

ROLE OF HOME STAYS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF UTTARAKHAND

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Abstract: *The tourism industry has emerged as one of the most important industries of the twenty-first century. The multiplier effects of tourism are significant in terms of job creation, income generation, the development of tourism infrastructure, as well as the preservation of priceless cultural heritage, the development of cultural deposits, and the development of potential tourism destinations. Uttaranchal continues to be one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, and the state has tremendous potential for future tourism development. Furthermore, tourism as a socio-economic activity encompasses a wide range of services and is fundamentally concerned with human beings moving from one location to another for a variety of reasons in order to achieve a variety of goals. The state of Uttarakhand has a number of eco-tourism destinations, including national parks and wildlife sanctuaries that are popular with nature lovers. Against this backdrop, the purpose of the current paper is to investigate the potential of home stay tourism in the state of Uttarakhand.*

INTRODUCTION

In total, the state of Uttarakhand has a geographical area of 53,484 square kilometres, which is divided into 13 districts that are divided into two geographical regions (Kumaon and Garhwal). According to the 2011 Census of India, the state has a total population of 101.17 million people, with rural residents accounting for approximately 70% of the total. Uttarakhand is the twenty-first most populous state in the United States. Agriculture and tourism are the two most important sectors of the state's economy. Agribusiness employs approximately 70% of the country's total population. Only 14 percent of the total reported area is under cultivation, according to the data. Rainwater is used to irrigate more than 55 percent of the state's cultivated land. Small and dispersed landholdings characterize the landscape. The average land holding in the hills is approximately 0.7 ha (divided into small holdings) and the average land holding in the plains is approximately 1.8 ha. The state's economy has been one of the fastest growing in India in recent years. Natural disasters are a frequent occurrence in Uttarakhand. The state is located in a seismically active area, and flash floods, forest fires, landslides, and cloudbursts are all common occurrences. Because glaciers are melting at an alarming rate, climate change has also increased the vulnerability of people to natural disasters. Additionally, the outburst of glacial lakes has increased the severity of flash floods. The cloudburst and heavy rains that occurred during the monsoon season exacerbated the severity of landslides and flooding.

Uttarakhand is home to a thriving and diverse cultural heritage. It is also abundant in natural resources and biological diversity. The state offers numerous opportunities

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for the development of the tourism industry. The state government has already begun implementing development projects aimed at promoting tourism in the region. In addition to two additional national awards, the state received the award for best performing state in tourism in 2004. It has already made a mark on the world tourist map by establishing a physical presence there. Tourism is practised in the entire state under three categories: religious tourism, natural tourism, and adventure tourism (adventure tourism). Religious tourism has been around for hundreds of years. Natural tourism has also been practiced since the beginning of time in conjunction with this. Adventure tourism, which includes activities such as river rafting, trekking, mountaineering, and skiing, has recently been introduced in the area under the name of adventure tourism. Due to an increasing interest in adventure tourism among tourists, the trend toward adventure tourism is rapidly gaining momentum. Because the entire state of Uttaranchal is comprised of the Himalayan Mountain System, there are numerous opportunities for outdoor activities such as skiing, trekking, river rafting, and mountaineering. Skiing is becoming more popular as a winter sport, and teams are being formed at both the domestic and international levels.

It is possible to separate pilgrimages from tourism in order to develop tourism in Uttarakhand. In pilgrimages, some element of tourism is always present, and it is becoming more prevalent. As a result, dealing with Religious Tourism is appropriate. The Himalayas of Uttaranchal are revered as the abode of Gods and Goddesses, and this is no surprise. This land, which is nestled in the lap of the Central Himalayan Range, is known as 'Devbhumi' and is considered a heaven on earth. Four pilgrimage destinations, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, and Gangotari, along with the Panch Badris, Panch Kedars, and Panch Prayags, form the fabric of pilgrimage in Uttarakhand. The four holiest pilgrimage sites in India are nestled among the lofty peaks of the Himalayas. In their quest for the divine, saints and pilgrims have traversed these mystical valleys, known in Hindu scriptures as 'Kedarkhand.' For centuries, they have walked these sacred paths. Each of the four dhams receives its water from one of the four pious rivers: the Yamunotri from the Yamuna, the Gangotari from the Bhagirathi, the Kedarnath from the Mandakini, and Badrinath from the Vishnu Ganga, respectively (Bhardwaj, 1973). Because of the natural surroundings, the entire Uttaranchal Himalayas is characterized by a magnificent and picturesque landscape where the heartbeats cease to function and the spiritual hunger gains new vigour. With the splendour and heart-wrenching view, there are numerous breath-taking spots between Gwaldom Kausani, Raniketh, Berinag, and many other locations in the area. Seeing Trishul, Nanda Devi, and Chaukhamba from various locations throughout Uttaranchal invigorates and elevates mankind to new heights and new levels of consciousness (Bagri, 1988). Uttarakhand is home to a thriving and diverse cultural heritage. There are a plethora of local fairs and festivals in Chamoli district, including the Jhanda Mela (Dehradun), Surkanda Devi Mela (Tehri), Magh Mela (Uttarkashi), Nanda Devi Mela (Nainital), Chaiti Mela (Udham Singh Nagar), Purnagiri Mela (Champawat), Piran Kaliyar Mela (Haridwar), Uttarayani Mela (Adhikari, 1990). Uttarakhand is a haven for those seeking outdoor adventure. Because of the sheer variety of activities available, ranging from

mountaineering (Bhagirathi, Choukhamba, Nanda Devi, Kamet, Pindari, Sahastratal, Milam, Kafni, Khatling, Gaumukh), trekking, skiing (Auli, Dayara Bugyal, Munsyari Mundali, Bedani Bugyal), skating, water sports (in all of Uttaranchal's lakes and rivers), to aero sports such as hang gliding. The Institute of Mountaineering is located in Uttarkashi, and it is one of India's three major mountaineering institutes. Many river rafting locations have been established along the Ganga, and they are attracting a large number of tourists. The state of Uttaranchal, in addition to the world-renowned Corbett National Parks, is home to a slew of other breathtaking wildlife tourism destinations. These places include the Rajaji National Park, Govind Pashu Vihar, Asan Barrage, Chilla, and Saptarishi Ashram, the last four of which are a haven for bird watchers. The Rajaji National Park is located in the northern part of the state (Negi, 1991). The fauna and flora of the state are of exceptional diversity. Due to its natural beauty, it is an excellent location for eco-tourism projects such as jungle safaris, trekking on mountain and forest trails, nature walks, and catch and release angling for Mahaseer and other species. All of these activities must be carried out in a manner that raises awareness of the environment and contributes to the preservation of the fragile ecological balance. Uttaranchal is a popular destination for those looking to relax and unwind because of its clean, fresh, and invigorating environment. From the modern facilities at Massoorie and Nainital to the untouched, pristine beauty of its snow-clad peaks, rivers, and forests, Uttaranchal offers everything a tourist could possibly desire in terms of amusement and leisure. Uttaranchal is a state in northern India. It's possible that it's preferable.

On the one hand, culture serves as the foundation for society's structure, and on the other, culture is the means by which society maintains its existence. Despite the fact that the state of Uttaranchal is home to the great holy shrines of Badrinath and Kedarnath, the state's geographical location exhibits distinct characteristics in terms of climatic variations and cultural differentiations all at the same time, despite its geographical location. Climate conditions are favourable. The lesser Himalayan cities of Mussoorie, Nainital, Almora, Ranikhet and other so many hills and valley towns have long attracted tourists to this state, but due to its isolation from the main treks of these pilgrimages, this state has struggled to attract tourists for a long time. This has resulted in relatively slow cultural transformation, measured in terms of cultural waves of variable sanctity, when compared to the other parts of India and the world visualised, despite the fact that huge pilgrimages represent the inflow of a large number of pilgrims flow. Throughout the course of history, this state has been endowed with various sanctities and sages who have come and gone. On the basis of micro-drainage basins, the entire state has been divided into various cultural groups for study. Geographical divisions, such as water divisions, on the other hand, divide cultural groups on a micro level, based on their geographical location. Even though this state is home to the holy snow-clad mountain peaks of Choukhamba, Nanda Devi, Kamet, Durgiri, Purnagiri, and Shivling and Trishul, a native place of Lord Shiva, as well as huge glaciers of international significance, the influence of these peaks maintains a Shiv community of the people, and thus the state is unable to be influenced by the Indian subcontinent or from abroad. In addition to Roopkund and Bedini Bugyal, which are located on the root of the Trishul,

Madhmaheshwar, Tungnath, Rudranath, Jageshwar, Binsar, Baijnath, the four dhams, Panch Badri, Panch Kedar, Panch Prayag, and many other places of tourist and pilgrim interest, these locations have become great resorts in terms of pilgrimages and tourism, primarily as (Gupta, 2002). Shaivism has woven the cultural fabrics of the state, and on the other hand, Shaivism has come to predominate throughout the state over the course of time. Despite the fact that the region is influenced by a combination of Shaivism and Vaishnavism, the number of temples dedicated to Lord Shiva far outnumbers the number of temples dedicated to Lord Vishnu. A sacrifice custom exists for the purpose of worshipping Shakti, in which goats and buffalos (Bagies), which are locally known as Atwar, are sacrificed as offerings to the Goddesses 'Durga' and 'Gaura', who are worshipped as manifestations of Shakti. The practise of sacrifice is becoming less and less popular over time (Sati and Kumar, 2004).

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is defined as "paying guest" staying in someone's home for a short period of time by the words "home stay" and "home stay" combined. Individual families and communities, on the other hand, provide accommodations and services to such visitors.. As a result, the Home- Stay Regulation recognizes it as being run (managed) by an individual or a group of people (Timlasana, 2012). The goal of the "Home Stay" programme is to draw tourists away from posh and crowded urban areas and into a rural setting surrounded by beautiful natural scenery by providing them with clean, comfortable, and reasonably priced lodging and food in rural settings. As a result, homestay provides travellers with a unique local experience as well as opportunities for interaction with the host family. It provides the opportunity to visit new and unexplored locations, which has allowed the government to popularise new tourist destinations while also providing an alternative source of income for rural residents and farmers (Gangotia, 2013). Guests who participate in home stay tourism have the opportunity to spend time with the host family, learning about their traditions, values, and culture. This provides them with an opportunity to experience a taste of rural life (Devkota, 2010). India is one of the most popular destinations for home stay tourism because of its rich cultural heritage and geographical structure. The environment and culture are commoditized in home stay tourism; market value is created as a result of the demand generated by visitors. As a financial incentive for the preservation of the environment and their culture, this programme provides a financial reward to the local indigenous community (Laurie et al, 2005). As part of this approach, tourism is viewed as a component of development, with an emphasis placed on identifying ways to increase positive impacts while simultaneously reducing negative impacts (Ashley, 2000). Rural poverty can be reduced significantly through the use of home-stay tourism, which is becoming increasingly popular. It encompasses all types of tourism activities, including trekking, cultural tourism, agri-tourism, health tourism, and environmental tourism (Devkota, 2010). In terms of earning foreign currency, it is a good source. It helps to close the gap in the country's balance of payments, generates more tax revenue, contributes to the country's economic development, and expands employment opportunities. Moreover, it may open up new markets for local people

to sell their wares, including agricultural products, livestock, and other livestock products (Budhathoki, 2013). The expansion of tourism encourages people to pursue higher education and to take on new positions, resulting in an increase in the overall literacy rate. As a result, new generations have the opportunity to redefine and reclaim their cultural and ethnic identities. It was decided to provide training in hospitality and basic guiding skills to the local residents in order to provide them with an avenue through which they could gain knowledge about hygiene, touristic destinations, and conservation techniques. The development of tourism in a particular location has had a positive impact on the livelihood of the people who live there; however, it has also had some negative effects on the lifestyle of the local people, causing them to lose their own traditional culture and heritage as a result of the development of tourism (Pandey et al., 1995). Tourism is being held responsible for deforestation and environmental degradation. When compared to the economic gains made from tourism, the loss incurred from such activities is significant. This results in a reduction of benefits to the local community as well as a reduction in the quality of the environment (Banskota & Sharma-1995). It is possible that an increase in the number of tourists will exacerbate the problem of traffic and parking in urban areas, as well as increase urbanization in areas where there is an increase in the number of tourists, which will result in increased noise and environmental pollution (Gurung et.al 1996).

A home stay is defined by Wipada (2007) as a type of lodging where tourists share a home with the homeowner with the intention of learning about their culture and way of life from the homeowner who is willing to transmit and share their culture. The homeowner is the person who prepares lodging and food for tourists in exchange for a reasonable wage.. Visitors or guests pay to stay in private homes where they interact with the host or family according to the definition given by Lynch, McIntosh, and Tucker (2009), which is a broader definition of home stay than that given by Lynch, McIntosh, and Tucker (2009). Due to the fact that this concept encourages interaction between host families and tourists while also serving as a development tool to raise awareness about cultural exchange and respect for the host culture, it stands out as a one-of-a-kind feature (Jamilah and Hamzah, 2007). There has only been a small amount of literature published on the development of home stay models up to this point. However, literature on mountain tourism, the growth of ecotourism in India and abroad, and community-based tourism all come together to provide a foundation for considering home stay as a livelihood strategy in rural and remote economies, particularly in developing countries. Increasingly popular as travel destinations, remote locations are becoming increasingly popular as people around the world seek out unique travel experiences that combine natural beauty with cultural and architectural appreciation. Other negative effects of tourism on society include an increase in crime, an increase in the sex trade among women, an increase in the consumption of alcoholic beverages, negative impacts on local people's lifestyles, exploitation of local resources, and negative impacts on local people's religious and cultural practises. Every one of these factors contributes to a negative attitude toward tourism. It is possible to have a delicate mix of experiences while staying in some simply delightful home stays, lodges, resorts, or

bungalows. Popular home stay destinations in the state of Uttarakhand included the Nanda Devi Valley and the Valley of Flowers, which were both famous for their home stay establishments (Macek, 2012).

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

Present paper purports to examine the scope of home stay tourism in Uttarakhand. Besides, it attempts to examine the emerging potential of tourism development in the state. The paper is based on primary data collected through field survey in Pithoragarh, Nainital, Hardwar and Dehradun in Uttarakhand. The survey included 124 homestays. The survey has been conducted with the help of structured interview schedule.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The home stays make a direct and indirect contribution to the local community, and as a result, they help to increase support for ecotourism. Home stays have the potential to instill a sense of ownership and responsibility in visitors toward the natural environment, as well as to contribute to the preservation of the region's cultural and natural heritage. Besides receiving tangible benefits, the local community is also involved in natural and cultural conservation efforts. The members of the community see themselves as participants in the process and are supportive of the conservation efforts being undertaken. Tourism activities that adhere to the principles of ecotourism can help to empower a community while also preserving its social, cultural, and natural resources, among other benefits. Encouragement of home stays is one strategy for promoting community-based ecotourism development. Home stays distinguish themselves from other forms of development in that they provide the traveller with a one-of-a-kind experience that combines their basic needs (food and shelter) with the culture of the host. Community members who have a vested interest in preserving their surrounding environment are directly empowered and benefit from home stays in the same way. An attempt has been made in this section of the dissertation to examine the home stay operation in selected regions of the state, in addition to evaluating the operation's contribution to sustainable tourism development. Uttarakhand is one of the most popular destinations for home stay tourism because of its rich cultural heritage and geographical structure. The environment and culture are commoditized in home stay tourism; market value is created as a result of the demand generated by visitors. This provides a financial incentive to the local indigenous community in exchange for the preservation of the environment and their culture.

Growth of home stay in Uttarakhand is shown in Table 1. There has been significant growth in home stays in the state during 2017 to 2019 (258.59 per cent). During 2019, there were 1022 home stays in the state and the state policy of home stays has projected the number of home stays of 5000 by the end of year 2020. During 2019, a large number of home stays were reported in Dehradun, Nainital, Pithoragarh and Chamoli. The growth of home stays during last three years was reported high in Nainital, Dehradun, Rudra Prayag, Chamoli, Pithoragarh and Uttar Kashi.

Table1: Growth of Home Stay in Uttarakhand

District	2017	2018	2019
Nainital	40	52	149
Uttar Kashi	19	19	60
Bageshwar	14	14	29
Tehri	65	79	105
Pauri	2	4	21
Dehradun	62	79	211
Haridwar	5	5	13
Rudraprayag	1	1	57
U S Nagar	2	2	2
Almora	65	69	103
Pithoragarh	6	6	141
Chamoli	2	2	126
Champawat	2	3	5
Total	285	335	1022

Source: Department of Tourism, Government of Uttarakhand.

Category-wise home stays in Uttarakhand in 2019 are shown in Table 2. Out of total home stays units during 2019, about 2/5th units were categories as bronze home stays while silver home stays accounted for 37.96 per cent. Thus, gold category of home stays accounted for 20.25 percent against total number of units. The gold units were recorded high in Nainital followed by Dehradun and Tehri Garhwal while numbers of bronze units were recorded high in Pithoragarh and Chamoli. About 2/5th rooms were reported in bronze category of home stays while silver category of home stays accounted for 38.60 per cent rooms. Numbers of beds were also reported high for silver and bronze category of home stays. During 2019, there were 3753 rooms with 7903 beds in 1022 home stays units in the state.

Table 2: Category-wise Home Stays in Uttarakhand in 2019

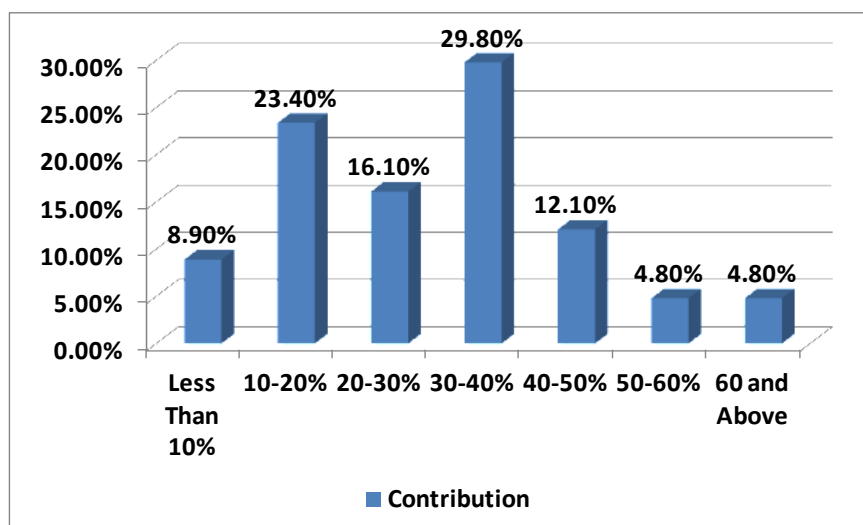
District	Number of Units			Number of Rooms			Number of Beds		
	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Dehradun	48	76	87	237	307	427	511	794	873
Pithoragarh	2	15	124	3	41	327	6	82	685
Nainital	93	47	9	335	147	20	646	282	40
Hardwar	-	8	5	-	36	26	-	72	52
Uttar Kashi	1	23	36	6	100	132	12	200	264
Bagheshwar	-	4	25	-	20	88	-	40	150
Tehri Garhwal	21	83	1	92	373	4	196	867	6

Pauri Garhwal	5	8	8	17	22	30	34	44	60
Rudra Prayag	6	28	23	27	59	72	44	128	142
Udham Singh Nagar	2	-	-	10	-	-	20	-	-
Almora	20	75	8	71	278	17	146	564	34
Chamoli	6	21	99	25	88	302	56	195	630
Champawat	3	0	2	10	0	4	20	0	8
Total	207	388	427	833	1471	1449	1691	3268	2944

Source: Deptt. of Tourism, Government of Uttarakhand

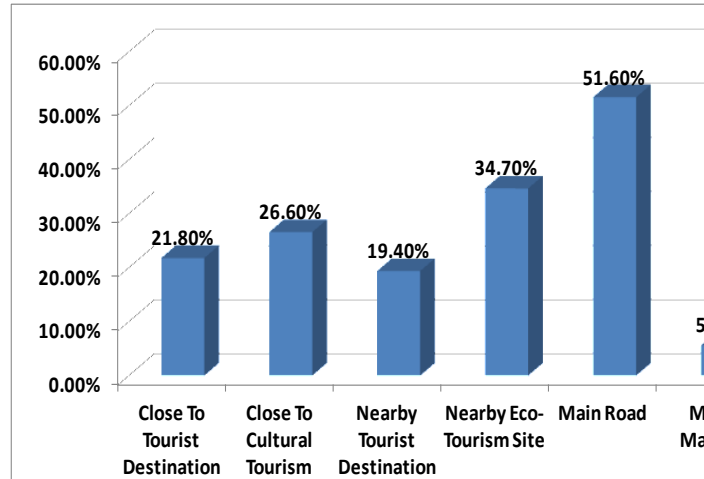
About 1/3rd respondents reported that the contribution of home stay income in total family income is less than 20 per cent. It was found more pronouncing in Pithoragarh (72.8 per cent) followed by Nainital (41.7 per cent). Most of the respondents in Hardwar (92.3 per cent) and Dehradun (71.4 per cent) reported that contribution of home stay income in total family income is in between 20 to 40 per cent. More than 2/5th respondents in Nainital and 28.5 per cent respondents in Dehradun reported that contribution of home stay against total family income is more than 40 per cent (Chart1).

Chart 1: Contribution of Home Stay Income In Total Family Income



Location of home stay is shown in Chart 2. More than 1/3rd respondents reported that home stay is located nearby eco-tourism sites. It was found more pronouncing in Pithoragarh (60.6 per cent) while 83 per cent respondents in Nainital and about 3/4th respondents in Dehradun reported that home stays are situated on main road. A large segment of respondents in Pithoragarh also reported that home stays are located close to tourist destinations, close to cultural tourism attractions and nearby tourist destinations.

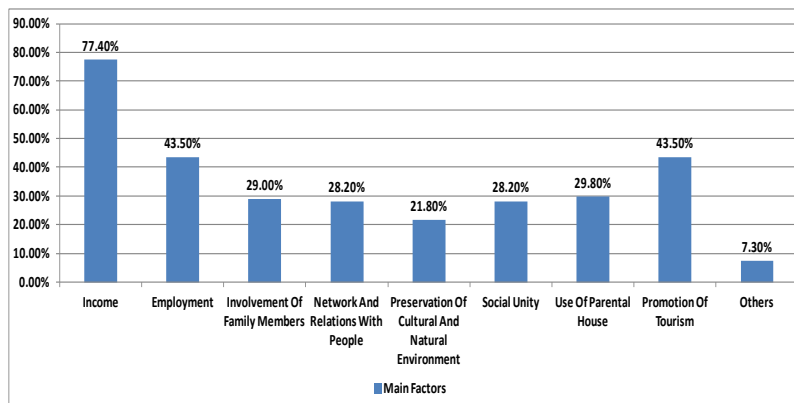
Chart 2: Location of Home Stay



Government of Uttarakhand has categorized home stays into gold, silver and bronze. As per information, there is no gold category of home stay in Pithoragarh and all the home stays are located in rural areas. More than half of respondents reported that their home stays are categorized as silver home stays. It was found more pronounced in Dehradun (88.1 per cent) followed by Hardwar (61.5 per cent). About 88 per cent respondents in Pithoragarh reported that they have bronze category of home stays. The proportion of gold category of home stays was reported high in Hardwar (30.8 per cent) followed by Nainital (25 per cent).

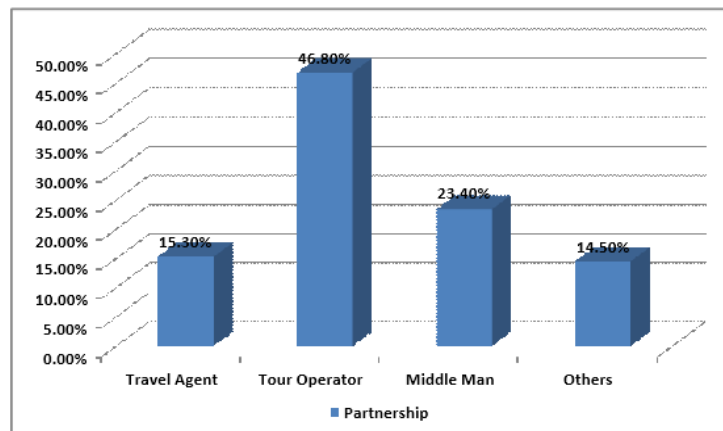
Income, employment, promotion of tourism, involvement of family members, use of parental house, network and relations with people, social unity and preservation of cultural and natural environment were some of the main factors for motivation to start home stay business. However, motivational factors vary across the selected districts (Chart 3).

Chart 3: Main Factors For Motivation To Start Home Stay Business



About 62 per cent respondents reported that they have partnership and networking with tour operators and travel agents for home stay business. It was found more pronouncing in Dehradun (100 per cent) followed by Pithoragarh (57.6 per cent). About 2/5th respondents in Pithoragarh and Nainital revealed that they have networking with middlemen for home stay business.

Chart: 6.7 Whether You Have Partnership/Networking With Other Organizations For Home Stay Business



A large promotion of respondents admitted that they do not have facility of mattress, aqua guard, water heater, internet, invertors /solar power, separate kitchen, fan/ cooler, air conditioner, separate bathrooms, television and geyser. It is to be noted that in the hill regions, modern housing amenities such as air conditioner, fan/ cooler, and internet are not required as climate is quite good. However, separate kitchen, separate bathrooms and television are necessary for the guests. Most of the respondents admitted that they provide services of daily room cleaning and change of bed sheets. However, majority of the respondents in Pithoragarh were against the view point. About half of the respondents further reported that local food and beverages services are available to their guests. However, such service is not provided at Dehradun and for majority of cases in Hardwar. About 1/4th respondents revealed that they also provide facility for cooking food by their guests. It was found more pronouncing in Nainital (66.7 per cent). About 2/3rd respondents reported that they have manuals/ guidelines for welcoming and guest handling while about 60 per cent respondents revealed that they have guidelines for registration, billing and payment. However, majority of home stays do not have manuals/ guidelines for communication skills, marketing and promotion, planning, organizing and handling of activities and hygiene and cleanliness.

Reading, yoga, meditation, site seeing, learning local languages, tracking, working in the field and watching television were some of the major activities being enjoyed by guests while staying at home stay. The respondents were asked that whether they educate their guests to mitigate impact of tourists on sensitive natural and cultural

environment. About 2/5th respondents reported that they regularly educate their guests to mitigate impact of tourists on sensitive natural and cultural environment. About 1/3rd respondents further reported that they sometimes educate their guests to mitigate the adverse impact of tourists on sensitive natural and cultural environment. The respondents were asked that whether they maintain code of conduct for wildlife and give importance of conserving biodiversity. About 30 per cent respondents reported that they regularly maintain code of conduct for wildlife and give importance of conservation of biodiversity. Less than half of the respondents said that sometimes and occasionally they main code of conduct for wildlife and give importance of biodiversity conservation. However, More than 1/3rd respondents in Dehradun and 21 per cent respondents in Pithoragarh revealed that they never maintain code of conduct for wildlife and conservation of biodiversity.

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Most of the respondents were found strongly agreed and agreed that home stay activities have increased income, created employment, improved quality of life, created social bonding and women empowerment and promoted infrastructure development. However, a large proportion of respondents were found against the view point in terms of infrastructure development, promotion of business and public awareness. Majority of the respondents were found strongly agreed and agreed on the view point that home stay activities have contributed in conservation of ecology and environment; preservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage; promotion of local arts, traditions and customs; development of tourism resources and protection and renovation of historical monuments, temples and other sites. However, a large proportion of respondents were against the view point that home stay activities have contributed in promotional of local fairs, haats and festivals, and protection of local heritage monuments.

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CONCLUSION

The concept of sustainable tourism development has emerged as a central concept in the field of tourism development. The newly created state of Uttarakhand is putting forth all of its efforts to promote tourism in order to boost its economy and generate foreign exchange earnings for the country. However, in order to ensure the long-term viability of tourism development in the new states, it is necessary to investigate the negative effects of tourism on the environment and ecology. In India, home stay is a relatively new and developing accommodation option. Houses for rent in the country are typically found in rural areas. In other words, the impact of tourism, which has been limited to commercialized tourist areas until now, will soon spread to rural areas. Home stay tourism, without a doubt, would contribute to economic development and job growth in rural areas by increasing the number of visitors. Due to the fact that it is so closely associated with the local people of the visited destination, the impact on local culture and the environment would be extremely detrimental. This sector is still in its early stages, is smaller in scale, and is disorganised; however, it has the potential to have a greater impact in rural areas if it is given more time to develop. In order to make home stays a sustainable accommodation option in the fragile Himalayan regions, it is necessary to gain an understanding of the phenomenon in order to prevent environmental degradation and non-sustainable practices from taking place, as well as to preserve local cultural heritage.

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