



Chapter 34

Sustainable Tourism Practices in Mountain Regions and Its Impact on Tourism Sectors: A Case Study of India


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ABSTRACT

Mountain tourism, a distinctive niche within the broader domain of adventure travel, has surged in popularity in recent years, as more and more travelers seek respite from urban life and immerse themselves in the awe-inspiring landscapes.. This research seeks to delve into the untapped tourism opportunities within the landscapes in the Indian region while highlighting the significance of sustainable practices and their impact on tourism sectors. Many studies have investigated sustainable tourism practices in mountain regions. Still, the effect on the tourism sector and sustainability has yet to be explored as far as mountain tourism in India is concerned. This study is based on a detailed literature review, and data was collected from reputed journals, Government documents, reports, and edited books which were published at national and international levels. It is concluded in the study that regardless of the massive potential of mountain tourism in India, sustainable tourism practices and their impact on the tourism sector are yet to be completely harnessed.

INTRODUCTION

Mountain tourism has garnered increasing attention in recent years due to its unique appeal, offering both economic opportunities and environmental conservation potential (Romeo R., 2021). Indian tourism is rich with culture, heritage, ecology, and natural beauty across the country. The tourism sector plays a vital role for foreign exchange earnings and

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gross domestic product (GDP) in India. India's travel and tourism business ranks 7th internationally, contributing almost 9.6% to GDP, and is expected to rise 6.9% annually over the next decade to rank 4th. This will have a multiplier effect on India's socio-economic progress via improved infrastructure, job creation, and skill development (Jatav, 2023). Tourism development in the concept of nature-based tourism, ecotourism, and sustainable tourism commonly has been advocated as an alternative to traditional natural human resource-based economic development, such as agriculture, small scale / cottage industries and mining in the developing countries mainly so in the cases of India so as to make way for sustainable jobcreation on the forecasted growths. They are advocated particularly in developing countries because many developing countries possess a comparative advantage over advanced countries in their ability to provide relatively pristine natural settings as well as the capacity to be skilled. (Dodds, 2018). Sustainable tourism is a dynamic, complex system in which continuous interaction between economic, social, and environmental components will take place. Due to nonlinear interactions between these components, there is complexity in the system (Rawat, 2023)

There are very few studies that focus on the sustainable tourism practices in mountain regions and its impact on tourism sector especially in India. This study attempts to explore the intersection of sustainable tourism on Indian mountains regions.

The current study seeks to answer the underlying research questions:

- What are the sustainable tourism practices should incorporate in mountain regions?
- What are the impacts of sustainable tourism practices on tourism sectors?
- How technology does play an important role in sustainability of mountain tourism?

Research Objectives

1. To implement sustainable tourism practices in mountain regions of India.
2. To discuss the impacts of sustainable tourism practices on tourism sectors.
3. To discuss the role of technology in mountains regions especially adventure tourism destinations.

MOUNTAIN TOURISM CONCEPT AND ROLE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Rajeev (2020) highlights tourism opportunities in the mountain regions of Indian region, known for its natural beauty, wildlife, and trekking possibilities. Tourism has raised awareness about the importance of the environment and wildlife among the local communities, leading to reduced poaching and a greater focus on conserving nature (Virgoa, 2023).

The development of sustainable or green technology can be linked to the early 20th-century environmental movements when worries about resource depletion, pollution, and climate change started to influence technical advancements (Patel, 2023). The adoption of sustainable technology has become imperative in tackling urgent environmental issues and attaining enduring societal prosperity. In India, over-tourism in popular destinations like Mussoorie has led to issues of overcrowding, environmental degradation, and strain on local resources.. This excessive influx of visitors has also resulted in environmental degradation, including littering, deforestation, pollution, and habitat destruction, posing a significant threat to the region's natural beauty and wildlife (Pal, 2016).

There should be special attention to the factors influencing sustainability in mountain regions and government bodies should focus on the protection of the environment (Guo et al; 2020). Due to green technologies, there can be more job opportunities for people and it can also lead to the growth of environmentally friendly practices (Przychodzen et al. 2020). Therefore, the need of sustainability is required through proper scientific research which is lacking currently (Ramdhani et al.2017). Global issues on which developed and developing nations can agree completely and unanimously is climate change (Li et al., 2022). The main concern when it comes to climate change is maintaining sustainability in mountains regions without increasing the stock of carbon emissions, according to policymakers, international organizations, and study experts (Xiuzhen et al.,2022). There are many factors which affect tourism in mountain regions such as government policies, investment in research and development, international partnerships and investments (Panchenko et al., 2023).

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