

## Pro-Poor Tourism in Kashmir with special reference to Rural Tourism: Opportunities and Challenges

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- GDP
- Tourism
- Alternative Tourism Strategy

### Abstract

The tourism is one of the countries most rapidly expanding businesses, and it provides promising economic benefits for numerous nations, particularly those that are still developing. Tourism not only creates jobs and opportunities for economic growth, but it may also do so in areas with little economic resources. For these reasons, numerous governments, particularly those in regions that are developing, have taken aggressive steps to create tourist sectors as part of their national development objectives. Tourism promotes economic growth by contributing to GDP, export profits, tax revenues, and service charges. However, a more thorough and integrated perspective is required to fully understand its multidimensional potential and influence on the broader social reality at the regional level. The administration of the state of Jammu and Kashmir has also recognized the importance of tourism due to its vast potential for revenue and has prioritized tourist marketing in the state. However, despite its great tourist possibility, J&K has not been able to capitalize on it. The current research intends to identify the numerous challenges experienced by visitors during their visit to the hill state, and subsequently there is an alternate plan for solving problems.

## **Introduction**

Tourism is described as the practice of traveling for leisure or the business of offering tours and services to visitors (Nelson, F. 2012). Tourism has long been closely associated with leisure, as seen by its definition. However, the current thinking retains its association with leisure and extends beyond it. People now take excursions for a variety of purposes, including health, rebirth, and education. The World Tourism Organization provides an overarching perspective of the significance of tourism.

According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), "Tourism comprises the tasks of persons traveling to and remaining in places outdoors of their usual surroundings for no longer than a single year of entertainment, business, and other objectives not connected with the performance of an activity compensated with respect to the place frequented" . The expansion of tourism has resulted in new types of tourism. Health traveling, wellness tourism, sustainable tourism, sustainable tourism, favourable to poor travellers, rural tourism, recreation tourism, and adventurous travel are some of the most noteworthy kinds of tourism. Most nations have previously acknowledged tourism's growth potential (Ekanayake, E. M., 2012). Rural tourism is seen as a good way to accelerate the growth of regions that are developing or emerging parts of the entire world.

Community is one element of understanding the creation of communities for tourist growth, but it is equally critical for understanding the population influences local tourism development. Local communities play an important part in tourism development since they are responsible for ensuring an enjoyable environment for visitors. Local communities are an essential component of contemporary tourist development. They serve as a center of gravity for the delivery of housing, food, information, transportation, amenities, and services related to tourist growth (Manwa, H., 2014). The word community may have a precise geographic connotation with an easily identifiable physical limit and region, as well as refer to groups of individuals with a shared interest.

In the past, a person's community and place of residence have been separated by distance. For the reason of this study, a neighbourhoods is a group of individuals who share customs or interests and live or work in an identical geographical region. awareness the relationship between community development and the ability of communities to promote tourism development requires an awareness of this spatial definition of community growth. Global GDP figures almost universally attest to the substantial economic contribution of tourism to national

economies (Demirovic, A., 2003). Only a few number of sectors worldwide have been identified over the past few years as being mostly driven by tourism. In a same vein, one might also describe the economy of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as being dependent on tourism.

Without a question, tourism is crucial to the overall growth of any nation or region. But this economic success, often referred to as the "green aspect of the tourism industry," is not without its dark side. Usually, we highlight the financial gains made by tourism while downplaying its long-term effects on the environment and people. Therefore, it is best to schedule travel in advance while addressing the demands of future generations. Since tourism in this area is still in its infancy, (Roy, P. B., 2010), care must be taken now to prevent long-term damage to the ecology, flora, and wildlife.

In contrast to the pro-poor growth agenda, which focuses primarily on the welfare of the poor, inclusive development is concerned with employment prospects for both the poor and the middle class. It has a long-term perspective and focuses on boosting the rate of growth, productivity growth, and the size of an economy while levelling the playing field for investments and creating more productive job possibilities. The World Bank (2009) believes that an inclusive growth strategy is preferable to "shared growth," which might be interpreted as reflecting a concentration on income distribution schemes.

Inclusive development must establish an environment of equitable opportunity for everyone by addressing job creation, market, consumption, production, and providing a platform for impoverished people to obtain decent living circumstances. To be long-term sustainable, rapid development must be broad-based across industries and include a big portion of a country's labour population.

The Commission on Growth and Development's 2008 Strategy for Sustained Development and Equity in Development emphasizes fairness, equal opportunity, and protection all through market and job changes. It believes that effective development policies must prioritize equality of opportunity, allowing everyone an opportunity to reap the benefits of prosperity. This will help to reduce social inequality between lower and higher income groups. Accelerated, robust, sustained, and inclusive development will enable increased earnings for a majority of the people, which may result in overall improvements in living standards.

We have now reached the most important part of India, the study zone of Jammu and Kashmir. For twenty years, conflicts in the area have plagued every resource that is accessible. The research is restricted to the Kashmir portion of our state, Jammu and Kashmir. Situated in the northernmost region of the nation, the state of Jammu and Kashmir has a total geographical area of 2416 thousand hectares. Its population density is 124 persons per square kilometre, with a sex ratio of 883/1000, a total population of 12548926, and an adult literacy rate of 68.74% in 2011. It is split into three sections, totalling 22 districts: Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Jammu & Kashmir Violence and freedom of speech violations continue to afflict the state, stifling progress and inclusive growth and shattering the state's peace spectrum. The state has its own economic potential. However, violence and turbulence have given rise to a wide range of sins, including injustice, murder, corruption, delinquency, and inequity. Most activities, such as commerce, transportation connections, and people's movement, have been denied during the previous two decades. Trade offers chances to increase production capacity, produce efficiencies of scale, and boost competitiveness. Regions with well-connected road transportation, ICT, electricity supply, and water systems will witness more inclusion.

Jammu and Kashmir is the northernmost state in India. With Jammu and Kashmir, as well as & Ladakh as its three different regions, it forms a unique region in terms of geography. In Jammu and Kashmir, the main industries are forestry, animal husbandry, landscaping, the agricultural sector, and tourism. On the other hand, one may argue that the economy of the twin border districts of Rajouri & Poonch are undeveloped. Farming, Ranching, and Agriculture still form the cornerstones of the Districts' Economies.

#### *Tourism that helps poor citizens and fosters regional improvements*

Recently, the notion of Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) is gaining popularity. This approach has piqued the interest of academics, researchers, development practitioners, and international donor organizations alike. Based to the Department for International Development, or DFID, pro-poor tourism is an alternative kind of tourism that helps the poor benefit from tourist activities not just financially, but also holistically (Lapeyre, R. 2011).

Further completely stated the role of pro-poor tourism in improving the standard of life of poor people through including them directly in the industry, involving them in the tourism sector's supply chain, and exposing indirect benefits by developing the infrastructure with alterations in structure at the destination.

#### *Role of Non-Governmental Organizations*

NGOs organize alternative activities in a broad range of developmental domains, including education, women's rights, food and water supply and demand, conservation of the environment, medical care, public transportation, microfinance, project management, and service delivery.

The Aga Khan Rural Supporting Program (AKRSP) has been in operation since 1982, playing an important role in collaborative development via autonomous village and women's organizations. To connect community-led village level groups and foreign funding agencies, certain supra-community-led organizations were developed and encouraged, and one of them is the Karakoram Area Developmental Organization (KADO).

#### *Rural Tourism in the Kashmir region*

To put rural places and people in the forefront for tourism, rural tourism is a valuable tool for the state & its agencies, especially those tasked with rural development. Both rural tourism and rural development may advance one another. This has the potential to expand and strengthen the rural economy. The potential role of agricultural tourists in boosting Kashmir's regional economy will be covered in the paragraphs that follow.

Moreover, 20% of the state's population is directly or indirectly employed in the tourist industry. With major economic advantages, tourism has grown to become one of the greatest service businesses in the world in the context of the shifting global economy. So, there is a lot of opportunity for tourism to flourish swiftly in an area such the territory and Kashmir, that's rich in tourist attractions and places (Nguyen, H. T., 2013). Recognizing and developing new locations is necessary to draw in more visitors. In an area where over 70% of the population lives in rural areas and is mostly reliant on agriculture. Among the beautiful surrounding and cultural treasures of rural towns, tourism in the countryside is a challenging industry.

There are a lot of potential benefits that tourism may provide rural areas. This activity is a major contributor to the regional economy and creates jobs, income, and welfare growth locally. In addition to promoting the usage and sale of regional food items, rural tourism may bring in a significant amount of tax money for local governments. Tourism in the countryside generates new jobs, gives rural locals commercial options, and prevents viable traditional employment from being replaced. The customs and history of rural areas are preserved via rural tourism. Encouraging environmental enhancements within communities while honouring natural diversity.

### *Community Tourism Promotes Rural Development in Kashmir*

**Tourism and Rural Development** One way to promote rural development is via rural tourism. For a location like Kashmir, where over 70% of the total population chooses to reside in rural areas, the development of a strong platform built around the idea of rural tourism is definitely advantageous. Cities have been the focus of industrialization and growth trends worldwide. In addition, the stresses of urban life have given rise to a phenomenon known as counter-urbanization (B. Mahmoudi, A. 2011). Interest in rural areas rose as a consequence. Incorporating the concept of tourism with rural development initiatives might facilitate the process of rural tourism in rural areas. The process of rural economic development may be aided by the expansion of rural tourism.

Taking the initiative to introduce rural tourism in Kashmir necessitates the development of rural infrastructure, which is at the core of rural development programs. Thus, rural development and tourism in rural areas are inextricably linked. After all, there is a limitation to how many visitors can be accommodated in Srinagar's hotels and houseboats. During the tourist season in Srinagar, there is a paucity of land for depositing human-generated waste. Dal Lake in Jhelum is severely polluted. Other issues in Srinagar include sound pollution, pollution of the water and air, and traffic bottlenecks (Malik M.I., 2011). Tourism is one of the causes of all these difficulties.

The majority of the state's main enterprises are situated in Srinagar and Jammu, while small companies and lack of formality dominate the primary economy. The majority of mid-sized businesses are concentrated in certain locations of the state. It gives economic opportunity for minority groups. According to data from 2009-2010 (SBOE, 2010), just 28% of rural regions in J&K had access to electricity,

compared to 80% of urban areas, while 59% of rural areas had access to improved water, compared to 88% in urban areas. The infrastructure remained weak, and insurgents destroyed around 650 schools (Mukhopadhyay D., 2008).

Improved infrastructure, including a functioning regulatory environment in metropolitan areas, would boost competitiveness and productivity while lowering business costs and facilitating trade and foreign direct investment. It will enhance the integration of society and the economy and generate jobs throughout project execution and maintenance.

### *Objectives of the study*

- Analyse the socio-economic state of rural populations in Kashmir, including poverty rates, job prospects, and access to basic necessities.
- Evaluate tourism facilities and facilities in rural Kashmir, including accommodations, transportation, and amenities.

### **Literature Review**

Dada, Z. A. 2018) The reduction of poverty is the most pressing global issue, because it is a prerequisite for long-term growth. It has become a big worry for most emerging nations, including India. Tourism is regarded as one of the most efficient and practical tools for poverty reduction. As a result, understanding the tourist-poor relationship is crucial if tourist is to be exploited as a tool for poverty reduction. This research has the goal to identify various factors of helping to alleviate poverty through tourism; and to study the perception of residents of Leh district of the Ladakh province of Jammu and Kashmir with regard to poverty the alleviation through tourism; and finally to suggest ways to encourage pro-poor advancement of tourism in the region.

(Bhat, A. A., 2022) This research intends to evaluate the link between the attitudes of local citizens about political considerations and support for development of tourism in the Kashmir area. Primary data have been obtained (N = 650) from the locals of the top five popular tourist attractions (Pahalgam, which, Gulmarg itself Srinagar, Sonamarg and Kokernag) using a questionnaire that has been tested by multistage sampling approach. In case of unconventional data, the partial least-squares structure equation model is utilized for analysis. The research is based on the theoretical frameworks of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Theory of Political Turmoil Trust (ITPT).

(Kumar, V. 2024) Inclusive development contains components relevant to wide based growth, shared development, and pro-poor growth. Violence and unrest negatively harmed its J&K economy which reached to equitable expansion adversely. Slow inclusive development is solely attributable to conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, India. The continuous clashes led in relocation of non-Kashmiri families. There has been damage to infrastructure, and yearly growth in the economy trailed behind as compared with the national level, tourism suffering greatly and all these impacted negatively more to vulnerable communities whose service rely on public.

(Bhat, I. A., 2014) In the Indian state and Jammu and Kashmir, and especially in the region known as the Valley of Kashmir, tourism is considered a major industry. Even though the state's economic growth is largely focused on landscaping and agriculture, tourism is still seen as the engine of the state's finances since it generates a lot of jobs. The younger generation has profited from the sector's significant job creation. Due to its ability to stimulate economic activity in all three primary and tertiary sectors, tourism continues to play a significant part in the state's economy. Especially during the busiest times of the year, the valley from Kashmiri gets an enormous influx of tourists, and Srinagar is crawling with travellers.

(Badola, R., 2018) Tourism has the ability to assist biodiversity conservation by creating social constituencies and offering alternative livelihoods for resource-dependent populations. Institutional mechanisms are critical to ensure fair benefit sharing among various stakeholders in the tourist industry. Using a variety of case study analyses or qualitative research techniques, we looked into the impact on institutional structures in four National Parks in the western Himalayan region of India at different elevations. According to our research, the best way to popular local communities' socioeconomic development and environmental concerns into the tourism management system is through a three-tiered arrangement that includes civil society organizations and local communities, supported by supportive government policies.

## **Methodology**

The current research is based on secondary data gathered from relevant publications, journals, and papers. In addition, many publications from the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of India, and the J&K the Development of Tourism Corporation were consulted. Also looked at were a plethora of magazines,

including The Tribune, Business lines Financial Express, among others. and The Economic Times; this was in addition to the websites of many local, national, and worldwide organizations.

## Results

This section includes an overview of the tourism sector, in addition to an examination of its supply- and demand- structure. The fundamental framework for demand is researched in terms of arrivals from tourists, while the affordability of tourism infrastructure is evaluated on the need side.

In 2002, the department's Economics & Statistics Department performed a study effort that indicated that 98% of visitors visiting the area are Indian natives and just 2% are foreigners. In 2011, Indian visitors made up 96.79 percentage of the total, while foreigners made up 3.21 percentage terms, seen in Table 1.1.

**Table 1:** Tourist arrivals in Jammu and Kashmir.

Year	India	Foreigners	Total
2004	63.98	2.08	68.97
2005	64.59	2.07	67.96
2006	78.96	2.08	56.49
2007	79.69	2.08	96.49
2008	68.95	78.49	68.64
2009	89.46	58.64	79.54
2010	69.79	26.36	96.79
2011	58.79	69.49	78.91

*Source:* Department of tourism, J&K.

An equation with a straight line ( $Y=a+bX$ ) in the above table the installation worked out to be ( $Y=3.15+0.19X$ ) for foreign tourists and ( $Y=90.72+11.69X$ ) for national tourists. This means that, if the current pattern of growth continued, it can be predicted that, in 2015, national travellers made up 96.62% and foreign tourists made up 2.38 percent. In 2020, they would make up 97.21% of national tourists or 2.19 the percentage they of foreign tourists. The predicted number of visitors expected to enter the region up to 2020 is shown in the chart below.

**Table 2:** Fitting the linear trend in Travellers' anticipated arrival in J&K (in lakhs).

<b>Year</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2012</b>	169.78	3.89	189.46
<b>2013</b>	164.98	4.89	149.95
<b>2014</b>	146.54	4.56	189.75
<b>2015</b>	189.64	6.89	189.82
<b>2016</b>	175.69	6.79	179.49
<b>2017</b>	149.98	5.89	197.64
<b>2018</b>	169.59	6.79	149.89
<b>2019</b>	149.58	5.89	197.49
<b>2020</b>	198.95	4.75	179.56

*Source: Department of tourism, J&K.*

According to a poll conducted by the department of economics & statistical studies, 75% of the visitors reported earning one lakh rupees or more annually. Regarding the purpose of their stay, 57% are taking a leisure holiday, followed by business (15%) and devotion (11%). Regarding their mode of transportation, 9 percent go on guided trips and 91% go alone. Excitation and tourism continue to be the major reasons for travel among foreign tourists.

Their short stay and low expenditure are major causes for concern from an economic perspective. Indian visitors are thought to stay in the state's capital for two to three days on a typical basis, but foreign visitors only stay for one day (Chauhan V. and Khanna S. 2006). The average cost per person for Indian tourists was just Rs. 22,45, but the average expenditure per person for foreign tourists was Rs. 5,328. On the other side, structure supply is explained in terms of infrastructural accessibility. As of December 31, 2010, the state included hotels and guest houses fit for the twenty-first century, according to table 1.3. Of these, 22244 had rooms with two beds and 1471 had bedrooms with one bed.

**Table 3:** Data on the quantity of hotels, guest houses, restaurants, travel agencies, travel guides, and photographers in particular, along with the number of beds and rooms.

S. No.	Districts	Hot els/ Gue sts Hou se	Rest dent s	Number of Rooms						Bed Cap acit y	Trav el Age ncie s	Ph oto Gr ap hs	Tou rist Gui de
				SBR	DBR	D O R	FS	TB R	Total				
1	Anantnag	65	15	26	437	33	58	12	646	1292	16	4	8
2	Bandipore	155	21	56	1189	41	69	0	1531	3062	25	56	6
3	Baramulla	31	9	63	176	42	65	2	388	776	0	0	0
4	Budgam	358	111	3465	1	46	124	29	4134	8268	114	26	87
5	Doda	72	6	560	45	26	15	249	973	1946	265	29	2
6	Ganderbal	598	56	254	6897	16	47	9	7877	15754	469	564	415
7	Jammu	265	13	256	216	12	56	0	818	1636	11	2	11
8	Kathua	126	26	115	56	16	40	16	395	790	35	3	8
9	Pulwama	96	569	169	256	26	49	59	1224	2448	69	116	298
10	Rajouri	198	58	79	566	198	569	649	2317	4634	986	2	8
11	Ramban	592	98	26	497	31	66	589	1899	3798	4	9	441
12	Poonch	98	468	16	339	5	69	83	1078	2156	1	0	0
Total		2654	1450	5085	10675	492	1227	1697	23280	46560	1995	811	1284

**Sources:** <https://jammukashmir.s3waas.gov.in/>

There are 25863 rooms available in total. According to the data, half of the hotels that are available are in the districts of Shimla and Kullu, which districts, with just 55% coming from the other areas of the territory. There are two peaks to the tourism season. The first starts around April 15 and lasts until July 15. The second one starts on September 15 and lasts until November and December.

The rates of occupancy in Anantnag, Bandipore, Baramulla, Budgam, Doda, Ganderbal, Jammu, Kathua, Pulwama, Rajouri, Ramban, & Poonch fluctuate, from up to 90% in the peak season to 28% in the off season. Although there are

just a few designated development areas in the state, there are plenty of natural beauty, cultural landmarks, and architectural historical sites. For the most part, state's interior tourist industry has not been impacted by inadequate infrastructure. Because of their accessibility, tourist destinations situated between the two national roads are becoming more and more prevalent.

### *Alternative Tourism Strategy*

Because of J&K's extensive resource base, the following method is suggested.

#### **Diversify tourism to lesser-known areas of the state**

This entails creating national parks and animal sanctuaries in addition to promoting tourism in rural & tribal areas.

- **Develop pilgrimage sites:** If access, internal roads, drainage & sanitation, and pilgrims' facilities are improved, they might grow in popularity as tourism attractions. Furthermore, fresh tourist sites can be developed nearby (Vinay Raj R, 2013).
- **Disable the seasonality component:** Himachal has always been a well-liked summer travel destination. In order to draw travellers throughout different months as well, tourism has to diversify.

#### **Tourist Infrastructure**

Hotels, roadside amenities, parking, & tourist facilities at popular tourist attractions are examples of tourism infrastructure. It must be carried out in order for tourism to flourish. The department is also responsible for maintaining the many facilities, such as music fountains, parks with open decorative lighting, and slab shauchalayas. The government's Ministry of Transport should suggest building more information centres in new locations, such as those outside of J&K.

Despite J&K's exceptional agricultural environments for gardening, profitable crop development, off-season vegetables and fruits, and seeds, the region has great potential for the growth of dairy travel, horticulture/forestry products, mineral-based manufacturing, and the establishment of hydroelectric authority. However, this potential for growth in the economy has not been fully realised. Thus, it is critical that J&K create infrastructure and tourism strategies.

#### **Suggestion and Conclusion**

Based on its conclusions, the study proposes that to be genuinely impactful, PPT must be incorporated in a wide community-based development approach. When comparing the GDP of the world to the economy of almost every nation, tourism is a major factor. There are a number of countries in the globe today that are regarded as having just tourism economies. Similarly, the State's financial system, which encompasses the state of Jammu and Kashmir, may also be referred to as the tourist the economy, or the economy focused on tourism. Without a doubt, visitors play a crucial role in the general development of any nation or region. But this economic expansion, which is often seen as a positive aspect of tourism, is also associated with certain negative aspects that lurk in the shadowy corners.

Usually we highlight tourism's economic benefits while ignoring its long-term effect on the natural world and humanity. As a result, it is preferable to plan tourism ahead of time while keeping future generations' needs in mind. Tourism may be seen as a potential development model in the area, providing an option for agricultural growth and contributing to job creation. Jammu and Kashmir falls short in adopting sustainable tourist development techniques.

Given the significant tourist potential and increasing number of visitors, the United States government should create a specific tourism action plan for the aforementioned destinations right now. It should start by creating more infrastructure, which should be integrated into regional planning and include things like hotel, transit, and advertising. By offering building subsidies to local entrepreneurs, setting up camps for the instruction of guiding, traveling, and other kinds of adventure sports, and simultaneously caring for the environment, it is possible to teach the locals about the long-term advantages of tourism. preservation and maintenance of regional culture, giving individuals more access to this sector's job and income prospects.

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