

# Research on Ecotourism in Himalaya: A Comprehensive Evaluation of Existing Literature and A Proposed Framework for Future Research.

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**Abstract:** The present study aims to investigate the phenomenon under examination through a comprehensive analysis of relevant data. The primary objective of this study is to examine the phenomenon in question by conducting a thorough investigation of pertinent literature. Ecotourism in the Himalaya is commonly acknowledged as a sustainable variant of tourism that effectively tackles two significant issues: the reduction of poverty and the preservation of biodiversity. The present study conducts an integrative literature review on the topic of ecotourism in Himalayas within the context of Himalayas. The objective is to acquire a thorough comprehension of the various perspectives through the application of critical analysis, as well as to pinpoint areas within the realm of nature-based tourism that necessitate additional research. The study effectively achieves its research aims by adopting two specific objectives that are focused on the field of tourism, particularly responsible tourism. The research began by doing an integrative literature review, which involved using a classification framework to perform a descriptive analysis. Moreover, the study of sustainable tourism investigates research queries pertaining to the positive impacts of ecotourism in Himalaya.

- (a) What are the challenges that occur due to the slow progress or inadequate execution of ecotourism in Himalaya?
- (b) What measures have been taken to tackle the challenges?

A total of 70 articles were analysed to identify the main themes, which were then categorised. Subsequently, a research framework was constructed by taking into account the gaps discovered in the current body of literature. The research implications play a crucial role in

providing guidance and promoting the advancement of ongoing research in a particular discipline. The primary aim of this study was to construct an integrated literature review about the topic of ecotourism in Himalaya in the context of Himalaya. This particular literature review approach expands the breadth of existing information on a particular issue and establishes recommendations for future research endeavors. Initially, there was sorting and scrutiny of studies conducted on ecotourism in Himalaya within the Himalayas setting. The relevant studies were further categorised, and a research agenda was developed along with corresponding suggestions. This paper provides an in-depth analysis of the existing gaps in ecotourism in Himalaya research conducted in Himalayas while also emphasising the importance of doing future studies in this field. The research implications offer guidance and facilitate the development of a current research portfolio in the given field. The articles were retrieved from designated databases and library services. Future research can involve expanding searches beyond the Scopus and Web of Science databases to include more services. The research was classified based on sustainable factors, including economic, social, and environmental implications. Therefore, future research endeavours may direct their attention toward exploring further ramifications, including political, technological, and legal ones. In order to obtain diverse viewpoints on ecotourism in Himalaya research in the Himalayas, it is imperative to thoroughly examine the good and harmful elements of each component of sustainability. Potential avenues for further research include exploring the dichotomy between the supply and demand aspects of ecotourism in Himalaya and investigating the institutional factors that influence this industry. The present study aims to offer valuable insights into the current state of ecotourism in Himalaya research in Himalayas. Additionally, it seeks to motivate academics and academicians to engage in further research by highlighting the research implications identified in this study.

**Keywords-** Ecotourism, Himalaya, environment, development, sustainable, future

## **Introduction**

Since it creates jobs and spurs economic growth, the travel and tourism sector are crucial to the global economy. In 2022, there were around 1,450 million tourist arrivals, a growth rate of 7.1% for the industry, and in 2018, growth is predicted to be between 4% and 5% (United et

al. Organisation, 2018). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2022), the industry creates 209 million jobs globally, or nearly one in ten jobs. However, due to the industry's faster growth than other economic sectors, tourism now accounts for 8% of all global greenhouse gas emissions (Lenzen et al., 2015). The United Nations proclaimed 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (United et al. on Climate Change, 2017). This designation was made in response to the growing public demand to reduce pollution and the industry's capacity to support social dimensions such as poverty alleviation and the promotion of cross-cultural interaction. To lessen its harmful effects on the environment, the tourism sector must put a strong emphasis on sustainable growth.

Because of its critical role in sustainable development and the ability to generate income through efficient market trend monitoring, ecotourism in Himalaya, a subset of sustainable tourism, has the potential to become a significant section of the total tourism industry (Wood, 2023). Academics and practitioners, however, have mixed feelings about "ecotourism in Himalaya" due to a lack of conceptualization (Hvenegaard & Dearden, 1998). The conception of ecotourism in Himalaya has some problems that can be resolved by institutional authorities such as legislators, certifying bodies, academics, tour operators, and organizations involved in establishing ecotourism in Himalaya sites (Conway & Cawley, 2016). The International Ecotourism in Himalaya Society (TIES), an illustration of such an institutional entity, offers the definition of ecotourism in Himalaya that is most frequently used. "Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment sustains the well-being of the local people and involves interpretation and education," as defined by TIES (Karst, 2016, p. 1), is what ecotourism in Himalaya is. In her analysis of the 85 definitions of ecotourism in Himalaya, Fennell (2001) identified two crucial components: fostering attitudes in favor of sustainable development and assuring benefits to local communities. According to Cobbinah (2015), the critical ecotourism in Himalaya themes include (a) environmental preservation, (b) cultural preservation, (c) community involvement, (d) economic advantages, and (e) empowerment of vulnerable people.

Ecotourism in Himalaya development has been the subject of numerous review studies (Buckley, 2022; Das & Chatterjee, 2015b; Lu & Nepal, 2019; Mgonja et al., 2015). Only a few

studies, however (Puri et al., 2019), have carried out descriptive analyses or looked at the benefits, difficulties, and solutions in tourist literature. By using an integrative literature review, which would assist in coordinating disparate perspectives through critical analysis and highlighting implications for future research, this study fills the research gap. Through two goals, this study was able to accomplish the stated goal. Initially, a classification framework was used to conduct a descriptive analysis of the investigations. The chosen publications were categorized and coded, and the proportion of each study in each structural dimension was determined. Second, the study examined research issues, including (a) what is ecotourism in Himalaya's advantages? What difficulties are brought on by the delayed development or lack of application of ecotourism in Himalaya? (C) What steps are necessary to address the problems?

This essay is organized as follows to achieve the goals above. The research technique is discussed in Section 2, followed by a descriptive analysis of a few studies (Section 3). The overview of ecotourism in Himalaya research in India, which comprises responding to study questions, is presented in Section 4. Section 5 discusses the framework for future study, while Section 6 lists any remaining issues.

## **History**

Due to its numerous cultures, traditions, ecosystems, and physiography, India makes for an intriguing tourist destination (Das & Hussain, 2016). India is home to the Western Ghats and the North-East Himalayas, two of the world's top 34 biodiversity hotspots. Due to its distinctive flora and fauna, India is classified as a mega-diversity country (IUCN, 2019). The network of national parks (103), wildlife sanctuaries (543), conservation reserves (73), and community reserves (45), many of which include tiger reserves, elephant reserves, Ramsar wetland sites, biosphere reserves, Natural World Heritage Sites, and Important Bird Areas, and which together cover nearly 4.92% of the country's land area (WII-ENVIS, 2017), has a significant potential for ecotourism in Himalaya.

Indian philosophy holds that people and the natural world have a close relationship. According to Vedic mythology, humans used to worship natural forces because they believed some natural

phenomena or objects to be divine. The total oneness of all natural beings is the most crucial idea in Vedic philosophy (Baindur, 2015). However, westernization led to cultural degeneration, and colonialism excluded native populations from environmental protection. For example, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism have solid environmental messages. It consists of merging domesticating animals with agriculture, abstaining from violence, and not eating flesh. Indigenous ecological knowledge and practices were marginalized by Western ideology with the rise of colonial authority. Colonial power adopted centralized conservation measures in the case of forest management, substituting the prevalent social forestry practices and leading to ecological issues (Gadgil & Guha, 1993). Ecotourism in Himalaya is, therefore, essential for India since it will motivate individuals to achieve economic benefits while meeting social and environmental objectives.

Compared to wealthy countries over the past ten years, India needs to pay more attention to developing ecotourism in Himalaya principles and policies (Hannam, 2005). The 12th five-year plan, which includes various action plans for sustainable tourism growth, was created by the central government to address these issues. In the nation's protected areas (PAs), it has prompted the growth of several groups centered on sustainable tourism. However, India's ecotourism in Himalaya strategy needs improvement, mainly because of the ambiguous and incoherent characteristics that define ecotourism in Himalaya. As a result, this study investigates key facets of ecotourism in Himalaya research in India. While the nation is highly diversified, cultural degradation is still occurring, necessitating the establishment of a cogent ecotourism in Himalaya strategy, which is where this essay fills the void.

## **Research Methodology**

The current study follows Torraco's (2005) recommendations for an integrative literature review. Many academics have used this style of literature review, including Seuring and Muller (2008), Jabbour (2013), and Amui, Jabbour, de Sousa Jabbour, and Kannan (2017). The initial goal of this study is to evaluate the structural dimensions and sub-dimensions using content analysis. The studies were coded, and the output's quantitative findings were shown. The procedures used in this investigation were adapted from those in Jabbour (2013).

Thematic analysis is utilized to respond to the research questions posed in the study for the second purpose. The approach was utilized by coding, expanding, and fine-tuning the themes to find patterns in the chosen studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Based on issues like the advantages, difficulties, and solutions of ecotourism in Himalayas, the descriptions for the study questions were developed.

The period from 1992 to 2017 was considered for this study when choosing articles. Following the Rio de Janeiro United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, the concept of sustainable development gradually changed. Thus, 1992 was regarded as the year that article downloads first became popular. A routine periodic search was done to find published articles on the subject. Search terms for research publications included "Ecotourism" and "Ecotourism in Himalaya," "Green Tourism," "Responsible Tourism," "Nature-Based Tourism," and "Nature-based Tourism," as well as "Sustainable Tourism." Initially, the writers used library resources, including the Scopus and Web of Science databases, to look for the chosen publications (Wang & Waltman, 2016). The authors then searched specialized journal databases using Elsevier, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis Journals, Wiley, Sage Publications, and SpringerLink, among others. Table 1 displays specifics regarding the search outcomes.

When the search for library services is limited to journal articles and conference proceedings and ignores book chapters, etc., it returns 213 items. According to Ngai et al. (2008), journal papers were considered the best sources for disseminating knowledge and original ideas. The search results were further condensed by disregarding research articles written in languages other than English. The authors considered journal articles in business, management, economics, social sciences, environmental sciences, biological and agricultural sciences, and finance. The last step involved choosing 70 publications that prominently featured ecotourism in Himalaya in the context of India.

### **Framework for Classification**

A classification structure was developed once the articles were gathered and verified for the descriptive analysis. The classification framework offers rules for classifying the chosen

articles. Six categories (1-6) were used to classify the framework's major topics, and significant themes were used to group articles. Table 2 lists the classification structure.

## Descriptive Research

### Distribution of articles by year

Figure 1 shows the year-wise distribution of the articles considered for the study. The total number of articles taken into account for analysis is 70. From 1992 to 2017, or 25 years, of research articles, were taken into account by the authors. According to search results, the first study in this field was published in 1993, and it took another four years for the following study to be published.

Keywords		Scopus	Web of Science
Ecotourism AND Himalaya		105	33
Green tourism AND Himalaya		3	1
Nature-based tourism AND Himalaya		9	3
Responsible tourism AND Himalaya		13	10
Sustainable tourism AND Himalaya		30	6
Total (n = 213)		160	53
Table 2. Classification framework incorporated in anal		ysis of the study.	
Classification	Meaning	Sub-categories	Codes
1	Geographical context	Shiwaliks or outer Himalayas	1A
		Lesser or Middle Himalayas	1B
		The Greater Himalayas	1C

		The Trans-Himalayas – Tibetan Himalayas	1D
		The Eastern Hills – Purvanchal: A chain of hills in North-East India.	1E
2	Focus on ecotourism	Predominately about Ecotourism	2A
		Ecotourism and another factor	2B
		Ecotourism and various factors	2C
		Ecotourism is not predominant in the analysis	2D
3	Research methods	Quantitative	3A
		Qualitative	3B
		Conceptual	3C
		Quantitative/Qualitative (Mixed Methodology)	3D 3E
		Survey Case study	3F
4	Target audience	Local communities	4A
		Hotels/ Tour operators	4B
		Tourists/Visitors	4C
		Tourist guides	4D
		Government and allied agencies	4E
5	Principles of ecotourism	Environmental conservation	5A
		Cultural preservation	5B
		Community participation	5C



		Economic benefits	5D
		Empowerment of vulnerable group	5E
6	Impacts of ecotourism	Economic impact	6A
		Socio-cultural impact	6B
		Environmental impact	6C

1997. The articles were divided into two stages based on the mean number of articles published each year. Only a few research was carried out in the early phase (1993–2008), or the first 15 years and the mean value accounts for 1.53, or 32.86% of the total publications. With a mean value of 5.88 or 67.14% of all publications, the second phase, or 2009–2017, saw a sharp increase in the number of publications. In this field, research publications peaked in 2023 and continued through 2015–2023. The notion is relevant among academics and practitioners, as seen by the recent increase in publications.

**Distribution of journal articles**

Figure 2 displays the frequency distribution of papers in the journals. The International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology followed with four investigations, while Tourism Recreation Research published seven papers on the subject. Three papers are published in each of the following journals: Anatolia, Biodiversity and Conservation, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, Tourism Management Perspectives, and Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes.

Several publications (31) have appeared in tourism-related journals, such as Annals of Tourism Research, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Current Issues in Tourism, Tourism Recreation Research, and Tourism Management Perspectives. The topic's multidisciplinary nature was also implied by the fact that it has appeared in journals related to management, economics, ecology, tropical ecology, management, and labor studies, among other disciplines, including

Margin: The Journal of Applied Economic Research, Ecological Modeling, and Sustainable Development, International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research.

### **Geographic Setting**

India is a diverse and multidimensional country with many races, religions, cultures, languages, castes, values, and creeds. Due to these distinctions, each Indian State has a unique character that surpasses the country's; variances were also discernible among these States regarding the demographics variable (Akbar, 1996). The views and expertise of those involved in ecotourism activities have a crucial role in ecotourism in Himalaya (Amante-Helweg, 1996). Therefore, examining the structural factor - geographical setting in a country with a diverse cultural population like India would offer fresh perspectives.

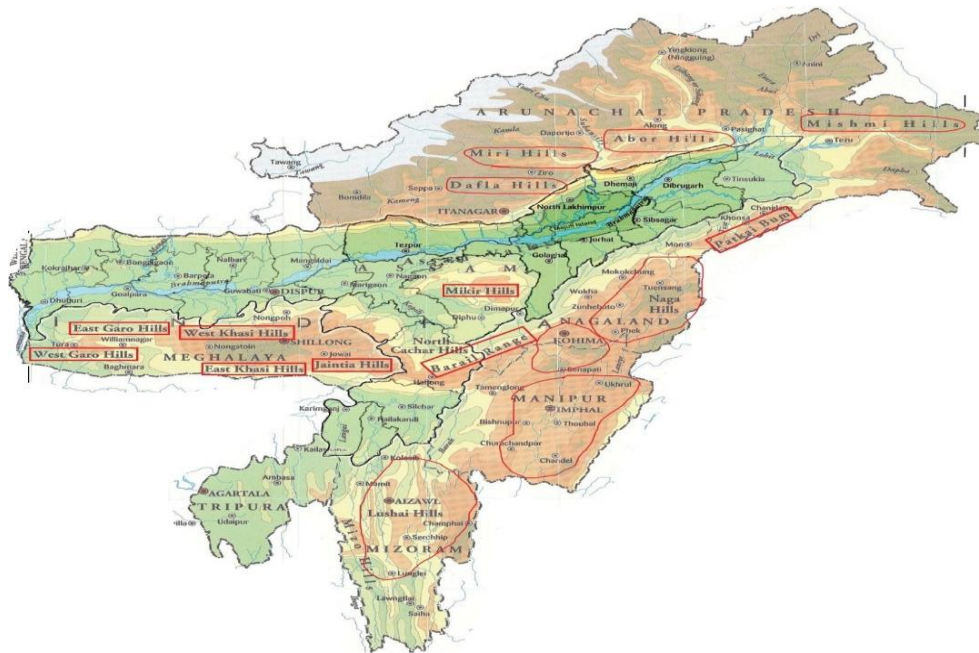
According to two Indian legal acts, namely Part-III of the States Re-organisation Act of 1956 and the North Eastern Council Act of 1972, the study divides the geographical setting of India into six zones. Table 3 displays the list of States. The States were divided into the Northern Zone, Southern Zone, Western Zone, Eastern Zone, North Eastern Zone, and Central Zone for this study. Indian maps about geographic context were created using mapchart.net; the map shows the number of studies in each zone (Figure 3).

The findings show that a sizable portion of studies in the geographical context (Classification 1) were done in the central (24%) and that the western (11%) had the fewest investigations. Studies comprised a sizeable portion of the southern (22%). For example, the north and eastern zones make up 16% and 13% of the total population, respectively.

### **Emphasize Ecotourism in Himalaya**

All research fell under the sub-category "primarily about ecotourism in Himalaya," which comprised 14.29% of the total. Most studies, or 35.71%, Table 3—zonal classification of States in India—focused on "ecotourism in Himalaya and various factors."

Image Study distribution according to geographic setting.



The categories "ecotourism in Himalaya and other factors" (22.86%) and "ecotourism in Himalaya is not predominant in the analysis" (27.14%) were also included.

### Research techniques

The grouping of research techniques was taken from Jabbour (2013). Conceptual, Qualitative, Qualitative, Qualitative, Qualitative, /Qualitative, and Case Study are some of the research methodologies that researchers used in their articles.

Studies using a hybrid methodology for data analysis were fewer (4.28%). The most popular strategy blended qualitative and case study methodologies (37.14%). The quantitative, survey, and qualitative methods comprised 22.86% and 14.29%, respectively. 15.71% of the total research was conceptual studies.

### Target market

The important informants and beneficiaries cited in the study are highlighted in Classification 4. Local communities, hotels and tour operators, travelers and visitors, tourism guides, governments, and affiliated organizations make up the significant informants and beneficiaries. The study shows more research (31.95%) describing local communities. Tourist guides,

government/allied agencies, and hotel/tour operators are among the other sub-categories with corresponding shares of 16.56%, 15.38%, and 8.88%.

### **The foundations of ecotourism in Himalaya**

Cobbinah (2015) accepted the following ecotourism in Himalaya tenets: community involvement, economic advantages, environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and empowerment of vulnerable groups. The majority of the research (31.55%) was focused on environmental protection; these were followed by studies on community involvement (25.67%) and economic advantages (24.60%). However, some point out that there are more studies on cultural preservation (11.23%) and empowering marginalized populations (6.95%).

### **Consequences of ecotourism in Himalaya**

According to Ceballos-Lascurain (1987), the study divides the critical arguments into economic, socio-cultural, and environmental repercussions (Figure 4). The findings show that most research (91.43%) consider environmental effect since it is considered a crucial aspect of ecotourism in Himalaya. The other components, such as the economic repercussions (7.14%) and social impacts (1.43%), were least studied by academics.

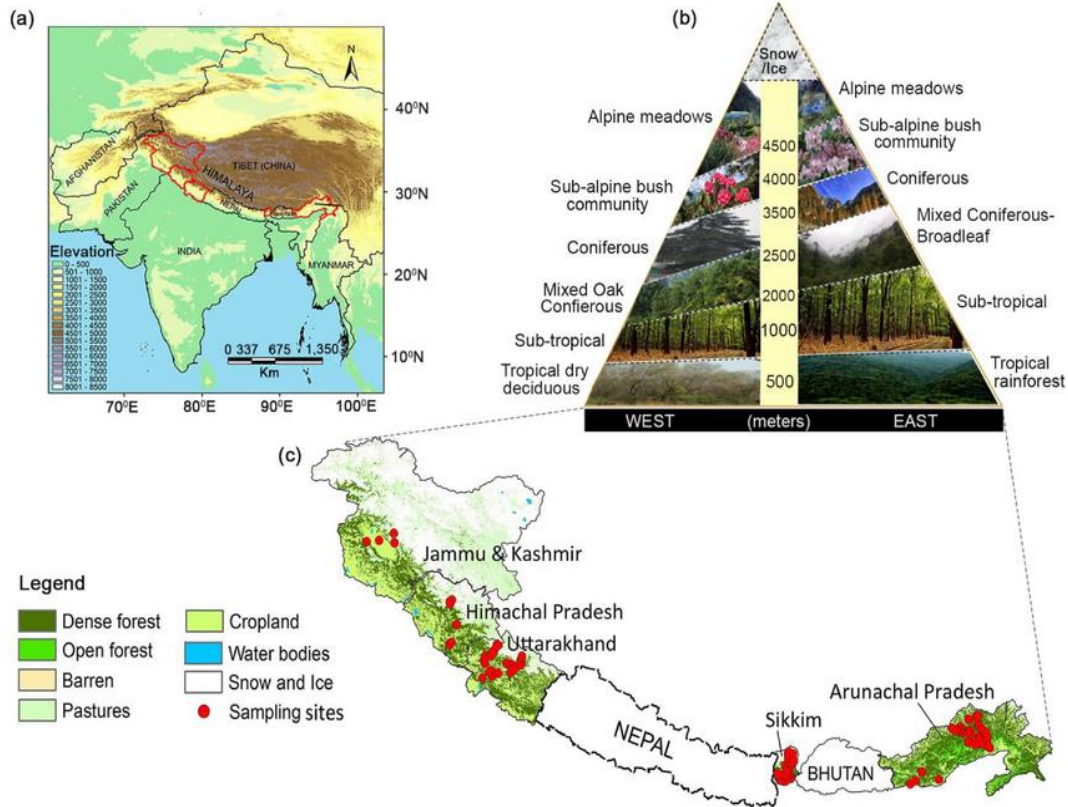
### **A summary of Indian ecotourism in Himalaya research**

The following section outlines the study question's positive effects on society, the difficulties it faces, and potential answers.

### **The advantages of ecotourism in Himalaya**

Three sustainability-related dimensions can be used to analyze the benefits of ecotourism in Himalaya. In terms of economics, the main benefit of ecotourism in Himalaya projects is the generation of income in the local economy and the creation of employment opportunities (Karmakar, 2011; Sinha et al., 2012), particularly in that are in undeveloped regions. Additionally, ecotourism in Himalaya improves the infrastructure and way of life.

Image 4. Distribution of ecotourism in Himalaya's effects.



Development in PAs's outlying regions. In their case study (2011), Surendran and Sekar examined how the growth of ecotourism in Himalaya in the Pakke Tiger Reserve led to job opportunities and reduced local communities' reliance on forest resources, thanks to the revenue these activities generated.

The social effects of ecotourism in Himalayas include empowering weaker populations, particularly women. According to a case study conducted in Meghalaya, more significant income from sustainable tourism improved women's status and allowed them to support themselves independently of men (De, 2013). Environmental awareness is a further societal benefit achieved through ecotourism in Himalayas. An important ecotourism in the Himalaya issue is raising conservation awareness and preserving the natural environment by reducing anthropogenic intervention. Studies have shown the value of environmental awareness in addressing conservation issues in PAs. In terms of relying on forest resources and defending an endangered species—the Indian Rhinoceros—from poaching, local communities' attitudes and behaviors have changed due to environmental education. Because of this awareness, local

people and park administration experience less conflict (Das & Hussain, 2016; Martin & Vigne, 2012).

Ecotourism in Himalaya has a substantial adverse environmental impact on flora and fauna. The success of such projects would depend on two factors: (a) obtaining societal benefits through direct income and (b) ensuring that advantages generated from the conservation and preservation of flora and fauna outweigh the total expenditures (Batta, 2006). For instance, Sekhar (2003) outlines the financial gain that residents receive from a in Rajaji National Park that is well-conserved. Local communities are motivated to maintain and conserve the environment by these advantages. Similarly, Maharana, Rai, and Sharma (2000) advocate making Khecheopalri an ecotourism in Himalaya destination so that local populations can benefit economically and that funds raised from tourism can be used for the preservation of the area. The incentive for local communities to participate in such efforts was primarily for their livelihood and to reduce poverty, rather than environmental conservation, according to Sarkar and Sinha's (2015) alternative perspective on ecotourism in Himalaya as a strategy of environmental conservation.

Destinations like Periyar National Park (Banerjee, 2022), Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary (Mohan & Athreya, 2011), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Chand et al., 2015), and Kaziranga National Park (Das & Hussain, 2016) provide examples of ecotourism in Himalaya's beneficial effects.

In conclusion, ecotourism in the Himalayas in India can be divided into economic, social, and environmental. The chosen research covered several beneficial effects. A sizable portion of these authors contend that the ecotourism in Himalayas primary motivation is its effect on the environment. According to the studies, it is inevitable that such projects will provide financial rewards to local communities in exchange for their support and acceptance. Studies have demonstrated the relationships between the three dimensions. Economic effects like greater employment possibilities, a higher standard of living, and infrastructure development positively impact social advantages like the empowerment of marginalized groups and raised environmental consciousness, which in turn result in environmental conservation.

### **Difficulties resulting from the delayed development of ecotourism in the Himalaya**

This section outlines the difficulties that travel destinations confront as a result of the delayed development of ecotourism in the Himalaya.

#### **Financial leaks**

In, economic leakages are frequently seen. According to Reddy (2018), the Andaman and Nicobar Islands had economic leakages brought on by the influx of foreign commodities and a widening divide between the rich and the poor. Similar economic leakages are reported by the Lakshadweep Islands, an Indian island group also noted for its ecotourism in Himalaya projects. They also note that the need for localization of the economy has led to local dissatisfaction and a lack of local participation. The issue is made worse by the necessity for increased local product marketing and the integration of agriculture and small-scale businesses for tourist needs (Kokkranikal et al., 2023). Localization initiatives have several drawbacks because hotels and resorts would be less likely to hire less educated locals for high-profile employment. The capacity-building of local communities in may not be of interest to hotels owned and managed by outside parties. Additionally, the souvenirs and other things sold at ecotourism in Himalaya destinations are imported from far-off regions, draining the local economy's benefits. Economic leakages push local populations to rely on natural resources, lead to the overexploitation of finite resources, and undermine the tenets of ecotourism in the Himalaya, particularly participation and environmental protection (Batta, 2016).

#### **Careless government strategy**

Ecotourism in the Himalaya development has been hampered by the government's careless approach to creating a global ecotourism in Himalayas policy. For instance, case studies of the northeastern regions and the Dudhwa National Park (Tisdell, 2017) described the adverse effects of a lack of government intervention. A decrease in the growth of the tourism industry and a reduction in the flow of economic benefits to local communities result from the government's restrictions on tourist arrivals. There needs to be more interdepartmental cooperation and coordination among government agencies (Kumar & Nayak, 2013).

### **Absence of initiatives for skill development**

Local communities call for skill development efforts from the government and institutional institutions to improve their talents and guarantee employability. Improving local communities' skill sets catalyzes expanding economic prospects, raising their standard of life, and promoting social empowerment. For instance, in the Pakke Tiger Reserve, the population needs to prepare for occupations in the manufacturing or service sectors due to a lack of an industrial workforce caused by a lack of ability. They, therefore, rely on forest resources to support their way of life. Local communities in rely on forest resources for survival, and overuse of these resources devastates the surrounding ecosystem (Surendran & Sekar, 2011).

Similar circumstances may be seen in Ladakh, where the Changpa people's lack of skills prevented them from reaping the financial rewards of tourism-related enterprises. Less qualified locals were not given high-paying employment, and immigrant hotel owners had no desire to improve the capacity-building of the community (Anand et al., 2012). The destinations need to show more government interference to support skill development activities. In general, the Forest Department's capacity-building projects need to recognize the severe requirements of the surrounding communities, which has led to a backlash against them.

### **Environmental education is lacking**

By supplying tourists and local populations with environmental education, ecotourism in the Himalayas has a significant potential to protect the environment (Salam et al., 2000). However, the ecotourism in the Himalayas tenet of environmental education was absent from Indian tourist locations, leading to unsustainable behaviors. Ecotourism in the Himalayas ideals like community involvement and the empowerment of disadvantaged groups are badly impacted when local populations are not given environmental education.

### **Inadequate infrastructure**

In the infrastructure could be better for tourism-related activities (Bhattacharya et al., 2013). Building infrastructure is necessary for the livelihood of tribal people and the empowerment of indigenous groups to protect forest resources (Mohan & Athreya, 2019). However, most PAs



needed their infrastructure to be developed, resulting in decreased tourist traffic and reduced local residents' means of subsistence. The large-scale infrastructure development is straightforward, performing cost-benefit analyses and environmental impact assessments. It has caused a change in land use, reduced the amount of forest cover, and cut off the residents from their homeland.

### **Negatively affecting social dimensions**

Even while ecotourism in the Himalaya guarantees economic benefits for local communities, numerous studies have detailed how the sluggish implementation of ecotourism in the Himalaya has hurt social facets. For instance, Mahapatra, Pandey, and Pradhan (2022) emphasized how the lack of well-defined white-water rafting tactics causes societal unrest, changes to indigenous culture and lifestyles, and confrontations between humans and animals.

Despite the favorable effects of ecotourism in Himalayas on travel destinations, there needs to be more excellent education for interested parties and a lack of community involvement (Batta, 2016). The literature showed that the economic and social benefits women and men experienced differed, demonstrating the gender-based social implications of ecotourism in Himalayas. For instance, women are more likely than males to work in low-paying professions in the tourism sector in India. These tourist locations had a pervasive gender pyramid that made it difficult for women to advance to the highest executive levels because these positions were occupied and dominated by men (De, 2013).

Conflict between tourist management staff and residents sustainability has been negatively impacted by residents' lack of engagement in ecotourism in Himalaya activities due to "policing" techniques (Singh & Singh, 2014). Conflict developed between park authorities and local communities due to authorities' failure to engage and help local people manage resources in PAs. Integrated conservation of development projects (ICDP) may help local communities' socioeconomic requirements if "policing" techniques are replaced with them. Contrarily, the ICDP has yet to be able to settle disputes between park administrators and neighborhood groups. This questions whether the ICDP and other community-based conservation programs, including the Eco-Development Committee (EDC) and Joint Forest Management Committee

(JFMC) in the PAs, are successfully implemented. A new wildlife rule in the Sariska Tiger Reserve forbids local populations from obtaining biomass resources for everyday requirements, which has angered indigenous communities.

The study highlights the significance of local populations' engagement in ecotourism in Himalaya activities and demonstrates that those who gain from ecotourism in Himalaya operations exhibit evidence of environmental conservation (Sharma, 2000). Barman, Bera, and Pradhan's (2015) study in Pilibhit Tiger Reserve has identified the tension between local communities and park authorities. Authorities equate residents to poachers rather than environmental conservationists, and local communities see ecotourism in Himalaya activities as exploitative with little reward.

### **Study Repercussions**

We are analyzing and synthesizing a few chosen papers that led to the following study conclusions for ecotourism in Himalaya research. It has been suggested that research must be more precise to distinguish between ecotourists and nature-based visitors, which supports drawing a distinction between the two groups. The former group visits for pleasure without adhering to ecotourism in Himalaya ideals, whereas the latter visits inspired by their ecological and cultural significance. Because there is no apparent distinction between the two groups in the Indian setting, it has been observed that nature-based visitors are frequently classified as ecotourists. In this regard, the fuzzy Delphi survey technique can be used to determine the requirements for ecotourists.

According to the research, pollution is one of the significant risks to environmental sustainability. Understanding the intricate problems brought on by the pollution created by tourism-related activities can be done using a system dynamics method. This method analyzes the structure and behavior of systems to create policies and support managers in making decisions. Additionally, the system dynamics method offers a comprehensive knowledge of the complex issues associated with ecotourism in the Himalaya, which spans multiple fields like

sustainable development, tourism, and management (Mai & Smith, 2018). Research can be done to determine how the skill-development effort under the "Skill India" scheme is changing the youth by giving them sufficient information, skills, abilities, and other traits about the tourism business, including ecotourism in Himalaya projects. Additionally, research is required to determine how vocational education and training (VET) may help the tourist sector exploit India's demographic dividend by equipping its youthful labor population with the necessary skills.

The sustainability of tourism sites depends on integrating tourists with environmental education. It is possible to research how environmental education for visitors and local populations promotes conservation efforts in tourist sites. Tourism sector stakeholders, including tour operators, government organizations, and tour guides, play a significant role in delivering environmental education to visitors and local populations. Examining how environmental education affects stakeholders' actions and attitudes is equally crucial.

An understanding of developing a tourist destination's sustainable infrastructure would be made possible by studies on the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental carrying capacity of ecotourism in Himalaya destinations. Studies backed by geospatial assessment methods that calculate ecotourism in the Himalaya site's carrying capacity can address the need for more excellent studies on ecotourism in Himalaya infrastructure design. This is consistent with the suggestion made by Puri et al. (2019) to reduce confrontations between people and wildlife. To understand how to reduce the economic leakages of local people in ecotourism in Himalaya locations, techniques like a value chain evaluation framework can be used. Understanding how ecotourism in Himalaya lessens economic reliance on natural resources and lowers economic leakages on the side of local communities is equally crucial.

With the 'Digital India' campaign and real-time payment systems like the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), the Government of India has recently made a significant push for the digital transformation of the Indian market. Therefore, the government must broaden these programs to include ecotourism in Himalaya projects, which provide green technologies like mobile money a boost and aid in reducing economic leakages in the local communities. Therefore,

future research must look at the obstacles preventing the execution of such projects. Understanding the obstacles that prevent regional communities from implementing eco-friendly technologies is also crucial. A valuable technique for incorporating the three facets of sustainability in tourist locations is community-based ecotourism in the Himalaya (CBE). In this regard, research is required to determine how CBE homestays boost local economies. Due to the necessity of implementing such efforts and the role of the EC in establishing measures to promote the efficient operation of ecotourism in the Himalaya, studies can also look into undesirable effects on tourist sites.

Understanding "ecotourism in Himalaya" promotes local communities' livelihoods and prevents misrepresenting ecotourism in Himalaya goals, especially in a developing country like India. According to Mosammam et al. (2016), the absence of ecotourism in Himalaya may result in economic inequality, social unrest, and environmental damage. Therefore, the concept can be the exclusive focus of future research.

The analysis of structural dimension research methodologies suggests that there are few conceptual studies on ecotourism in the Himalaya and that most studies are either quantitative or qualitative. Therefore, conceptual investigations will reveal the concept's dimensions and the need for more clarity among various stakeholders. These findings support Batabyal's (2016) assertion that case studies and empirical analysis comprise most ecotourism in Himalaya literature.

In India, research mainly focuses on visitors and native populations. However, discussing how the government, affiliated organizations, tour operators, and tour guides support tourism in ecotourism in Himalayan locations is essential. The research should include tour operators who play crucial roles in ecotourism in Himalaya destinations that support the local economy and tour guides who educate ecotourists about the environment. The ecological and geomorphological aspects of ecotourism in Himalaya studies must be taken into account.

The characteristics of a particular site are influenced by ecotourism in Himalayas services offered by PAs, including land-based safaris or water-based ecotourism in Himalayas. There is

an unequal distribution of advantages among stakeholders, and studies claim that businesses stole local communities' share of the economic gains from tourism-related activities. Therefore, filling in these gaps would require a comparative analysis of stakeholders' advantages of ecotourism in the Himalaya.

Nearly all research covered environmental preservation, community involvement, and financial advantages regarding ecotourism in the Himalayas principles. The research should, however, talk more about cultural preservation and community empowerment for at-risk groups. These findings concur with those of Cobbinah (2015), who claimed that the lack of fundamental ecotourism in Himalaya tenets—such as cultural preservation and empowerment of vulnerable groups—was to blame for the failure of tourism destinations to achieve sustainable development.

Understanding ecotourism in Himalaya principles is crucial when considering its effects on the economy, society, and environment. Most studies have concentrated on the environmental aspect of ecotourism in Himalaya, indicating a limited view of sustainability in some studies and the necessity of extending the study to include economic and social components.

## **Conclusion**

This study aims to assess the literature on ecotourism in the Himalaya in India comprehensively. This literature review helps broaden the scope of the already-known information about a particular issue and develops recommendations for further research.

First, studies on ecotourism in the Himalaya in the context of India were sorted and examined. The pertinent studies were classified by formulating a research agenda and recommendations. The study discusses the need for additional research and details the shortcomings in India's ecotourism in Himalaya research. The research implications aid in supplying direction and creating a current research portfolio.

In contrast, due to the slow development of ecotourism in Himalaya, several popular tourist destinations in India, including Pakke National Park (Batta, 2016), the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (Sinha et al., 2022), Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend why ecotourism in Himalaya attempts in India failed and how such issues might be resolved. The study looks at the advantages of ecotourism in Himalayas and its difficulties and potential fixes. Finally, the research ramifications suggested in this study offer academicians guidance for starting research. It might offer solutions to problems that prevent ecotourism in Himalayas in specific locations and aid in achieving sustainable development's environmental, social, and economic aspects. The following shortcomings of the current study need to be addressed in follow-up research:

These databases and library services were searched for the articles. For future study, searches can include resources outside Scopus and Web of Science. Studies were grouped into categories based on sustainability factors such as economic, societal, and environmental implications. Future research should concentrate on additional effects like those on politics, technology, and the law. To get varied perspectives on ecotourism in Himalaya research in India, examining both the good and harmful elements of each sustainability dimension is necessary.

Future research can be done on topics including the institutional and supply versus demand aspects of ecotourism in Himalaya.

The current study will shed light on ecotourism in Himalaya research in India and inspire academics and researchers to undertake their studies using its research implications.

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