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UNDERSTANDING THE PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL PEOPLE ABOUT HERITAGE TOURISM: A CASE STUDY IN TAWANG MONASTERY OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the perceptions of local people on heritage tourism in Tawang Monastery, an important heritage tourism site in Arunachal Pradesh. The study also examines the trend and growth of tourists' inflow in Tawang during 2015 to 2021 based on secondary data. Data were collected through field survey from randomly selected 100 households covering ten villages in January 2023. The results showed that local people participate in tourism activities only moderately and voluntarily. They mainly participate in provision of food, accommodation and transport activities. The people stated that tourism enhances the their income by promoting sales of handlooms and handicrafts, transport services, provides jobs and business opportunities. The study indicated that local people faced difficulties and disadvantages while participating in tourism services due lack of skills and knowledge and lack of professional training. The study calls for providing training to local people to enhance their skills to enable them to take up different tourism-based activities.

KEYWORDS: *Heritage tourism, Tawang Monastery, tourist arrivals, local people, perceptions*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is considered one of the most significant and fastest-growing service providing sectors in the world. Before the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic, travel & tourism is the key sector for economic development and job creation throughout the world. Travel & Tourism accounted for 1 in 5 new jobs created across the world during 2014-2019, and 10.3% of all jobs (334 million) and 10.4% of global GDP (US$ 10 trillion) in 2019. In 2022, the Travel & Tourism sector contributed 7.6% to global GDP, an increase of 22% from 2021 and only 23% below 2019 levels. 22 million new jobs were created in the year 2022, representing an increase of 7.9% over 2021, and only 11.4% below 2019. The spending of domestic visitors was increased by 20.4% in 2022, which is 14.1% below than in 2019. International visitors spending rose by 81.9% in 2022, but still behind 40.4% that of 2019. The year 2022 is the time for the revival of travel and tourism sector. The growth and development of tourism sector largely depends on the participation of the people all over the world towards tourism industry. The participation of local people in the mobilization and management of recourses for providing tourism related services is very important for tourism development. It provides economic benefit to the local community and encourages them to participate in the conservation and preservation of economic resources. So the participation of local community promotes sustainable development in tourism industry. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism comprises "the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes."

In the world tourism map, India has made a unique place for tourists. Tourist attraction to India is because of its rich natural and cultural landscapes and is considered one of the most liked tourist destinations in Asia. The beauty of the cultural heritage and natural sites makes India a tourist paradise. The beautiful beaches, museums, ancient places, wildlife, national parks, sanctuaries, snow cover mountain peaks, rivers, temples, technological parks, diverse cultures, places of pilgrimage, etc are some of the tourist attractive places in India. The increasing number of UNESCO World Heritage sites in India makes the country more attractive to tourists, the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites reached 40 in India, out of which 7(seven) are Natural World Heritage sites, 32 (thirty-two) are Cultural World Heritage sites and 1(one) is Mixed World Heritage Site. Many more sites are on the list for reorganization by UNESCO. Tourism in India is important for the country's economy. It has the potential to generate employment, earn foreign exchange, and promote traditional customs and values across the world. It also leads to several intangible benefits. It plays a powerful tool in global peace and integrity. Tourism also creates incentives for the conservation and preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of countries.

The India's travel and tourism sector has witnessed substantial growth in the recent period. The sector is expected to grow at an annual rate of 7.8% to reach around ₹33.8 trillion (US $457 billion) which representing 7.2% GDP of the whole economy by 2031 (IT&T 2022, WTTC). The sector has immense potential for further expansion in the tourism sector on account of the vast natural and cultural heritage in India.

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There are several challenges in this sector. Eliminating all these challenges will help the sector to realize its full potential and shape the tourism industry for tomorrow.

The North Eastern region of India which comprises of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim was gifted by nature a huge potentiality for tourism development. The region falls in the Eastern Himalayan range which comprise of mainly hills, mountains and river valleys. Tourists from India and all over the world like to visit the region because of its unique natural beauty. The snow covered mountains, green forest, blue river water, varieties of rare flora and fauna and the cultures and traditions of different ethnic groups makes the region an attractive tourist destination. However, the share of tourists received by this region is less than one per cent of the total tourist's arrival in the country.

Arunachal Pradesh is one of the states of North East India. It has a huge potentially for tourism development. The total geographical area is 83,743 square kilometer out of which 80.50 per cent of its area is under forest cover which is one of the highest in India. The state is least densely populated with only 17 persons per square kilometer due to which vast forest and natural resources of the state are still unspoiled (Lama, 2016). The state has been emerging as one of the most favoured tourist destination of India. It is situated in the Eastern Himalayan ranges and the topography of the state mainly comprises of hills, mountains, snow capped peaks, river valleys, passes, waterfalls, lakes, green forests and a house of diverse species of flora and fauna which make its landscape a unique and beautiful one. Arunachal Pradesh is the home of many indigenous tribes and all the tribes have their own colourful festivals, unique cultures and traditions which attract tourists from across the world. The state is also endowed with historical and cultural heritage sites such as the Itafort, the Bhalukpong fort, Bishmaknagar, Galden Namgyal Lhatse (Tawang monastery), Parshuram Kund, etc.

Thus, the state has a high potential to attract tourists for various types of tourism such as nature-based, ecotourism, heritage tourism, cultural and pilgrimage tourism, adventure tourism, rural tourism, wildlife-based tourism and spiritual tourism. The tourist arrivals in the state has been growing rapidly in the last few years due to dedicated efforts made by the state government in the form of organizing fairs and festivals, infrastructure development, vigorous advertisements, simplifying entry formalities, and promoting tourist cab services under the Chief Minister's Paryatan Vikas Yojana. In the year 2005, the total number of tourist arrivals in the state was 50,873 out of which 50,560 were domestic tourists and 313 are foreign tourists. The total number of tourist arrivals has increased to 5,20,089 in the year 2018, out of which 5,12,436 were domestic tourist and 7,653 are foreign tourists. During 2010 to 2018, tourist arrivals in the state grew at a compound annual growth rate of 9.42 per cent, which is much higher than the northeastern regional average of 5.4 per cent. The high growth of tourist arrivals in the state indicates that tourism can be one of the engines of growth of the state's economy if promoted with proper planning and management. The state's share in total tourist arrivals in the north eastern region improved from 3.72 per cent in 2010 to 5.20 per cent in 2018.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to measure the impact and dependence of local people and the economy on the development of heritage tourism in Tawang Monastery of Arunachal Pradesh. The study is expected to provide necessary and valuable information to the policy maker in designing appropriate policy for the development of tourism sector and also provide maximum benefit to the local peoples and local economy.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

The paper focuses mainly on the tourism development in Tawang Monastery and its impact on the livelihood of the peoples residing in the periphery and on the way to Tawang Monastery. Tawang Monastery is an important cultural/ religious heritage site located in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, India. Tawang Monastery was founded by Merak lama Lodre Gyatso in the year 1680-81. The monastery stands on the spur of a hill, about 10,000 feet above sea level and has ravines in the south and west, narrow ridge on the north and gradual slope on the east. It offers a commanding and picturesque view of the Tawang Chu (river) Valley. From a distance it appears like a fort as if guarding the votaries in the wide valley below.

The monastery is the largest Buddhist monastery in India and second biggest and oldest in Asia which is also known as Gaden Namgyal Lhatse. Being the largest and the oldest Buddhist monastery in India, it is considered as the fountain-head of the spiritual life of the Buddhist people of that region. Tawang Monastery is the largest of its kind in the country and is one of the largest monasteries in Asia. A cluster of 65 residential buildings for the monks was present inside the campus of Monastery. Though it has the capacity for housing about seven hundred monks, the actual number of resident lamas (monks) varies time to time. It has a center for Buddhist Cultural Studies where young monks are taught Arithmetic, English and Hindi besides traditional monastic education. Near to the main building of the monastery, it has a library with valuable old books and scriptures (Norbu, 2016; https://tawangmonastery.org).

TREND AND GROWTH OF TOURISTS ARRIVALS IN TAWANG MONASTERY

Tawang is a favoured destination for the tourists and Tawang Monastery is one of the important place for tourist attraction in Tawang District. All domestic and foreign tourists who visit Tawang keep Tawang Monastery on their list of visits. So the number of tourists visit to Tawang District will be the same as the number of tourists visit to Tawang Monastery. The trend and growth of tourists' arrivals in Tawang Monastery and Tawang District of Arunachal Pradesh are presented in the following Table and Figures.

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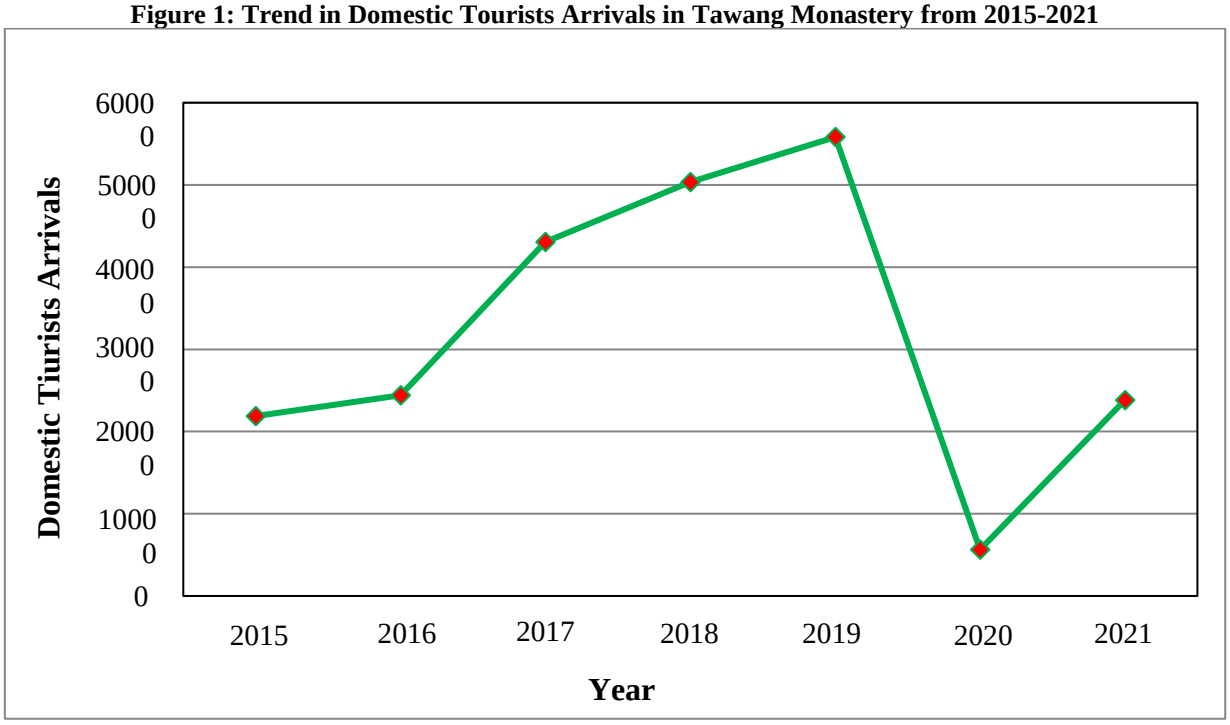
Table 1: Tourists Arrivals in Tawang Monastery from 2015 – 2021

Year	Tourists Arrivals			Annual Growth Rate (%)		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2015	21875	305	22180	--	--	--
2016	24423	279	24702	11.65	-8.52	11.37
2017	43059	235	43294	76.31	-15.77	75.27
2018	50357	245	50602	16.95	4.26	16.88
2019	55823	421	56244	10.86	71.84	11.15
2020	5639	45	5684	-89.90	-89.31	-89.89
2021	23842	4	23846	322.81	-91.11	319.53

Source: District Tourism Office, District Tawang, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

Table 1 shows the arrivals of tourists in Tawang Monastery from 2015 to 2021. It has been seen that the number of domestic tourists arrivals in Tawang Monastery was 21875 in the year 2015, after that there is a continuous increase in domestic tourists arrivals up to 2019 (55823). The year 2020 and 2021 witnessed a decline, which may be due to the restriction of COVID-19 pandemic. During the same period 2015 to 2021, the number of foreign tourist's arrivals was 305 in 2015 and declined to 235 in the year 2017. The year 2018 and 2019 showed an increase to 245 and 421 respectively. In the year 2020 and 2021 the number foreign tourists' arrivals declined due to the restriction of COVID-19 pandemic. There has been a continuous increase in the total number of tourists visiting Tawang Monastery from 2015 to 2019. The year 2020 registered a decline of -89.89 per cent as compared to 2019. The year 2021 witnessed a growth of 319.53 per cent in total visitors and 322.91 per cent in domestic visitors over the year 2020 whereas the visits by foreign visitors registered a negative growth of -91.11 per cent over 2020.

Figure 1: Trend in Domestic Tourists Arrivals in Tawang Monastery from 2015-2021

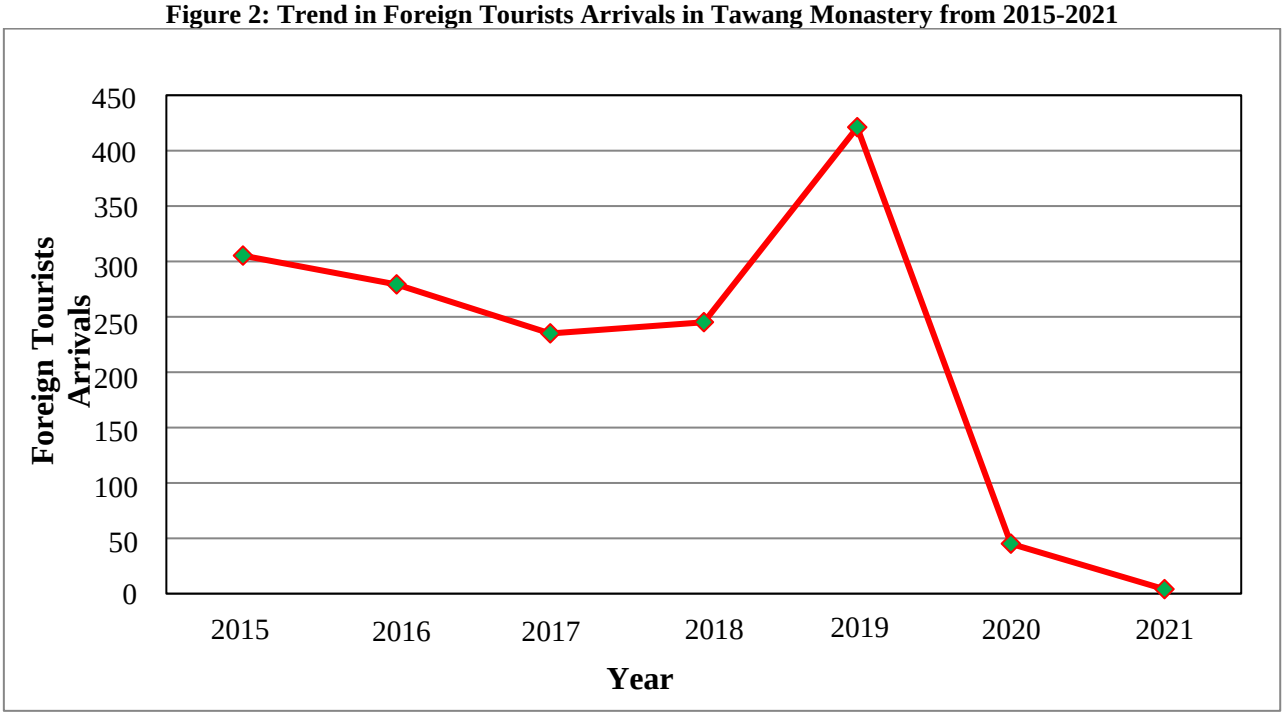


Source: District Tourism Office, District Tawang, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

The above Figure 1 reveals that the number of domestic visitors visiting Tawang Monastery of Arunachal Pradesh from 2015 to 2021 has registered an increasing trend, except in the year 2020 the number of domestic visitors visiting Tawang Monastery recorded a decline.

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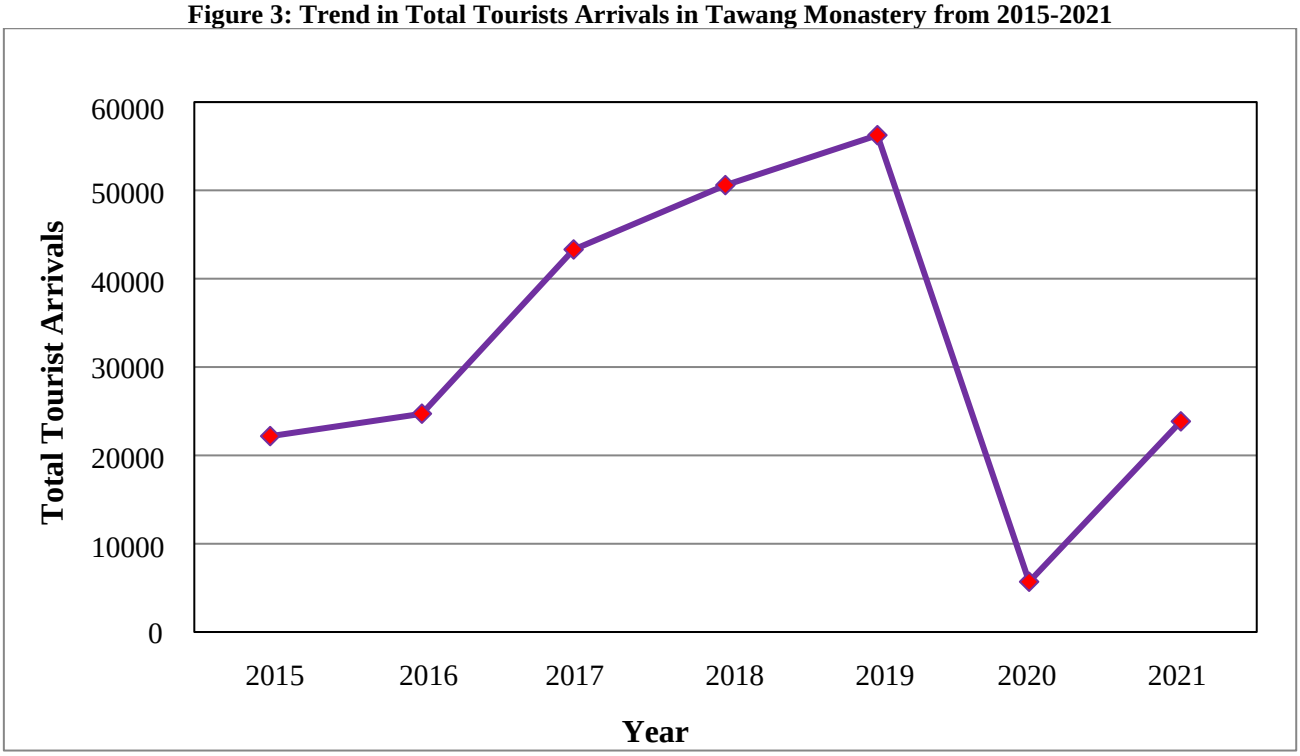
Figure 2: Trend in Foreign Tourists Arrivals in Tawang Monastery from 2015-2021



Source: District Tourism Office, District Tawang, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

From the above Figure 2, it is apparent that the number of foreign visitors visiting Tawang Monastery of Arunachal Pradesh from 2015 to 2021 has registered a fluctuation. It showed a decline up to 2017, thereafter, it registered an increasing trend in the year 2018 and 2019, and again a decline in the years 2020 and 2021.

Figure 3: Trend in Total Tourists Arrivals in Tawang Monastery from 2015-2021



Source: District Tourism Office, District Tawang, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

The above Figure 3 reveals that the total number of tourists visiting Tawang Monastery of Arunachal Pradesh from 2015 to 2021 has registered an increasing trend, except in the year 2020 it registered a decline in the annual growth rate of -89.89 per cent over the year 2019 which was mainly due to COVID-19

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pandemic. The year 2021 recorded an increasing trend of 319.53 per cent as compared to the year 2020.

DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY

The study used both primary and secondary data. The secondary data were collected from Indian Tourism Statistics, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, District Tourism office, Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh and Tourism Statistics of Arunachal Pradesh, Directorate of Tourism, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The primary data which were collected by conducting field survey of households in the study area. The survey was carried out with the help of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to collect the socio-economic variables like age, sex, educational qualification, occupation, income, etc. Face to face interview method was used to collect the information from the surveyed households by using random sampling technique. A total number of 100 households were surveyed from 10 villages namely; (1) Shyo, (2) Mandrelling, (3) Chanprong, (4) Urgelling, (5) Gyangkhar, (6) Maidung, (7) Lebrang, (8) Bomdir, (9) Lumberdung and (10) Kitpi in the month of January 2023. In the household sample survey, the responsible and efficient respondent of the family member mostly the adult member who has sufficient information were interviewed for the household survey. The data were analysed using various statistical.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion of the study are presented as follows:

Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Surveyed Households

Socio-economic characteristics of the households influenced to a great extent on the impact of households livelihoods from the development of tourism. Socio-economic characteristics of the households include age, gender, education level, occupation, households' income etc. The study of socio-economic characteristics of the households, their perception, participation, involvement, various benefit accrue from tourism, etc is important to identify the impact of tourism development on the livelihood of the households and local economy.

The head of the surveyed households was classified based on gender. Out of the total 100 surveyed households from ten villages near Tawang Monastery, 81 per cent of households head were male and 19 per cent were female (Table 2).

Table 2: Surveyed Households Head Classified by Gender (in Percentage)

Gender	Percentage
Male	81
Female	19
Total	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

The level of education is an important factor to determine the level of participation and demand for tourism/ environmental goods by the local people. Therefore, during the time of interview respondents were asked about their level of education. The study found that the average level of education of the surveyed respondents was considerably high. There were no illiterate respondents in the surveyed sample, 33.0 per cent were higher secondary level, 26.0 per cent of respondents were graduates followed by 22.0 per cent of respondents were of primary level and 19.0 per cent of the respondents had the secondary level of education (Table 3).

Table 3: Percentage Classification of Surveyed Respondents by Level of Education

Education Qualification	Percentage
Primary Level	22.0
Secondary Level	19.0
Higher secondary Level	33.0
Graduate	26.0
Total	100.0

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

From the surveyed sample, it was found that 22.0 per cent were government sector employee, 2.0 per cent were having service in the private sector, 41.0 per cent of surveyed visitors were engaged in business and 35.0 per cent of respondents' falls in the category of the farmer (Table 4).

Table 4: Percentage of Surveyed Respondents Classification by Occupation

Occupation of the Respondents	Percentage
Service (Government)	22
Service (Private)	2
Businessman	41
Farmer	35
Total	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

The source of income of the surveyed households is very important to know the dependence of their livelihoods, so the study made an attempt to ask the respondents to indicate their household's source of income. The details are shown in the following Table 5.

Table 5: Sources of Households Income (in Percentage)

Household Income Sources	Percentage
Service (Govt. & Private)	12.33
Business	19.86
Income from Agriculture	22.26
Animal Husbandry and Poultry Farming	16.44
Handloom and Handicraft	11.99
Income derived from tourism related activities	17.12
Total	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

The table revealed that 22.26 per cent obtain their income from the agriculture sector, 19.86 per cent from business activities followed by 17.12 per cent derived from tourism-related activities, 16.44 per cent earn their households' income from animal husbandry and poultry farming, 12.33 per cent get their household's income from the service sector and 11.99 per cent obtained their households income from handloom and handicraft.

An attempt was made to get information from the respondents about their annual household income. Among the surveyed households' respondents, it was found that most of the households were either in the high middle-income group or high-income group. 2.0 per cent of households belonged to annual income range of ₹8 - ₹10 lakhs, 34.0 per cent of households were in ₹5 - ₹8 lakhs range, 46.0 per cent were in

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the range of ₹3 - ₹5 lakhs, and the remaining 18.0 per cent fall in the range of ₹1 - ₹3 lakhs annual households income (Table 6).

Table 6: Percentage Classification of Surveyed Households Annual Income

Approximate Annual Household Income	Percentage
100000 to 300000	18
300000 to 500000	46
500000 to 800000	34
800000 to 1000000	2
Total	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

Perceptions and Opinions of Surveyed Households about Tourism

It is very important to know the perception of the local people about tourism. So, the study made an attempt to ask the surveyed households respondent to indicate their opinion about tourism, and the responses are divided into six categories namely (a) Tourism creates jobs and income for local residents, (b) Tourism preserves and develops the local culture, (c) Tourism enhances the quality of local business, (d) Tourism increases the knowledge of local residents, (e) Tourism helps to raise the awareness of local residents and (f) Any other.

The study found that 28.53 per cent respondents were of the opinion that tourism creates jobs and income for local residents 26.69 per cent said tourism enhances the quality of local business and the rest 19.32 per cent revealed that tourism increases the knowledge of local residents. 16.26 per cent believe that tourism preserves and develops local culture and 9.2 per cent said tourism helps to raise the awareness of local residents (Table 7).

Table 7: Surveyed Respondents' Opinions about Tourism

Opinion about tourism	Responses	Percentage
Tourism creates jobs and income for local residents	93	28.53
Tourism preserves and develops the local culture	53	16.26
Tourism enhances the quality of local businesses	87	26.69
Tourism increases the knowledge of local residents	63	19.32
Tourism helps to raise the awareness of local residents	30	9.2
Total	326	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

Opinion Regarding Villagers' Participation in Providing Tourism Services

The participation of local people in providing tourism services is very important in terms of fulfilling the demand for various facilities and services required for the visitors and also providing opportunities for the local people to obtain economic benefits from their involvement in various tourism services**.** Therefore, an attempt was made to know the kind of tourism services that are being provided to the visitors and tourists by the local peoples.

The study reveals that 20.38 per cent of Tawang Monastery households respondents were of the opinion that villagers were engaged in providing accommodation facilities, 23.51 per cent of Tawang Monastery provided food items, 11.91 per cent of Tawang Monastery were providing travel guide, followed by 10.66 per cent of Tawang Monastery were engaged in selling souvenirs products, 20.38 per cent of Tawang Monastery were engaged in transportation and rental vehicles and 13.16 per cent of Tawang Monastery surveyed respondents said that villagers were engaged in providing trekking facilities (Table 8).

Table 8: Respondents' Opinion about Villagers' Participation in Providing Tourism Service

Tourism services	Responses	Percentage
Accommodation	65	20.38
Food	75	23.51
Travel guide	38	11.91
Sales of souvenirs	34	10.66
Transportation and rental vehicles	65	20.38
Trekking facilities	42	13.16
Total	319	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

Respondents' Opinion Regarding the Type of Benefits the Local People Accrue

To identify the benefits that can be accrued from tourism development, the respondents were also asked to indicate their opinion regarding the type of benefits that can be accrued by the local people if the site will be developed as a tourist destination. The study found that 26.32 per cent of the respondents considered income from the business as local people benefit, 25.76 per cent said that employment to the people is a benefit, 24.65 per cent indicated income from transportation services as a benefit and 23.27 per cent of the respondents considered income from the sale of handloom and handicraft as a benefit which the local people will accrue from tourism (Table 9).

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Table 9: Respondents' Opinion Regarding Type of Benefits the Local People Accrue

Benefits accrued	Responses	Percentage
Employment for the local people	93	25.76
Income from transportation services	89	24.65
Income from sale of handloom and handicraft	84	23.27
Income from business	95	26.32
Total	361	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

Moreover, respondents were asked whether they perceived any problem due to the existence of the site/place. All the respondents (100 per cent) revealed that the existence of the site does not perceive any kind of problem for them.

Opinion about the Disadvantages when Participating in Tourism

The respondents were also asked to give their responses regarding the disadvantages when they participate in tourism. The study found that respondents' disadvantages when participating in tourism are 27.35 per cent due to lack of experience working in tourism, 23.71 per cent said due to lack of professional training, 23.1 per cent opinion is due to lack of information, 19.75 per cent confessed due to lack of skills and knowledge on tourism, 3.65 per cent said their disadvantages are due to lack of communication skill and 2.43 per cent said language limitation as disadvantages participating in tourism (Table 10).

Table 10: Respondents' Disadvantages when Participating in Tourism (in Percentage)

Disadvantage in participating	Responses	Percentage
Lack of skills and knowledge on tourism	65	19.76
Lack of communication skill	12	3.65
Language limitations	8	2.43
Lack of professional training	78	23.71
Lack of information	76	23.1
Lack of experience working in tourism	90	27.35
Total	329	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

Respondents' Opinions about Barriers Encountered When Engaged in Tourism Activities

Barriers to tourism activities hamper the healthy growth and sustainable development of tourism to the site. So an attempt was made to ask the respondents about any barriers/difficulties they have faced since their involvement in tourism activities and the study found that 59 per cent of the surveyed households response 'Yes' they have faced barrier when participated in tourism activities.

Moreover, they were also asked to indicate their responses about the type of difficulties faced since their involvement in tourism activities and the details are shown in Table 11. The table shows that 25.0 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that due to lack of skills people faced difficulties when engaged in tourism activities, 19.23 per cent said lack of support from local government acts as a barrier, 24.04 per cent are in the opinion about lack of professional training institutions followed by 3.85 per cent identify their difficulties as lack of collaboration between businesses, governments, and local communities and 27.88 per cent said lack of knowledge as their difficulties to participate in tourism activities.

Table 11: Opinions about Type of Difficulties Faced when Participating in Tourism Activities

Difficulties faced	Responses	Percentage
Lack of skills	52	25.0
Lack of support from local government	40	19.23
Lack of professional training institutions	50	24.04
Lack of collaboration between businesses, governments, and local communities	8	3.85
Lack of knowledge	58	27.88
Total	208	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

Opinion about the Dependency on the site for their livelihood

To know the dependency on the site for their livelihood, they were asked to give their level of response about the need for the preservation of the site for their livelihood. The levels of responses are categorized as (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Partially Agree, (4) Disagree and (5) Strongly Disagree. It has been seen from the Table 12 that majority of the respondents (81.0 per cent) gave their opinion as strongly agree regarding the preservation of the site for their livelihood and 19.0 per cent indicate their response as agree.

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Table 12: Respondents' Opinion about Preservation of the Site for their Livelihood

Preservation of the site	Respondents (in Percentage)
Strongly agree	81
Agree	19
Total	100

Source: Survey Data, 2022-2023

Moreover, respondents were also asked to give their opinion on whether they are interested in taking initiatives to promote tourism in their local community. All the respondents (100 per cent) showed that they are interest to promote tourism in their local community.

Opinion about the Site for the Development of Tourist Destination

The surveyed respondents were asked to respond to whether the site can be developed as a tourist destination. All the respondents said "Yes" the site can be developed as a tourist destination. The study also found that majority (90.0 per cent) of the surveyed respondents considered the site is very useful for them.

Conclusion and Policy Implication

Based on the above discussion and findings, it can be concluded that Tawang Monastery is an important cultural/ religious heritage tourism site in/at tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The Monastery was founded by Merak lama Lodre Gyatso in the year 1680-81 which is the largest Buddhist monastery in India and second biggest and oldest in Asia that stands on the spur of a hill, about 10,000 feet above sea level. Tawang is a favoured destination for both domestic and foreign tourists and Tawang Monastery is one of the main attractions for the tourists visiting Tawang District. A large number of tourists from all over the country and from the world visited every year. However, the inflow of tourists in Tawang district and Tawang monastery during the year 2015 to 2021 has been fluctuating. The year 2015 to 2019 has recorded an increase, but the year 2020 has registered a decline of 89.89 per cent annual growth rate which may be due to covid-19 pandemic and again the year 2021 has recorded an increase of 319.53 annual growth rates.

The impact of tourism development on the local economy and livelihood of the local people can be measured from the socio-economic characteristics, perception, participation, benefits, etc of the surveyed households. The study found that majority of the households head was male. Most of the households' level of Education was higher secondary and graduate level. Occupations of the households reflect on the dependency of the livelihood. The study showed that most of them were engaged in business (41%), farmer (35%) and service govt. & private (24%). Source of income of the households is also an important determinant to identify the impact of tourism development. The source of income revealed that majority of the households income sources were business and agriculture. The households' opinion regarding tourism showed that tourism creates jobs and income for local people as well as it enhances the quality of local business. The study found that villagers participated in tourism by providing accommodation, food, travel guide, transport and trekking facilities. The types of benefits accrued by the local people from tourism development are in the form of employment, income from transportation service, business and sale of handloom and handicraft products. The study showed that households' respondent faced some disadvantage and encountered barriers when they participated in tourism activities. It was observed that majority (81%) of the surveyed respondents strongly agree regarding the dependency on the site for their livelihood and 90 per cent of the household respondents considered the site as very useful for them.

The result of the study led to the following suggestions that can be made for tourism development and to increase in the participation of local people and the impact on their livelihood. Focus should be made on regular maintenance and beautification of the monastery. There is a need to focus on more hygienic washroom, cafeteria, etc. Well trained tourist guide should be available for the safety and convenience of the visitors. As the local peoples participation was voluntary and moderate, to encourage active participation of the local people on tourism activities, government should focus on training, counseling and awareness programme from time to time. Focus on financial support is also needed to encourage the local unemployed youth in participating tourism related activities. Subsidiary schemes should be provided for the promotion of attractive home stays by the local people, encouragement and support for producing more attractive, varieties and quality handloom and handicraft products to enhance the income of the local people. Cleanliness and maintaining the natural beauty of the place should be focused to attract more tourists who were visiting mainly to enjoy the natural beauty. Policy should focus on better and improved connectivity of the place with the rest of the world.

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