



Prospects of ecotourism development in Shopiyaan district.

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Abstract

For the state of Jammu and Kashmir as a whole, and for the Kashmir Valley in particular, tourism is a significant industry. In spite of its heavy reliance on agriculture and horticulture, tourism is still regarded as the economy's backbone due to the large number of jobs it creates. Large numbers of jobs have been created as a result of the industry, and many of those jobs have gone to the younger generation. Tourism continues to play an important role in the state's economy by stimulating economic activity in the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors. Tourists flock to the Kashmir Valley, especially during the summer and winter high seasons, and every part of Srinagar city is bustling with activity. The Golden Triangle of Kashmir, which includes Srinagar, Phalgam, and Gulmarg, has become the primary tourist destination.

Key words: Ecotourism, Development, Valley, Kashmir, Tourism etc.

Introduction

Tourism is short-term travel for pleasure, business, or other reasons. Although transnational travel is usually linked with the term "tourism," it may also apply to trips inside the same country. Tourism may have both positive and negative effects on a location. Local employment and income are created and possibilities for local entrepreneurs to build tourist businesses are provided when tourism is properly planned, developed and managed, all of which contribute to an improvement in the living conditions of people. Tourism-related taxes may be utilised to fund municipal infrastructure and service improvements. Because of the tourist appeal of local natural regions, archaeological and historic sites, arts, crafts, and cultural traditions, tourism may justify and assist pay for conservation and general enhancement of environmental quality. However, tourism may cause congestion, pollution, and other environmental issues if it is not properly planned, developed, and controlled. The tourism industry and the environment go hand in hand. Many of the tourist attractions are found in the built and natural environments, and the growth of tourism may have both harmful and beneficial effects on the environment. Protecting tourism's natural resources is essential to long-term sustainability. The tourist industry, owners and managers of tourism commercial businesses, environmental supporters, conservationists, and community members, as well as community organisations and leaders, are all partners in promoting sustainable tourism. In order to enhance the community's quality of life while both conserving natural resources for tourism and making fair profits for the tourist sector, these partners must work together. As a result of these considerations, a new category of tourism has emerged: Ecotourism. Ecotourism, then, is a kind of ethical travel to natural places focused on environmental preservation and community well-being.

Eco-Tourism

Tourism ideas like wildlife tourism and adventure tourism are closely associated with ecotourism. Ecotourism has been labelled by several scholars as an extended form of mass tourism. In the eyes of some researchers, ecotourism is synonymous with responsible tourism.



During the past three decades, the word "ecotourism" has risen to prominence as a counterpoint to "mass tourism" and as a way to confront "untouched tourism" in light of its negative environmental and social effects. Globalization has put pressure on both developed and developing countries to do more to preserve natural resources. However, travel and tourist demand, particularly in natural regions, is growing steadily. As individuals become increasingly interested in spending their free time in exotic locales across the globe, the tourism sector has grown into a multibillion-dollar business in recent decades. As a method to use natural resources more economically, effectively, and sustainably in natural reserves during the last several decades, ecotourism has risen to prominence. As a kind of responsible travel to natural places that conserves the environment while also improving the well-being of local residents, ecotourism has attracted the attention of many different groups for a variety of reasons. Ecology and tourism go hand in hand when it comes to the preservation of wildlife and their habitats, with ecotourism being defined as "low impact nature tourism that helps the local community value and protect their wildlife heritage area as a source of income while also contributing to conservation." According to the National Geographic Traveler website: "Ecotourism is a type of tourism that involves visiting sensitive and unspoiled regions of nature in order to reduce the effect of conventional commercial (mass) tourism."

Sustainable Development

It was the World Commission on Environment and Development's 1987 report that introduced the public to the idea of sustainability. Sustainable development is promoted in the study by pointing out that economic progress and environmental protection are not only mutually beneficial, but also essential. The two are interdependent. Economic, social, cultural, environmental, and physical limitations all have great potential for sustainable growth." Sustainability is the capacity of the current generation to satisfy its own requirements without affecting the capabilities of future generations. These two ideas are at the heart of it: the concept of needs, especially for those who are poor and have few other options, and the idea of limits placed on the environment's capacity to fulfil existing and future demands by the current level of science, technology, and social structure." "

Impacts of ecotourism on the environment, society, and the economy

As long as development fulfils the requirements of both visitors and locals, tourism will remain viable. Ecotourism helps the local community while also contributing to conservation, economic growth, and enhancing education. This kind of natural resource-based travel is known as ecotourism. While there are cultural aspects, the main emphasis is on getting to know and appreciate things like native flora and animals and their habitats as well as learning about the area's geology and history.

Conservation and tourism (and the economics associated with it) are combined in ecotourism to benefit local people, with a particular emphasis on sustainability.

Ecotourism is built on a foundation of natural and cultural landscape values. They include geographic location, microclimatic conditions, water availability, natural beauty, natural vegetation, wildlife presence, topography, geomorphologic structure, local food, festivals and pageants, traditional agricultural structure, local handicrafts, regional dress culture, historical



events and people, heritage appeals, architectural variety, traditional music and folk dance, and other creative pursuits, among others. As an alternative to mining, hunting, and farming, ecotourism makes use of one or more environmentally beneficial economic uses of natural resources. Visitors and residents are exposed to nature and conservation as a result of ecotourism, which fosters a greater respect for natural surroundings and environmental education.

Ecotourism is often thought of as a way to protect natural places while also helping to conserve biodiversity. Experiencing and learning about nature, scenery, wildlife and ecosystems, as well as local cultural artefacts, are the primary goals of this trip. The environment and its preservation are always the primary considerations in ecotourism planning.

Shops of the Shopian

Shopping or Shupiyān is a district in Jammu and Kashmir, India's union territory, located on the ancient route popularly known as the Mughal Road. Because of this, much of Shopian's land is covered with woods. The district is known as Shupyan (Kashmiri pronunciation:) in Kashmiri. As part of the Pir Panjal Mountain Range, Shopian District has very low temperatures year round. It became a tehsil in Pulwama district after India's partition. The district was given official recognition by the Indian government in March 2007. In this area, agriculture — especially apple farming — is vital to the economy. Shopian is a border town in Pulwama district, located 22 kilometres (14 miles) away from Aglar. Shopian area is known as "Kashmir's apple bowl."

Road known as the Mughal

Before the Mughals conquered Kashmir, the Mughal Road was known as the Namak Road (Salt Route). They called it the Salt Route because salt was transported from the Western Punjab to Kashmir through this route. This podium path could only be traversed by horses and ponies. Several Mughal Emperors, including Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan, and Aurangzeb, travelled to Kashmir's Paradise through this route/road, earning it the name "Mughal Road."

Former Chief Minister Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah decided in 1978 to build the Mughal Road between Būfliāz Poonch and Shopian to provide a direct connection between Rajouri-Ponch and make the most of the beautiful sites in Pir Panchal area as a tourist destination. That it came time to start building, it was really 1981 when two Mughal road sections were established in Shopian and Būfliāz. After Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah's death in 1982, the construction effort became bogged down by a lack of resources.

Conclusion

Ecotourism is a kind of tourism centred on a love for a place's natural heritage (hence the name "eco"). While this idea has been around since the 1970s, it has generated quite a bit of discussion in the environmental and sustainable development communities since then. Interest because it offers a compelling alternative to the mass tourism paradigm, which has had such a transformative effect on the social and ecological conditions of destinations around the world; and controversy because many people believe it has not yet lived up to its reputation as a more ethical or responsible mode of travel. However, it is limited by a number of factors, such as its links to more consumptive forms of tourism such as fisheries and hunting, its inclusion within the much larger mass tourism industry, the inability of local populations to regulate the



pace or scope at which development occurs in their own communities, the profit motive, and new programmes such as accreditation that have become politicised and institutionalised.

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