

### Notes on New Research Work

This section highlights new research being done by scholars in different parts of the world.

#### Tourism, Environment and Society

(A Comparative Sociological Study of the Interface between Tourism and Environmental Consciousness in Two Different Regions of India Garhwal and Rajasthan)

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#### Abstract

Tourism is a phenomenon that is closely associated especially with leisure time, in its origins and duration. Numerous theorists tend to go as far as to claim that tourism is a classical product of free time or leisure. When free time became property of the masses, modern mass tourism appeared as a form of using that time. Therefore, tourism is considered to be an extension of leisure. The analysis of tourism as a phenomenon is approached from the aspect of leisure time in this study. The cultural ethos of a society is a significant determinant of the phenomenon of leisure and tourism. The socio-cultural factors also reflect a great influence on the environmental attitudes of the people. Indian society reveals vast cultural diversity and therefore, consequent diversity in the patterns of leisure and tourism and in the ecological sensitivity might be evident as well. The present research involves a comparative analysis in a cross-regional context. It attempts to draw out an account of similarities and differences between two regions i.e. Garhwal and Rajasthan, pertaining to the phenomenon of tourism and its interface with environment. The present study is focused on the residents of two cities located in two different regions who take the roles of both, the tourists as well as the hosts at different points of time. It seeks to examine tourism from sociological standpoint. From this perspective, it is important to consider various social and cultural aspects related to the tourism and the ecosystem and to understand traditional and modern models of interaction with the environment. It is in this context, that the objectives of the study were set. Instead of testing any specific hypothesis, the following objectives were discerned:

1. The foremost objective of this study is to trace the linkage of leisure with the phenomenon of tourism. An in-depth study of urban leisure patterns and the various socio-cultural factors that influence the trends of leisure and tourism is attempted.
2. The main focus is to determine the historical as well as the contemporary touristic patterns in the universe. It is also examined whether leisure and tourism have emerged as independent processes in Indian society or they are intermingled with work culture.
3. The organic relationship between environment and tourism is the central theme running through the entire course. By comparing people from two different regions in India, the study endeavours to show how traditions, geography and other aspects of area's character influence tourism trends and environmental concerns. The study examines the touristic and ecological dimensions inherent in the cultural practices of both regions.

4. The present study attempts to find the impact that the tourism industry, also called 'smokeless industry', has on the culture and environment of the society and vice-versa. The key objective is to discover whether the common man in India is aware of socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism be it positive or negative. The study also explores public's attitude towards environment.

### **Universe and Methodology**

Lijphart saw comparative method as one of the basic methods the others being experimental, statistical and case-study methods of establishing general empirical proportions. The present study also employs the comparative method. Therefore, in order to achieve broader generalizations, the study was conducted in two different regions of the country - Garhwal and Rajasthan. Each region has its distinguishing geographic, economic, cultural and social characteristics. Rajasthan is located in between 23°3 N to 32°12 N latitude and 69°30 E to 78°17 E longitudes and is the largest state in India. Rajasthan is vast, varied and interesting state among all where hill features mingle with plateaus, plains and deserts. Besides a picturesque natural setting, Rajasthan's attraction as a tourist's paradise is largely due to rich historical and cultural heritage going back to antiquity. The Garhwal region lies between latitudes 29°26 - 31°28 N and longitudes 77°49 - 80°6 E. The natural beauty of the region, majestic Himalayas, gushing rivers, hanging glaciers, wildlife and Chardhams have always attracted tourists of all tastes and fashion. Both these regions are hub of tourism. While Rajasthan is the legendary land of valour and chivalry, Garhwal is a land where Gods lived and saints and sages meditated. In each region the natural setting has its own peculiar qualities that necessarily affect and are affected by the social and cultural ways of the inhabitants. Since the main purpose of the study has been to shed light on the contemporary patterns of leisure and tourism and their implications; the inter-linkage between tourism, environment and society and environmental concerns of the urban community, there could not possibly be a better choice than Jaipur in Rajasthan and Dehradun in Garhwal as both are the best representative of the urban community of their respective regions.

The sample size totaled three hundred, which meant that one hundred and fifty respondents each were to be surveyed in both regions i.e. Garhwal and Rajasthan. The sample selection was done by using Purposive Quota Sampling method. An attempt was made to make the sample as representative as possible. Unorganized sector workers, industrial workers, merchants and service class (clerical) people constitute the major segments of the urban working population. The elite belonging to the field of education, medical, technical, political and from the field of art and culture were also included in the sample. The data for the present study have been collected from primary as well as the secondary sources. The secondary data have been obtained from the government records, published reports, books, journals, periodicals, unpublished thesis and Internet sites. The primary data required for study was collected with the help of questionnaire cum schedule. In order to cover the vast spectrum of leisure and tourism patterns in the urban society, a comprehensive questionnaire cum schedule, consisting of open-ended as well as closed ended questions was prepared after going through lot of background literature. The questionnaire cum schedule was finally drafted after pre-testing it on some respondents. Besides this, an interview guide, which probed into tourism experiences and implications of heavy tourist influx, was administered to informed persons of the respective regions. This helped in the compilation of lot of qualitative information. The survey method was

supplemented with non-participant field observations and informal conversations with the respondents, which helped in gaining insight into the respondents' mind and also contributed in the enrichment of primary data. The responses were subsequently tabulated and the data was analyzed. The study is produced in descriptive cum analytical design.

### **The Study: Findings and Discussion**

The present study is based on two different and important cities of India. Jaipur, a colorful cultural and historic city located in the plains and Dehradun, a scenic natural region placed within continuous mountain ranges. Both these places present two different landscapes and two different societal worldview formations, for in these cities culture as well as history is different. However, both the cities are important destinations from touristic point of view. Therefore, contrapuntal and comparative study of these two different cities situated in two different regions of India gives a significant understanding about the interface between tourism, environment and society. It is in this context that, the study approaches tourism from an emic' attitude, or one that seeks to comprehend it from within. It tries to explore how tourism is shaped and how its ramifications for society and environment are comprehended by the social actors i.e. residents of the two cities, in terms of tourist roles as well as host roles.

Leisure and tourism both are the products of western civilization, the former linked to the Industrial revolution and the latter to the age of exploration. Understanding the relationship between tourism and leisure is important, particularly if tourism is considered a special form of leisure. In common parlance and sociological research, tourism is identical to pleasure travel. From that point of view, tourism is a leisure pursuit and can be typified as a form of consumption. After the introductory chapter, the second chapter tries to understand the nature of the two cities in its relationship with the realm of leisure. The patterns of leisure and tourism in both regions are analyzed in terms of five occupational categories namely, unorganized sector; industrial workers; merchants; service class and elites. On an average, the respondents spent 3 hours 51 minutes on leisure during the weekdays and 6 hours 29 minutes during weekends. The study indicates that periodicity of leisure is 1 and 1/2 hours more during weekdays and 2 1/2 hours more during weekends among respondents of Dehradun. It is so because Dehradun still lacks fast life and mechanized work culture prevalent in big cities. Another reason responsible for more leisure time can be attributed to the small area of Dehradun that allows people to save some time which is used in commuting to far off workplaces in bigger cities like Jaipur. Barring unorganized sector and elites, an upward rise in leisure time is observed among other occupational categories strengthening the notion that leisure time increases with increasing affluence. At the same time, it reveals the dichotomy between the money-rich time- poor' elite class and time- rich money-poor' unorganized class.