

**Tourism and its impact on Socio – Economic Life of Shimla District, Himachal Pradesh**

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**Abstract**

The phenomena of tourism have undergone a sea change in the recent years. Traditional behavior of tourists to look for modernized cities, star hotels, amusement parks, and night clubs has been shifted due to a variety of factors. Travel to relatively less pollute undisturbed natural areas for the purpose of studying, admiring and enjoying the nature, its wild plants, animals and local culture are getting popular these days. The present study aims to show trend and impacts of tourism in Shimla district. First step of the research is to collect the secondary data on different issues from various published and unpublished sources of different governmental and non-governmental agencies. Then the reconnaissance survey was made to the study area. An extensive literature survey gives an

in-depth knowledge and idea to develop an ideal methodology. A large number of books have been reviewed to find out the previous and present trends of research going on in related to this topic. A number of organizations, institutions and the government offices and non-governmental organizations including state-level, district-level, block level, different forest range-level and village-level, were visited to collect various categories of data.

**Introduction**

International survey has ranked India as fifth among tourist hotspots in the year 2005. The tourism ministry of India has revealed that the tourists flow has gone up by more than 25% over the last year and foreign exchange has grown up by 40% over the last year and World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has rated as the fastest growing tourism economy in the world. Lonely Planet Pulse Survey conducted among 20000 respondents across 167 countries ranked India as one of the top five most desired destinations (The Hindustan Times Aug 23, 2005). However not a single Indian city could make it to the top twenty list. This is despite of

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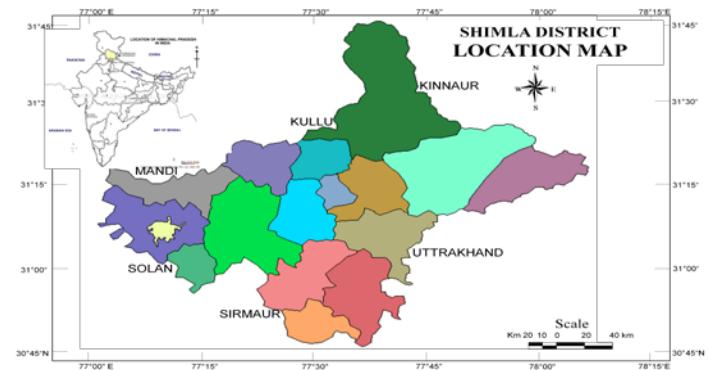
many metros boosting a rich heritage of trade, culture and history. The situation arise since at the first instance when tourists touches one of these cities either he is assaulted by filth, noise, confusion or he is victimized by greedy taxi drivers and touts. The incredible India campaign, open skies and better connectivity with U.K. have really contributed positively but other facets like good governance, tourist friendly local administration, and basic infrastructure are crucial to retain India brand equity as a popular international destination. Ecotourism as the concept deal with the overall development of the destination emphasizes the fulfillment of expectations of all stakeholders concerned. It may be subjective as many authors point out. But the ideology can really contribute to an equitable tourism development.

Himalayas are one of the nature's most fascinating phenomenon and one of the earth's most bewildering features. The Himalayas have always been a nursery of peace and religion. It has been the cradle of everything precious and beautiful in India's heritage. Poets, painters, sages and saints have always been spell - bound by the natural grace and charm of Himalaya. The poet Kalidas conceived the Himalaya to be much larger mountain than the present form and described it as celestial entity in his famous epic 'Kumarsambhava'

### **Study Area**

Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh is the embodiment of heaven on the earth, replete as it is with lush green forests, high snow covered peaks, beautiful valleys, gushing streams and

unpolluted rivers, which is probably why it is abode of many gods and goddess. Shimla district in its present form came into existence from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1972 on account of reorganization of the districts of the state. After reorganization, the erstwhile Mahasu district 10<sup>th</sup> in its entity and its major portion was merged with Shimla. It comprised 19 erstwhile hill states. The district derives its name from Shimla town, the district headquarters and also the state capital of Himachal Pradesh.



The district Shimla comprises 7 sub-divisions, 17 tehsils and sub tehsils. The subdivisions are namely Shimla (Rural), Shimla (Urban), Theog, Rampur, Rohru, Chaupal and Dodra-Kawar, the Tehsils are namely Seoni, Shimla (Urban), Shimla (Rural), Theog, Kamarsain, Rampur, Rohru, Kotkhai, Chaupal, Jubbal, Chirgaon, and Dodra-Kwar while Junga, Nankhari, Tikkar, Kupri and Nerua are the sub-tehsils. For the rural development, the district has been divided into nine Community Development Blocks, namely Rampur, Narkanda, Theog, Mashobra, Chaupal, Jubbal, Kotkhai, Rohru, Chauhara and Basantpur.

Shimla district situated between  $30^{\circ}45'$  to  $31^{\circ}44'$  North latitudes and  $77^{\circ}0'$  to  $78^{\circ}19'$  East longitudes. It is bounded by Mandi and Kullu districts in the North, Kinnaur district and Uttrakhand state in the East, Sirmour district in the South and Solan district in the West. The district contains the total geographical area as 5131 Sq Km with varying elevation from 300 meters to 6000 meters mean sea level.

The topography of district is rugged and tough. The hills and mountains ranges are generally aligned in the East - West direction which present a complicated pattern of relief. The pre-dominantly rough terrains, the prevalence of interlocking spurs, narrow and steep side valley throughout the district reflect the youthfulness of its topography.

Climatic conditions of Shimla district vary according to elevation of the area. December, January and February are severe cold months, when the winter season is at its peak. Snowfall generally occurs in December and continuous till mid March. Bulk of precipitation is received generally in the rain season. The average rain fall of district is 1028 millimeters. Due to large difference in altitude and precipitation, the vegetation types in this region range from tropical to alpine. Three rivers, i.e. the Satluj, Pabber and Giri flow through Shimla district. The district has a very rich religious and diverse culture heritage. This is reflected through its myriad tradition carved wooden temples.

### **Aims, Objective and Methodology**

The public is still ignorant about the values of tourism and socio-economic life. In countries like Japan, United States and Canada, the state

has been forced to produce visible result. It took a great deal of effort on the part of Japanese and American citizen to improve the quality of socio-economic life. In the developing countries there is an absence of general public pressure on the state to take strong measures on the awareness on socio-economic life. The awareness among the people is low and the tourism and environment group that exist are very particularistic and lack a mass base unless people feel individually threatened by socio-economic life. It is not likely that they will exert direct pressure on the state to show results. Unregulated tourism can cause manifold problems unbalanced social change and unplanned economic development, Social tensions and socio-economic life degradation, distortion of life style and cultural decay.

Thus, Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh has taken for the present study to know the trends and impact of tourism on its socio-economic life so that suggestion could be made for the scientific and sustainable development of hill tourism. There are relatively few efficient studies on issue of real importance. It is starting to observe that countries with tourist potential undertake little or no research in this failed compared to work done in the United States and Britain. The proposed studies which have been carried out are, i) Shimla and its tourist trends. ii) Analyze the impact of tourism in Shimla. iii) Propose and suggest the measure to control the adverse effects of tourism on socio-economic life of the people of Shimla district.

The present study aims to show trend and impacts of tourism in Shimla district. First step of the research is to collect the secondary data on different issues from various published and unpublished sources of different governmental and non-governmental agencies. Then the reconnaissance survey was made to the study area. An extensive literature survey gives an in-depth knowledge and idea to develop an ideal methodology. A large number of books have been reviewed to find out the previous and present trends of research going on in related to this topic. A number of organizations, institutions and the government offices and non-governmental organizations including state-level, district-level, block level, different forest range-level and village-level, were visited to collect various categories of data.

### **Tourist Trends**

The number of tourists is increasing day by day in the tourist places in the world. This time tourism industry is growing very rapid rate. Providing money for each economy where it is running with planned. The number of tourists is rising continuously as the same rate as the population of the world is rising. The tourists have controlled by the climatic condition, i.e., summer (May, June) and autumn (September, October). The autumn festival attracts only more sophisticated tourists. In the month of December, January and February, the cold temperature (less than 2 degree C) and in July and August heavy rainfall lessen the number of tourists. Thus, Shimla district experiences two extreme tourist periods, i.e., “peak” period in May and June for Indian as

well as September and October for foreigners and “depression” period in January and February. In summer, tourists come here to get relief from the scorching heat of plain. Most of these tourists of this period come from Delhi, Haryana, Bihar, Punjab, Rajasthan and South India and small number from foreign countries. In winter, they come to see the clear sky, when Shimla provides an ideal setting for viewing the Himalayan Panorama. In this season they enjoy the snowfall. Autumn festivals of the district draw a lot of crowd of foreigners and south Indian during October-November. The foreigners take enjoy of ice-skating and skiing in this period. Table 1 shows the monthly arrivals of tourists in Shimla district of two years (2002-2003). It is apparent from the table that the highest number of the Indian tourists visited in the month of June (2,38,942) and in case of the foreigners the highest number of visited tourists in the month of October (4,154) in 2002 and in the year of 2003 the tourist arrival rate has increased in month of June the Indian had 2,56,265, while the foreigners had 5,325 in the October month.

Further increase of tourists is shown in the Table 1.2. The table shows the monthly arrivals of tourists in Shimla district of two years (2012-2013). It is apparent from the table that the highest number of the Indian tourists visited in the month of June (4,00,359) and in case of the foreigners the highest number of visited tourists in the month of September (9,259) in 2012 and in the year of 2013, the tourist arrival rate has increased in month of June the Indian had 4,69,341, while the foreigners had 10,925 in the September month.

Impact of tourism in study area have been felt in two ways (a) Positive effects and (b)

Negative effects. The positive effects are always welcome for the regional development and growth, while the negative impacts bring unwanted constraints to the region. Growing tourism activities have greatly modified the

hills of Shimla. The impacts of tourism on economy, society and environment have been discussed below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2002</b>		<b>2003</b>	
	<b>Month</b>	<b>Indian</b>	<b>Foreigner</b>	<b>Indian</b>
January	63,629	506	64,891	566
February	72,889	962	74,929	1,087
March	66,995	1,769	74,760	1,807
April	78,906	1,936	86,292	2,474
May	1,42,796	3,341	1,60,903	3,959
June	2,38,942	3,016	2,56,265	3,756
July	1,06,601	2,796	1,12,027	2,952
August	57,095	3,915	62,142	4,843
September	77,945	1,426	89,606	4,914
October	66,141	4,154	71,611	5,325
November	61,017	2,808	63,928	3,788
December	1,03,117	1,693	1,10,356	2,389
Total	11,36,063	31,022	12,27,710	37,860

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Civil Aviation: Himachal Pradesh

**Table 1.1:** Estimate of Domestic and Foreign Tourist Arrival in 2002-2003

<b>Year</b>	<b>2012</b>		<b>2013</b>	
	<b>Month</b>	<b>Indian</b>	<b>Foreigner</b>	<b>Indian</b>
January	99,496	2,594	1,05,127	4,032
February	96,344	1,152	1,01,171	4,206
March	96,927	2,403	1,01,889	5,769
April	1,06,746	2,639	1,14,453	7,279
May	2,45,517	7,448	2,97,812	9,414
June	4,00,359	6,893	4,69,341	8,821
July	1,51,040	6,549	1,65,011	8,947
August	83,720	6,915	92,113	9,273
September	1,31,006	9,259	1,44,516	10,925
October	1,04,790	9,147	1,24,911	10,793
November	92,178	5,776	1,03,746	6,494
December	1,49,184	3,977	1,51,125	4,454
Total	17,57,307	64,752	19,71,417	90,407

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Civil Aviation: Himachal Pradesh

**Table 1.2:** Estimate of Domestic and Foreign Tourist arrival in 2012-2013

The exposure of the tradition way of the people to the outsiders is not free from the negative impacts. The simple folk cannot absorb the rude culture shocks that they have imbibed and the evil consequences of a western society are all glaring, which are responsible for loss of

culture identity and erosion of moral and social values. Video parlors, disco dances in the bars and restaurants, movies, dress, mannerism all pervade the major centres. All the men and workers engaged directly or indirectly in different sectors of tourism activities, take full

advantage of tourists coming from outside. Gradually they are leaving aside the simplicity and humanity of their behavior - a unique feature of the hills people. Modern tourism has made them cunning and clever who also start hating their own community people. Over crowing in the markets, on the roadways and recreation spots may slowly increase the level of frustration among local residents.

Tourism provides the huge wealth for economy whether it is developed or underdeveloped like India. The tourists visit in a region, state or country give something to the people of the area.

- a) In Shimla region where a tourist visits earned revenues through the tourist trade, have a direct positive effects on economy. So this region has earned the foreign exchange.
- b) It has brought infrastructural improvement in the form of transport network, road construction, electricity, water supply, drainage, sewerage, and tourist based industries etc.
- c) The tourist industry being a labour-intensive service industry is a valuable generator of employment. It is a great encouragement to economic development of this region.
- d) The tourism has raised the direct relationship between traders and tourist trade goods and services.
- e) The multiplier effects of the growing trade and tourist expenditure have stimulated the economic activities and their diversification in the remote areas of this region like valleys of Tatapani and Pabber.

### **Local Community**

Local community is the key factor for the development of tourism in the area. Discussions with local villagers indicate that community interest in tourism is very high, but they have lack the skills, knowledge and support to develop it. Local participation will be more effective than other media to promote tourism in the area. Local participation has been described as "giving people more opportunities to participate effectively in development activities. It means empowering people to mobilize their own capacities, be social actors rather than passive subjects, manage the resources, make decisions, and control the activities that affect their lives." In Shimla district only little part population is living in the urban centers. The people of Shimla district are simple, cooperative and hard working class and a close knit community. The system of the joint family is still prevalent, but slowly changing to a nuclear based family. Busheri and Hindi are the popular spoken dialect. It is a highly cast conscious society. The people of all the cultural groups are free to pursue their customs, conventions, beliefs and traditions. The villagers women of the district are an asset to the family, incharge of day to day domestic chores like collecting fuel and fodder, bringing water, cooking food, tending to cattle and assisting in the agricultural fields. They enjoy considerate freedom in the family and the spread of the education in the recent past is slowly changing their social position. The men's time is spent in rearing goat and sheep and working in the fields.

A wide assortment of Hindu temples, three shrines and sacred grounds is found throughout the district. Each village of the district has a local God known as Devta. These deities have a fascinating history and play an important role in village affair. There are many important pilgrimage spots in the district. All these spots are regularly visited by locals and non-locals alike, particularly men, and are only accessible in the summer and fall months. Hindu customs dictates that no leather articles are allowed anywhere in the immediate vicinity.

People with their sense of the picturesque, in their colourful customs and costumes, for their hunger for life and for their passion, for songs and dances are the biggest attraction. The genius of the valley lies in religion which expresses spontaneously on periodic festivals, the Lavi Fair being the most grandiose in colourful pageantry of the natives. Village melas (festivals) occur year-round. They are colourful, multiple day affairs where gods from different village are brought together. One can watch human spokes person for the each god (Gur) go into a trans and tell stories, give advice, and answer questions for local villagers. Local songs and dances are also performed and villagers dress in the best traditional costumes. Respectful observation by outsiders is welcomed. Natti is a folk dance, based on classic tradition of Nattya Shastra the district has practiced by local amateurs, who dance for themselves for their pleasures and with no audience in view.

### **Livelihood Strategies**

The people living in the rural areas of the district are engaged and dependent on various

primary occupation, viz., agriculture, dairying, cattle keeping, fisheries and forestry. The economy of the hilly districts in Himachal Pradesh is dominated by agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry. Similarly Shimla district also has an agrarian economy with 80% of the workers directly engaged with agricultural and horticultural activities.

The most important factors influencing the livelihood condition of the people in the district are variation in altitude, slope and climate. These variations help the district in tourism development as well as agricultural and horticultural development. Due to tourism development in the district, Shimla (town) and some other famous places like Ranpur, Kotgarh, Kotkhai and Tatapani Kullu have now become starting points of medium and hard treks. Half a dozen trekking agencies and the institute are engaged in this business which creates employment to the local people aby way of porters, guides and cooks.

Long period of winter prohibits any outdoor activity of the people in the region. Thus, local people have to mainly depend upon the stored resources i.e. grain, fodder and fuel wood etc. and economy generated during the non- winter months. Out of that too heavy rains often take a toll of agricultural and horticulture crops. Local community has direct interaction with tourist. They have the responsibility to provide a safe, clean, high quality experience for the tourist. In return, they have a right to a reasonable remuneration for their services and to ask for cooperation in respecting local traditions and the natural environment.

Planning is for the benefit of people and they should be involved in the planning and development of tourism in their area. Through this involvement, tourism development will reflect a consensus of what the people want. Also, if local people are involved in planning and development decisions and if they understand the benefits the tourism can bring, they will more likely support it. Open public hearing provide the opportunity for anybody to learn about the plan and express their opinion. When the plan is completed, regional eco-tourism seminar should be organized. This meeting informs the participants and the local community about the importance of controlled eco-tourism development and the recommendations of the plan.

There are at least five areas where local people can help to bring about eco-tourism activities i.e. information gathering, consultation, decision making, initiating action and evaluation. Local organization such as gram panchayat, mahila mandal, navyuvak mandal, devta committies may need strengthening and local people may need some training in skill areas.

Tourists are also asking to keep the area neat and clean throughout their stay. Even though there is high local interest in ecotourism development, there are a few independent initiatives. Activity is mainly focused on a few guest houses, some sporadic employment as porter and guides and craft production. Such type of planning and strategies need proper attention in other areas.

About 65% of the villagers of the Shimla District are willing to associated with

ecotourism and related activities. They are of the opinion that this may improve their economic status as they will get more opportunity to earn through tourism. About 25% people want to establish small shop, about 2.7% people want to become tourist guides, 5% are in favour of establishing hotels or restaurants, 7% are in favour of handicrafts and other show interests in porter, cook and in adventure sports. There is no outside advertising or co-ordination between them.

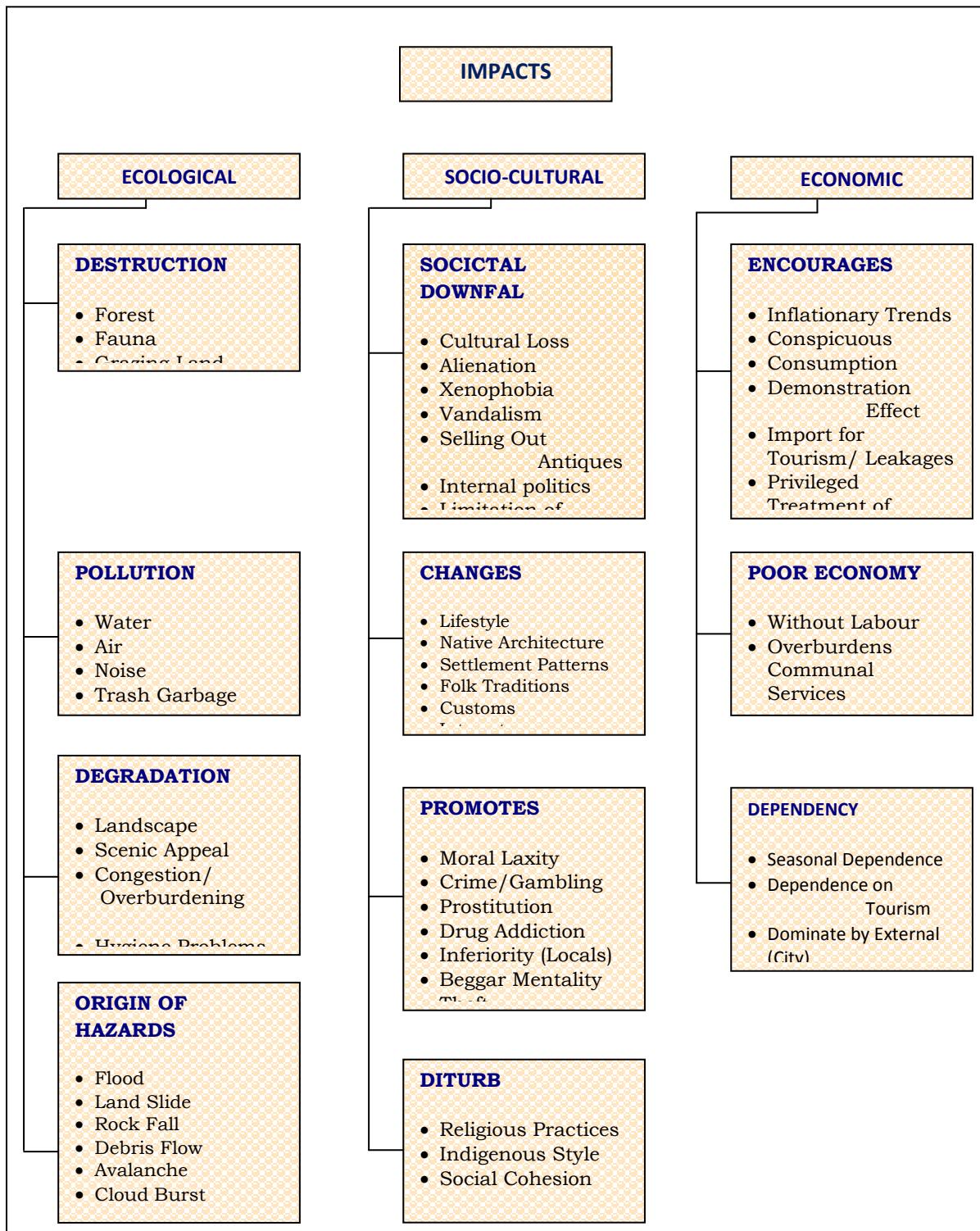
### **Role of Visitor**

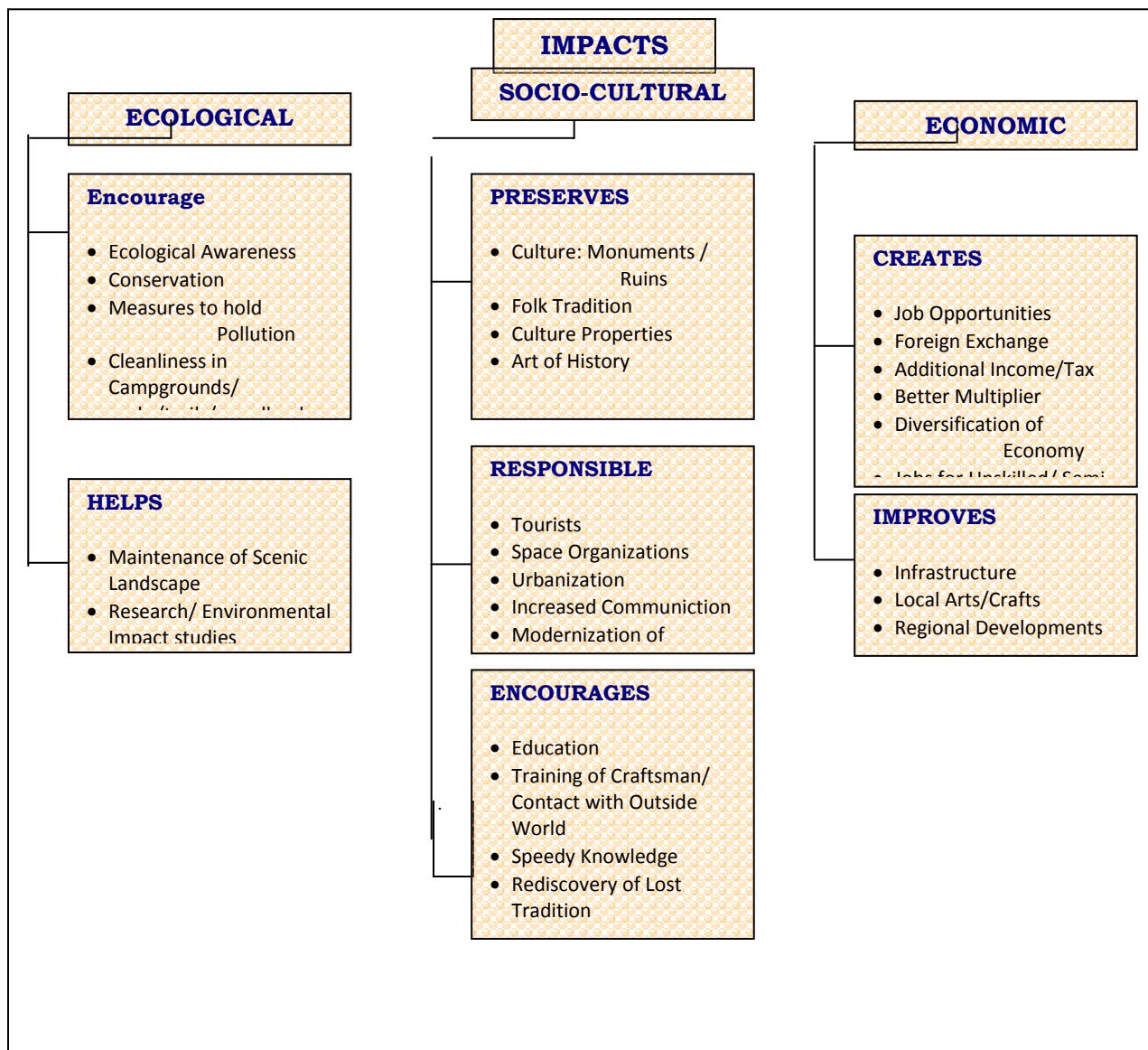
In the hilly regions the tourism sector is flourishing day by day thus the pressure of tourists increases. Due to fast life of the metro cities, the peoples want to spend their holidays at peaceful places surrounded with trees and snow clad peaks that's why they make their way to the hill stations to fulfill their desire. But due to heavy tourist pressure these hill stations are facing a lot of problems concerning the pollution, garbage, deforestation, wildlife destruction, socio-cultural loss etc. Thus this is the foremost duty of local peoples and tourists to handle this situation eco-friendly. So the tourists should have to take an active role in the protection of the environment and community development. The local administration has to provide eco-friendly awareness education to the tourists through pamphlets, posters, seminars, books and advertisement. If tourists will follow such awareness so they can boost up the tourism very eco-friendly. In this respect tourists must be aware of their impact both positive and negative, socio-economically and ecologically. This is especially true for the average Indian

tourists, who has had exposure to responsible tourism and has a tendency to bring the bad

habits of the city (pollution, litter and demanding attitudes) into hills.

**Fig.1.3: Negative Impacts of Tourism**



**Fig.1.4: Positive Impacts of Tourists**

The tourists should have to play a very responsible role during their visit to the hill stations as they are the central part of the tourism sector. When the tourists visit to the specific areas they should have to obey the rules and regulations made by the local administration to promote ecotourism. And it is also their duty to give and take respects from local communities and educate them concerning the ecotourism, thus this tendency

will improve the positive mentality of the local peoples towards the ecotourism.

The money spent by the tourist is the main source of the earning of the local community. Therefore, during the visit, the tourists should have to spend a large part of their expenditure on local produces that will be beneficial for raising the living standard of the local community and thus they will provide the best facilities (accommodation etc.) to them. Such

tendencies will promote the ecotourism in the area.

## Culture

**The people:** The population of the district mainly consists of Hindus followed by Sikhs and Mohammedans. The other religions like Christians, Jains and Buddhists constitute microscopic minority. The Hindu population chiefly composed of Brahmins, Rajputs and Kenets. The other sections of the people consist of Badhis, Chamars, Chanals, Julaha, Kolis, Lohars and Rehars which are Scheduled Castes.

The Rajputs form rather a ruling class than a caste and comprise of the families of the erstwhile hill chiefs. There are three categories of Rajputs. First is the ruling family of the yester years, who do not give their daughters to Khash, Mians or other Rajputs. They still marry among other ruling Rajput families. The second are Thankurs and Mians. They also hesitate to give their daughters to Kanets or Khash. Then there are Kanets or Khash who are mainly agriculturists.

The Brahmins are of two classes- Sasani and Dharebar. The Sasanis are generally muafidars and are of distinctly higher class than the Dharebars. They would marry Dharebar women but will not give their own daughters in marriage to them. The other groups, Brahmins are Bhat, Panda, Acharaj and Mahacharaj or Bedwa. The Kolis form the majority of population among Schedule Castes. Besids these, the Gujjars, a nomadic Scheduled Tribe are also found in the district. Gujjars are mostly Muslims. While some of them are settled on agricultural land, the other still

follow a nomadic life. In summer they move to higher hills in search of new pastures and in winter they come down to warmer places.

## Language

Pahari consisting of various dialects is the spoken language of the villagers in the district. However, with the spread of communication, increase in literacy rate among the masses, predominant population of the district can now speak Hindi and Pahari all over the district. According to the classification of languages, made by the Linguistic Survey of India, the dialects spoken in Shimla district come under Western Pahari. These have been classified under broader Indo-European Family of languages, Aryan Sub-Family, Indo-Aryan Branch, Inner Sub Branch and Pahari Group.

## Dress

Cotton and woolen clothes are worn by the people. Since the winter is severe, woolen clothes made up of the indigenously spun and woven cloth are commonly used. Ordinary clothes for man consist of cotton khadi or mill made shirt, lower, cap and a jacket. In the past in some low lying areas majority of men folk used to move about without *pyjama* wearing only a small loin cloth in summer and rainy season. However, with the passage of time the loin cloth has now been replaced by underwear. The dress of the women is *Salwar*, *Kameej* and coloured head gear which is called 'Dhattu'. Jacket is also worn by them. In the upper portion of the district the traditional dress of a man consists of black woolen domestically spun and woven *pyjama*, coat and Bushehari cap with a coloured band Loia is also put on by most of the people. The women,

however, wear *Pakhati*, *Rezta*, *Kameej*, *suthan* and *Dhattu*. Women of the higher altitudes of Rampur tehsil put on wollen and Gaddi. The typical dress of the women of Theog, Kotkhai, Jubbal, Rohru and Chaupal tehsils is *Salwar*, *Kameej*, *Sadri* with yellow or red coloured *Dhattu* as the head gear.

### **Food Habits**

The staple food of the villagers generally consists of maize, rice and wheat. Wheat is taken mostly in summer and thereafter occasionally. In addition, pulses like Urd, Lobia, Moong and Kulth are used almost daily. Maize which is the main cereal crop grown is favorite and is taken round the year. The people in the villages have four meals a day. Morning meal (*Nawari*) consists of wheat or maize bread taken either with *Lassi* or with tea. Those who cannot afford *Lassi* or tea they take it with salt. The mid day meal (*Chaili* or *Dopari*) consists of maize or wheat chapattis taken with vegetable or dal or curry ‘*Khairu*’. In the evening the morning menu is repeated. At night in the dinner (*Bayali*) the rice or Cheena of Kangani is taken with pulses. People are also very fond of meat and those who can afford they take it at time in the dinner. Due to various incentives provided by the Government, the people have started keeping improved varieties of milching cows and buffaloes and poultry birds. In addition to the above cereals, *Bathu* and jawar are also taken especially in winter. Sidku or sidu is very famous in upper Shimla hills. It is a thick fermented roti of wheat flour with paste of opium seeds mixed with either gur or salt added to it which makes it very delicious. It is

always taken with have made pure ghee. Patandey are made of very thin paste of wheat floor and are eaten with dal and ghee or *kheer* (made of rice and milk).

### **Fairs and Festivals**

**Bharara Fair:** This fair is held in village Bharara near Kumharsain and people of all castes and creed participate. The fair is held on the 1st of Jaistha (May). It is being celebrated from ancient times. Devta Koteswar is brought in the fair and goats are sacrificed in its honour as a mark of respect. The fair is cultural and recreational and ‘Natti’ dances are performed. People also enjoy ‘Hindola’ ride.

**Bhoj Fair:** This fair is held in village Guman in Rohru Tehsil in the month of November for three days in honour of Devta Bansor, Parshu Ram and Kilbaru. Devta Bansor is the presiding deity. Beside, paying homage to the deities ‘Natti’ dances are performed by the people. The fair attracts a huge crowd.

**Lavi Fair:** Lavi fair of Rampur is the most important fair of the district and state. It is a commercial fair held on the 25th of Kartika (November). It is said that the fair was related to the signing of trade treaty between the erstwhile Bushahr State and Tibet. The shepherds of Kinnaur migrate to warmer places before the onset of winter and on their way they halt at Rampur. The woolen goods, dry fruits and medicinal herbs brought by them are purchased by the people and the traders of the plains and food grains, clothes and utensils are sold. It is a very old fair and entirely related to

the sale and purchase of goods. ‘Natti’ dances and cultural shows are the main attractions.

**Mahasu Jatar:** This fair is celebrated at a place about 6 Kilometers from Shimla-Kotkhai road near Mahasu village on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in the month of Baisakha (May) for two days. The fair is a very old one and is held in front of the Durga Devi temple by a large gathering who throng the place from the neighbouring areas. It is believed that a Rana of Badoli lived in Chakroth near Mahasu. He had built Durga temple there. After the abolition of his jagir the Rana left the village and the villagers of Mahasu constructed a temple of Durga in their own village and to commemorate the occasion they started the fair. ‘Natti’ dances and folk songs are performed. Archery game is the main attraction of entertainment. At the end of the fair a goat is sacrificed.

**Pathar- ka- Khel -Halog:** This fair is held in village Halog of Tehsil Shimla (Rural). Halog was the capital of erstwhile Dhami state. The fair is held on the second day of Diwali in the month of Kartik (November). In ancient times human sacrifice, it is said, used to be offered to goddess Kali every year at the spot where the fair is now held. It is also said that on this day the widow of a ruler of the state performed ‘Satti’ and that before doing so she had ordered to make human sacrifice henceforth.

**Sipi Fair:** This fair is held every year in Sihpur below Mashobra on the 1st Jaistha (May) in honour of Sip Devta. It is very old fair and the Rana of Koti used to be the chief visitor. Thousands of people of the surrounding areas participate in the fair. A goat is slaughtered in honour of the deity. Archery game is played

besides several cultural programmes, variety shows, ‘Karyala’, Performance of the jugglers, magicians and acrobats provide additional entertainment to the spectators.

**Rohru Fair:** This fair is held in Rohru on the 9th and 10th Baiskha (April) on the banks of river Pabbar in honour of Devta Shikru. People of nearby villages are the devotees of the Devta. It is very old fair and is held to commemorate the supremacy of the deity. This fair is also a commercial one and apart from the performance of ‘Natti’ dances and cultural activities, brisk trading is also done. Men and Women costumed in their best attire participate in the fair.

**Summer Festival:** It is held every year in the month of May at Shimla. It is variety cultural function with performance of local folks, cultural program by school children and daily performance by some famous personality. It is held on the famous ridge ground.

**Winter Sports Festival:** Ice - skating in Shimla is a big attraction for the sports - lovers during winter, Shimla is the only place in Asia which has the privilege of having a natural Ice - skating rink of the kind and offers a popular pastime to the participants and on lookers alike. Ice - skating normally begins in early December and carries on to February. Clear skies and low temperatures provide series of uninterrupted sessions. There are two sessions every day, in the morning and in the evening depending upon the frozen ice on the ground. The hanging balloon on the Municipal Building adjacent to scandal point works as signal, whether the skating is going to be held on that day or not. Membership is available for

the season as well as for shorter terms and even for single sessions. Skates are available at the rink. Fancy dress carnivals, 'gymkhana' ice - hockey and dances enliven every season.

### **Conclusions**

It cannot be advocated that tourism should be stopped but should it be promoted and developed at the cost of socio economic environment? With the high tourist flow and further increase in Shimla hills, it seems necessary that some remedial and improvement measures be taken before the socio economic life of the people exploited. Tourism will need to adopt a more ecological approach of it is to guarantee its own long term sustainability.

Recognizing that tourism is a growing factor in the economy of the hill areas and that tourism has become a more egalitarian pursuit than what it was in the decades gone by, and that tourism exerts a profound influence on the environment and ecology of the hill areas, it is recommended that plans for the development of tourism, in particular and the development of human settlements, in general, should be guided by sound ecological and environmental considerations. As the attraction of the hill resorts lies largely in their aesthetic appeal, it is recommended that the development of hill town should aim at preserving this appeal. To this end, local committees can be constituted to ensure aesthetic beauty in constructions and in urban graphics, such as billboards, tourist posters and signboards.

Tourism is essentially a scenery-cum climate based industry and obviously the trade will be affected if these are allowed to fall into disrepair. Much of the scenic because of the

unplanned felling of the trees. However, so far only isolated attempts have been made for its planning and development and no integrated model of mountain development based on tourism has emerged. The designers and administrators of tourist developments fail to respect the most elementary principals for adapting architecture to its surroundings. In the following lines some suggestions, for the improvement of the tourist trade, have been made:

1. Basic amenities and civic facilities (Food, accommodation, transport, water, electricity, sewage and health) will have to be provided for and their standards improved. During the peak seasons (April – June and September- October) demand overshoots the supply causing serious scarcity of the essential commodities, certain steps will have to be taken. Imposition of a toll box for improvement of civic conditions can be conceived.
2. For the middle and low budget tourists, who form the backbone of the regional revenue earnings, cheaper accommodation should be provided. Youth Hostel, Yatri Niwas are far short compared to the huge demand. The tourists often become victims of the unscrupulous hoteliers.
3. Transport operators, hoteliers, shop keepers often charge high prices during the peak season because of absence of any check on part of the local government authorities. This practice should be checked in order to arrest further harassment of tourist.
4. Construction of high structures defying the ban of the authorities, excessive

construction activities and urban sprawl have all together restricted the view of the scenic beauty. Not only serious ecological disorders have been experienced because of the forest depletion but defacement of natural setting is also causing harm to the tourist trade which is based on aesthetic beauty. Ecological restoration of the environment is absolutely necessary in order to revitalize and retrieve the last glory of the hill station.

5. Tourism is a valuable foreign exchange earner. Easy travel formalities, less restrictions, better foreign exchange conversions, efficient information bureau, coupled with trained guides, high standard hotels and food, better servicing are some of the steps that will have to be taken for promoting international tourism.
6. Tourism in Shimla Hills is mainly operative during the summer and the autumn seasons. During the rains and winter, tourist inflow is at its lowest ebb. Only some foreigners choose to come here during the winters. Hence, during the off season, trade becomes sluggish. If proper facilities can be created through off season tariff relief, winter sport facilities, creation of another amusement and recreation facilities, so that tourist motivations can be generated, it will become a year-round activity and seasonal idleness can be wiped out.
7. Trekking, climbing, adventure courses, rafting, boating, fishing etc. are the new avenues, which can attract tourists in large numbers. Vast potential does exist here, they only need to be tapped and developed.

These can be of definite interest for tourist attraction.

Whatever damage has been done in the past should not be allowed to continue. For planning a balanced development in future, it is necessary to consider the equilibrium between man and his environment. At the same time, it is essential to promote the concept of ecotourism, involving education and interpretation of the natural environment. Environment education minimizes negative effects both upon the human and natural environment and contributes to the management of protected area.

The science of tourism recreation is still young and it is only through errors made by mankind that we can learn and bring about checks into not repeating mistakes again and develop mountain tourism in the Himalayas in a sustained and scientific manner.

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