

An investigation of local community's perceptions towards eco-tourism in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, Jharkhand, India

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ABSTRACT

This study explores local residents' perceptions or attitudes towards eco-tourism development in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary. For this survey, researcher itself went to this sanctuary and asked to the local residents about their perceptions regarding eco-tourism development in their area. Total 210 responses were analyzed for this research. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive analysis and factor analysis. From the MANOVA test, researcher finds that respondents with different age and gender having different attitudes towards eco-tourism development in their area. The results indicate that eco-tourism is seen as a development tool during the last few years. Its positive impacts outweigh the negative impacts, mainly because it offers more economical opportunities and has increase the social wellbeing and level of education. Eco-tourism has increased the traffic problems within the sanctuary, this being mentioned by the local respondents as most negative impacts, but regardless, they are proud of the continuous growth of eco-tourism in their area from last few years and they have the positive willingness to support future actions for eco-tourism development. The scope of further studies is discussed.

Key words: Eco-tourism, Eco-tourism impacts, Local community's perception, Factor analysis, Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, Jharkhand.

Introduction

Tourism is a global activity of employment opportunities, for generating revenue generation and general economic growth. In today's scenario this industry is a world's largest smokeless and fastest growing industries compared to any industries in the world. In developed and developing countries both have a great significance of tourism. It has achieved a huge social, cultural and economic significance in modern society. Tourism is now viewed as one of the key sectors of economic growth and

development of the country, both from the point of view of income and employment generation as well as a source of revenue. (Singh and Pathak, 2009). Tourism is an important driver of growth, which raises the national income of many countries. Ecotourism is normally put ahead as a potential way out for local community development and biodiversity preservation in developing countries like India. The Ecotourism development in remote, rural areas in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary has become synonymous with local community's socio-economic development. Ecotourism is defined by di-

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verse groups of citizens in number of ways with different agendas. In general words, eco-tourism can be described as an explanatory tourism, where the environment and cultures going to seek protection, understanding and praise are required. This kind of tourism mainly focusses on the natural and cultural heritage which includes different kind of tourism forms like nature walk tourism, wildlife tourism, low impact tourism and sustainable tourism (Yacob *et al.*, 2011). Understanding the knowledge of the local community about the ecotourism in their locality, its viewpoint, and awareness about its benefits on their wellbeing, helps policy makers develop and implement long-term strategies for sustaining it. Eco Tourism got established for the amalgamation of environmental protection and development. The concept of environmental protection is by recognizing the rights and impact of people in biological areas, paying more attention to human and biological priorities. The vision of development was linked to the environment to generate economic profitability over the period of business and employment opportunities (Yacob *et al.*, 2011). Jharkhand has emerged as a more preferred destination in India for foreign tourist as the state registered over 360% growth in terms of visitors from abroad between 2010 and 2011. Jharkhand is a fascinating state and blessed with luxuriant forest, captivating wildlife, enthralling waterfalls, exquisite handicrafts, immense bio-diversity, moderate climate rich cultural and historical heritage and enchanting classical and folk dances and musics.

This paper aims to examine the local community's perceptions or attitude regarding the eco-tourism development during the last few years in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary. The research was conducted in the context of the rising need of the tourist population for eco-tourism and leisure activities and the recent development of new tourist sites in the sanctuary. This paper consists of six sections. In the first section, the introduction and the, literature review is mention, regarding ecotourism development impacts and local communities' perceptions.

The second section is Material and methods which have sub sections like study area, sampling and secondary data which describes the research area and the methods used for the data analysis. The third section is results of the study which is explain about the profile of the respondent and the residents' attitude towards eco-tourism development in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary. The forth section, dedicated to the discussion and conclusion, limitation and the future research direction of the research paper. The fifth section of this research paper includes acknowledgement. The last sixth section includes the reference part.

Materials and Methods

Study Area and Sampling

The study was conducted in one of the oldest sanctuary of the Jharkhand that is Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary which is situated near the industrial city of Jamshedpur, in order to investigate the local community's perception or attitudes towards eco-tourism development. The selection of this research area based on the continuous growth in tourist inflow and revenue in generation in this respective sanctuary and also the government projects related to eco-tourism took place during the last few years. In the last few years, an increase of eco-tourism activities, tourist inflow, and the revenue generation were notice especially due to the regions' high potential of flora and fauna.

The quantitative survey based on a questionnaire was used in order to examine the locals' attitude and perception about eco-tourism development. The field work was carried out between January-March 2019, based on a non-probability convenience sample of 210 local residents. The survey was conducted in dalma wildlife sanctuary. A pilot study was conducted on a sample of 30 respondents in order to evaluate the feasibility of the research instrument. Based on the result of the pilot study some of the questions were removed (e.g., are you

Year wise statement of Tourist in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary

Year	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18			
Tourist Number	25290	32676	34585	37680			
Year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Total Revenue collected	148193.00	180371.00	199332.00	348727.00	384338.00	414186.00	894676.00

settled here permanently?), while for others the evaluation scale was reduced from 7 points to 5 points that is 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Disagree, and 5= Strongly Disagree. The final questionnaire comprised two main sections and were analyzed and presented in the current paper. In the first section, the socio-demographic profile were collected, in second section 27 variables were used in order to gather responses from local community regarding socio-cultural and economic impacts of eco-tourism development in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary. A descriptive statistical analysis was used to identify the profile of the local residents and to determine the mean and standard deviation of each of the items used to describe the residents' perception towards socio-cultural and economic impact of the eco-tourism development. Exploratory factor analysis was employed to access the factor structure of the variables that describes the residents' perception about eco-tourism development. The 27 variables were factor-analyzed using principal component analysis (PCA) with the Varimax rotation method to established the underlying constructs. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity were examined to determine the fitness of the data. Cronbachs' alpha reliability coefficient was computed for each factor to estimate the internal consistency of each scale.

Secondary Data

The secondary data was collected from different sources like forest office, books, related research paper, journals, newspaper, and governments published report and policies and forest management plan.

Data Analysis

For finding out the dimensionality of the scale of impact, the 27 variables related to the impacts were analyzed by the factor analysis using varimax rotation. The variables which have loading score less than 0.40 were excluded from the analysis part. The acceptable variables correlating with more than one dimension were also deleted from the analysis. As for the alpha reliability coefficients, a factor with the value less than .70 is not considered a valid dimension in explaining the construct of eco-tourism development. A series of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) procedures was performed to test for any significant differences in the underlying di-

mensions among residents with different demographic characteristics. In the MANOVA procedure, three factors emerging from the factor analysis were the dependent variables, and the demographic variables including income level, gender, and age were the independent variables.

Results

The Profile of Respondents

Demographic information about the respondents is provided in Table 1. About more than half of the respondents (57.8%) were males and about 53.4% respondents were married and 32.8% were single. About 47.5% had a monthly house hold income of 6000 to 10000. The majority of the respondents (46.2%) reported that they have studied till secondary. With regard to the age of the respondents,

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 210)

Variable	Percentage
Gender	
Male	57.8
Female	42.2
Marital Status	
Married	53.4
Single	32.8
Widowed	13.8
Occupation	
Agriculture	58.3
Business	10.5
Student	12.5
Homemaker	7.5
Labor	8.7
Unemployed	2.5
Monthly household income	
Rs. 1000 – 5000 /-	27.5
Rs. 6000 – 10000 /-	47.5
Rs. 11000 – 15000 /-	20.2
>Rs.16000 /-	4.8
Education	
Illiterate	15.4
Secondary	46.2
Higher secondary	28.4
Graduate	9.5
Post graduate	0.5
Age	
18 – 30	21.4
31 – 40	25.9
41 – 50	21.9
51 – 60	18.4
>60	12.4

about 25.9% were between 31 to 40, and 30.8% indicated they were older than 50. About 58.3% of respondent having their primary or only occupation was agriculture. For this survey, 12.5% of the total respondents was student, and 7.5% was home-maker.

Residents' Attitude Towards Eco-tourism Development in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary

The means and standard deviation of the 27 variables of attitude scale are presented in Table 2. Respondents were most likely to agree that (a) Employment opportunities have improved after eco-tourism, (b) Eco-tourism development has improved economic stability, (c) Eco-tourism has increased social wellbeing and level of education, (d) Tourist respects the culture, lifestyle of the local communities. Meanwhile, they were inclined to disagree with the following statements:(a) Eco-tourism has increased the number of crime problems, (b)

Growth of eco-tourism interrupting the life of local communities, (c) Local communities' experiences immoral behavior of tourist in the sanctuary. The results imply that local communities were apt to believe that eco-tourism creates benefits for their communities from both economic and socio-cultural perspectives. Moreover, respondents were likely to have endorsing attitudes towards eco-tourism development surrounding their community.

Principal factor analysis (PCA) was conducted to access the dimensionality of the 27 variables used to evaluate the perception of local residents towards eco-tourism development in dalma wildlife sanctuary. A 5 point Likert-type scale was used based on the following scale: 1- strongly disagree; 2- disagree; 3- neutral; 4- agree; 5- strongly agree to evaluate each variables.

To determine the appropriateness of factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measures of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Attitude Attributes (N = 210)

	Mean	SD
Employment opportunities have improved after eco-tourism.	3.7925	.9504
Eco-tourism development has improved economic stability.	3.7801	.8639
Eco-tourism has increased social wellbeing and level of education.	3.6318	.9214
Tourist respects the culture, lifestyle of the local communities.	3.5000	.9291
Eco-tourism has encourage women empowerment.	3.4726	1.0407
Family income has increased through eco-tourism.	3.4542	.9823
Eco-tourism promotes cultural exchange.	3.4143	1.0074
Eco-tourism has raised the popularity and image of Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary.	3.3801	1.1365
Local communities are getting direct economic benefits by providing facilities to the tourist.	3.3726	.9995
Local communities involvement in planning and decision making process.	3.3676	1.0821
Government giving compensation and employment to local community for their assets after acquiring it.	3.2000	.8725
Improvement of infrastructure for the local communities.	3.1967	1.1693
Economic opportunities of ecotourism are being distributed in local community in an equal manner.	2.9676	1.0342
Eco-tourism encourages the varieties of cultural activities.	2.9180	1.1524
Eco-tourism adds greatly to the traffic problems.	2.9094	1.0564
The environmental impacts resulting from ecotourism are pretty minor.	2.8761	1.0230
Ecotourism development has increased the overcrowding of tourists.	2.7854	1.0853
Growth of eco-tourism has resulting in pollution.	2.6333	1.2487
Visitors should be taxed more than the local community for the services they use.	2.6046	.9416
Tourist does not give fair price to the services, communities provides.	2.5482	1.1163
An increase in tourist will lead to friction between local community and the tourist.	2.5242	1.2058
Jobs created by eco-tourism projects are most of them are low paying.	2.5046	1.0763
Local community should take steps to restrict eco-tourism development.	2.4472	1.0345
Tourist should charge more for the services than the local communities' pay.	2.4378	1.1023
Local communities' experiences immoral behavior of tourist in the sanctuary.	2.4156	1.2611
Growth of eco-tourism interrupting the life of local communities.	2.3711	1.1034
Eco-tourism has increased the number of crime problems.	2.2578	1.0342

were performed. The result of the KMO measures of sampling adequacy reveals value of .851, which is sufficient for further analysis such as MANOVA. Bartlett's test of sphericity demonstrates a significant at a level of .001 ($\chi^2 = 2,157$, $df = 210$).

As for the dimensionality of the scale assessing residents' perceptions of eco-tourism development, three factors with 56.48% of the total variance emerged from the analysis. These factors are labeled as Benefits for the local community, Eco-tourism Impacts on Local Community, and the Fairness respectively. In addition, two variables a) Growth of eco-tourism interrupting the life of local community, and b) Tourism adds greatly to the traffic problems, were loaded on more than one factor and eliminated from the analysis. Although a factor con-

taining four variables emerged in the initial factor analysis, the factors were excluded due to a smaller alpha coefficient.

The benefit factor for the local community has the highest eigenvalue (6.402), 30.97% of the total variance and a Cronbach's alpha .87. Eight items explaining the factor are (a) Employment opportunities have improved after eco-tourism. (b) Eco-tourism development has improved economic stability. (c) Eco-tourism has increased social wellbeing and level of education. (d) Tourist respects the culture, lifestyle of the local communities. (e) Eco-tourism has encouraged women empowerment. (f) Family income has increased through eco-tourism. (g) Eco-tourism promotes cultural exchange. (h) Eco-tourism has raised the popularity and image of Dalma

Table 3. Factor Analysis of Local Communities' Attitudes

Factor	Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Reliability Alpha
Benefits for the Local Community		6.402	30.972	.874
Employment opportunities have improved after eco-tourism.	.803			
Eco-tourism development has improved economic stability.	.763			
Eco-tourism has increased social wellbeing and level of education.	.765			
Tourist respects the culture, lifestyle of the local communities.	.755			
Eco-tourism has encouraged women empowerment.	.743			
Family income has increased through eco-tourism.	.702			
Eco-tourism promotes cultural exchange.	.685			
Eco-tourism has raised the popularity and image of Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary.	.603			
Eco-tourism Impacts on Local Community		3.310	16.328	.865
Local communities' experiences immoral behavior of tourist in the sanctuary.	.805			
The environmental impacts resulting from ecotourism are pretty minor.	.745			
Ecotourism development has increased the overcrowding of tourists.	.697			
Growth of eco-tourism has resulting in pollution.	.670			
An increase in tourist will lead to friction between local community and the tourist.	.641			
Growth of eco-tourism interrupting the life of local communities.	.602			
Jobs created by ecotourism projects are most of them are low paying.	.542			
Eco-tourism has increased the number of crime problems.	.531			
Eco-tourism adds greatly to the traffic problems.	.523			
Local community should take steps to restrict eco-tourism development.	.502			
Fairness		1.825	8.181	.837
Visitors should be taxed more than the local community for the services they use.	.852			
Tourist should charge more for the services than the local communities' pay	.841			
Tourist do not give fair price to the services, communities provides.	.721			
Total			56.481	

Note: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measures of sampling adequacy: KMO = .851.

wildlife Sanctuary.

The eco-tourism impact factor on local community shows an eigenvalue of 3.31 explains 16.32% of the total variance and has a cronbach's alpha of .86. These factor is described by ten eco-tourism impacts related variable: (a) Local communities' experiences immoral behavior of tourist in the sanctuary, (b) The environmental impacts resulting from ecotourism are pretty minor, (c) Ecotourism development has increased the overcrowding of tourists, (d) Growth of eco-tourism has resulting in pollution, (e) An increase in tourist will lead to friction between local community and the tourist, (f) Growth of eco-tourism interrupting the life of local communities, (g) Jobs created by eco-tourism projects are most of them are low paying, (h) Eco-tourism has increased the number of crime problems, (i) Eco-tourism adds greatly to the traffic problems, (j) Local community should take steps to restrict eco-tourism development.

The fairness factor reveals an eigenvalue of 1.82, accounts for 8.18% of the total variance and exhibits a cronbach's alpha of .83. These factor is articulated by three items: (a) Visitors should be taxed more than the local community for the services they use, (b) Tourist should charge more for the services than the local communities' pay, (c) Tourist do not give fair price to the services, communities provides.

The results of the MANOVA procedure show that local residents with different age groups had significant differences in their attitudes or perceptions towards eco-tourism development (Table no.4). The post hoc test with Tukey Statistics ($p < .01$)

shows that respondents between 31 and 40 differed significantly in perceived benefits from the between 51 and 60. This implies that older generation was inclined to perceive more benefits of tourism than the younger. Male and females also had different attitudes towards eco-tourism development (Table 5). Females tended to have a stronger view of the negative associated with eco-tourism development.

Discussion

Eco-tourism was perceived as a development opportunity for the local community because of the main benefits (e.g., Employment opportunities have improved after eco-tourism.(b) Eco-tourism development has improved economic stability. (c) Eco-tourism has increased social wellbeing and level of education. (d) Tourist respects the culture, lifestyle of the local communities. (e) Eco-tourism has encouraged women empowerment. (f) Family income has increased through eco-tourism. (g) Eco-tourism promotes cultural exchange. (h) Eco-tourism has raised the popularity and image of Dalma wildlife Sanctuary). (Jafari and Pour, 2014) (A & I, 2017) (G, 2009). These are the important aspects for sustainable eco-tourism development within the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary. The development of eco-tourism in the respective sanctuary generates extra income for the local budget that could be invested for future eco-tourism development plans and conservation of the natural and cultural attraction, ensuring the sustainability of the area. The residents from Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary perceived eco-tourism

Table 4. MANOVA/ANOVA of Age

Variable	Mean					ANOVA	
	18 – 30	31 – 40	41 – 50	51 – 60	>60	F Value	p Value
Benefits	3.5917	3.3540 ^a	3.5758	3.8491 ^a	3.7143	3.179	.014
Impacts	2.8743	2.7200	2.7501	2.8470	2.8015	0.195	.931
Equity	2.6515	2.6500	2.7106	2.0788	2.6049	2.167	.075

Note: For ANOVA, $df = 4$. For MANOVA, Wilk's lambda = .861, F value = 2.193, $p = .007$.

a. Significant difference ($p < .05$) was found in the Tukey test.

Table 5. MANOVA/ANOVA of Gender

Variable	Male	Female	F Value	p Value
Benefits	3.3731	3.3501	3.070	.071
Impacts	2.5743	3.0312	12.974	.000
Equity	2.5136	2.5244	0.005	.946

Note: For ANOVA, $df = 1$. For MANOVA, Wilk's lambda = .833, F value = 4.820, and $p = .002$

development being a key element with positive impact on the social and cultural components. The fact that eco-tourism is perceived as having cultural benefits is a common finding in this geographical area, where host communities are very proud of their cultural heritage, being part of one of the oldest civilizations. Other studies from Iran indicates it's huge important (Mohammadi *et al.*, 2010) (Mohammadi and Kalifah, 2010). There are different findings regarding the attitude and support for tourism development and the age of the respondents. In the current research, oldest residents perceived traffic, jams, pollution more negatively in their attitudes toward eco-tourism development compared with the youngest one, similar with findings of Cavus and Tanrisevdi (Cavus and Trnrisevdi, 2002). They realizes and agrees that eco-tourism development leads to new entertainment options for the local community, with direct impact on the environment. As such, it exhibits the potential to become an important source of sustainable development if tourism suppliers from local areas keep creating their offers based on the above mentioned expectations of the target population. The local residents are aware of the impacts that eco-tourism can have on their community and they highly appreciate the positive ones that is development of the community by increasing the living standard and the quality of life, economical opportunities, basic infrastructures, women empowerment. Results indicate that eco-tourism impacts are perceived positively as employment opportunities and well-being increase. The older residents of the local area are willing to support the development of sustainable eco-tourism because of the positive effects on the community and environment, even if they are more concerned about the negative eco-tourism impacts like crime, pollution, traffic jams, etc. It is needed to highlight that this research reveals the fact that even if eco-tourism is considered to be an alternative occupation for women in the rural area, the women are less attracted to start-up a business, compared with the men. The development of eco-tourism in the rural areas of the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary implies strategies plans that take into consideration the natural and cultural heritage, and competitive advantages of the area in order for it to be sustainable and attract both national and foreign visitors. Tourist facilities (lodging, restaurants, and entertainment) should be adapted to visitor's need in order to gain competitive advantages. In the

same time, special training programs should be developed to quality the working force in tourism services and assure high standard quality services, which could improve the perception about the quality of the eco-tourism services. The research underline important aspects related to the perception of the residents through eco-tourism development in the area. The sustainable eco-tourism development in a destination is highly influence by the interaction between tourist and local community. The quality of interaction between local community and tourist influence resident's perceptions regarding eco-tourism development and acceptance and tolerance for tourists by residents. (Armenski *et al.*, 2011). Eco-tourism is perceived as being an important development tool or opportunity for the local community of the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary and its uses different tools to promote it worldwide, mostly by the forest department of the Jharkhand. This research examined the variables and factors that explained the local community's attitudes and perceptions towards eco-tourism in the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary. The results of the research provide helpful and important information about their support for eco-tourism development and their future intention to get into the tourism business. This information can be used by policy-makers and tourism strategies to formulate and develop plans for sustainable eco-tourism development. Future research should be extended to either rural areas of the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary in order to determine the support and attitude of the local community towards eco-tourism development, on the one hand, and to identify the satisfaction level of the tourist, on the other hand. In order to develop proper and sustainable strategies, it is important to analyze the demand for eco-tourism, as well. This can provide vital information about the socio-demographic characteristics of the tourists, their preference, and the trip budget, which can be later used to develop proper tourism services and products.

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