourism jobs are low paying ( $M=2.65$ ,  $SD=1.25$ ). The residents also responded positive towards items like tourism increases private development ( $M=3.63$ ,  $S.D= 0.848$ ) and tourism encourages public development ( $M= 3.57$ ,  $S.D= 0.840$ ). Additionally, the respondents are in strong agreement with the statement that tourism can be the most important economic development option for an area ( $M=4.05$ ,  $S.D= 0.91$ ).

From an environmental perspective, respondents strongly agreed with the positive statements such as tourism development improves the physical appearance of an area ( $M= 3.85$ ,  $S.D= 0.669$ ), tourism provides incentives for protection and conservation of natural resources ( $M=4.40$ ,  $S.D=1.17$ ) and for new park development ( $M=4.05$ ,  $S.D=0.91$ ). Residents also agreed with the negative environmental impacts but were relatively rated low; tourism development increases the traffic problems of an area ( $M=3.43$ ,  $S.D= 1.107$ ) and results in more litter in an area ( $M=3.54$ ,  $S.D= 0.701$ ). From a socio-cultural perspective as revealed from 4.2, residents tended to strongly disagree that an increase in tourists in village will lead to friction between residents and tourists. ( $M=1.20$ ,  $SD=1.12$ ), and further disagreed that tourism increases the amount of crime in the area ( $M=2.36$ ,  $SD=1.13$ ). However, the residents agreed with the statements like tourism development increases the quality of life in an area ( $M= 3.77$ ,  $S.D=0.782$ ), tourism helps to preserve the cultural identity and restoration of historical buildings ( $M=3.80$ ,  $S.D=0.759$ ) and tourism development increases the number of recreational opportunities for local residents ( $M=3.57$ ,  $S.D=0.893$ ).

**Table 8: Descriptive Analysis of Rural tourism Development Impact**

S.No.	Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.
<b>Impact on Economic Development</b>			
1	Increasing the number of tourists visiting an area improves the local economy.	<b>3.63</b>	<b>0.846</b>
2	Tourism provides desirable jobs for local residents.	<b>3.68</b>	<b>0.798</b>
3	Tourism related jobs are low paying.	<b>2.65</b>	<b>1.25</b>
4	Shopping, restaurants, entertainment options are better as a result of tourism.	<b>3.63</b>	<b>0.846</b>
5	Tourism encourages more private development (e.g., housing, retail).	<b>3.57</b>	<b>0.840</b>
6	Tourism encourages more public development (e.g., roads, public facilities).	<b>3.62</b>	<b>0.828</b>
7	Tourism contributes to income and standard of living.	<b>3.62</b>	<b>0.828</b>
8	Tourism results in an increase of the cost of living.	<b>2.79</b>	<b>1.39</b>
9	Tourism can be one of the most important economic developmental options for an area.	<b>4.05</b>	<b>0.91</b>
<b>Impact on Environmental Development</b>			
10	Tourism development improves the physical appearance of an area.	<b>3.85</b>	<b>0.669</b>
11	Tourism development increases the traffic problems of an area.	<b>3.43</b>	<b>1.107</b>
12	Tourism results in more litter in an area.	<b>3.54</b>	<b>0.701</b>
13	Tourism provides incentives for new park development.	<b>4.05</b>	<b>0.91</b>
14	Tourism provides incentives for protection and conservation of natural resources.	<b>4.40</b>	<b>1.17</b>
<b>Impact on Socio-Cultural Development</b>			
15	An increase in tourists in my village will lead to friction between residents and tourists.	<b>1.20</b>	<b>1.12</b>
16	Tourism development increases the quality of life in an area.	<b>3.77</b>	<b>0.782</b>
17	Tourism helps to preserve the cultural identity and restoration of historical buildings.	<b>3.80</b>	<b>0.759</b>
18	Tourism development increases the number of recreational opportunities for local residents.	<b>3.57</b>	<b>0.893</b>
19	Tourism development increases the amount of crime in the area.	<b>2.36</b>	<b>1.13</b>



## **Discussion and Implications**

This study revealed that residents were not satisfied with their involvement in decision making and blaming Government not consulting them properly in tourism development process. It is pertinent that if not directly involved, but being given the trainings by the authorities, the residents gain knowledge and awareness of the value of tourism, the role it plays in the development of their communities, and they also contribute valuable ideas in finding solutions to improve the overall tourism impact. These residents would then educate the remaining residents through the words of mouth. This will result in a more positive perception of tourism by the informed community.

Therefore, the findings of this study have implications for policy makers that will help them make better policy of rural tourism development. Government policy determines how tourism is developed, managed, budgets allocated, organized, administered, and enforced. This study is first of its kind to serve as a guide to local leaders, professional experts, and policy makers which will help them to evaluate the residents' attitude, formulate strategies to address them. This will eventually contribute to solving the problems, especially problems concerning to minimize the negative impact of the tourism development. This finding is corroborated by most of the previous studies stating that public input and involvement of the local community is must to increase the added value of both public services and policies.

Finally, from the locality perspective, the findings of this study have implications for local government, its agencies, and authorities in Kashmir region as the results could help them to develop rural tourism aimed at providing better service to the residents, who play an important role in determining the success and failure of the local tourism industry. This will increase the resident participation and involvement in tourism especially concerning to the problem-solving issues of tourism.

For the government, this means more emphasis should be laid on educating residents about tourism in rural communities. This finding supported the findings by Murphy (1985), Haywood (1988) and Pearce & Butler (1999). These results will be helpful to stakeholders to collect information and plan appropriate strategies based on the tourism attractions they intend to develop before the implementation stage. For the local communities, rural local official entities, public and private service providers, the anticipated outcomes of this study would offer an insight into the potential for rural tourism development in order to help them to provide a good rural tourism experience. The ultimate aim is to develop a knowledgeable society that will advocate the protection of the phenomenon of tourism.

Based on the findings of this study the researchers therefore, propose the following specific suggestions pertaining to effective rural tourism development.

- 1) In order to build local awareness of the impacts of tourism Government must gather more input by consulting the local residents and establish education programs at community level.
- 2) Increased women participation in tourism development will yield better results in developing rural tourism. Government should start specific schemes to encourage women folk to participate in tourism activities.
- 3) Government authorities should provide an opportunity for local residents to participate in at the preparation stage of tourism development rather than having them to participate after the planning is completed.
- 4) For balanced development of rural tourism, local communities should be encouraged to take part in control, and should therefore be involved in planning how a tourism development in an area should be controlled.
- 5) Sustainable rural tourism development can be attained by collaborative approach and forming of partnerships among all the stakeholders involved in management, operation, implementation, monitoring of rural tourism projects.
- 6) For any successful tourism project forming of regulations is necessary. Formulating the policies is easy, but to implement policy is not easy unless it is supported by the local people. All the stakeholders should collaborate together in an attempt to build consensus about tourism policies.
- 7) The authorities should also focus on promoting the local products and resources at the rural destinations making it a unique attraction for the tourists.
- 8) The success of rural tourism projects totally depends on the quality of service provided to the tourist. In order to develop the manpower, various short training courses and capacity building programs should be organized at the local level for imparting skill and knowledge, so that so that service is delivered effectively to the tourists.

### **Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

There were few limitations in trying to interpret the results of this study. First, the findings of this study are limited by the nature of the sampling process. Sampling design is an important issue in monitoring the communities. The analysis of this study is based on smaller sample. The results reported in this study might not be generalized to the population at large due to sampling biases that might have existed, although certain attributes are generalizable to

other areas with similar characteristics. A relatively large sample is recommended for future research to test any differences in results.

The research scope and boundaries of this research are limited to Kashmir region. The study investigated respondents from only three villages of the whole region. This geographically limited survey may not produce same results and conclusions in terms of the magnitude and directions of relationships among the constructs studied in this research. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all rural tourism destinations in India, since residents differ with respect to perceptions toward sustainable tourism development. Residents in other rural tourism destinations may have different perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in regard to tourism impacts, perceived participation, development approaches and strategies. The research scope should be extended to other rural tourism destinations and to see if similar findings and results could be addressed. Thus, it is suggested that data be collected from other rural tourism villages of Kashmir to compare the obtained results.

Lastly, the study only studied perception of local residents. It is recommended for future research to study the perception of other stakeholders such as tourists, and people who are involved in organizations, associations related to tourism.

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