



Tourism without Limits Leads to a World without Nature

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ABSTRACT: The paper deals with excessive tourism. It's important to note that while tourism can bring economic benefits to an area, it can also have negative impacts on the local environment and communities. The increase in tourism can lead to overcrowding, environmental degradation, and damage to cultural heritage sites. It's crucial to strike a balance between promoting tourism and protecting the environment and local communities.

Sustainable tourism practices can help mitigate the negative impacts of tourism and ensure the long-term viability of the industry. This includes promoting responsible tourism behaviours, such as reducing waste and energy consumption, supporting local businesses and communities, and respecting cultural heritage sites. By implementing sustainable tourism practices, we can ensure that future generations can enjoy the benefits of tourism while preserving the natural and cultural resources of the areas we visit.

KEYWORDS: Tourism, excessive tourism, sustainable tourism

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism, a rapidly growing industry, is estimated to employ over 200 million people worldwide and contribute to about 20% of the world's total employment. With an investment of over 5 trillion US dollars and an annual turnover of over 16 million US dollars, its impact on the overall environment of the tourist area cannot be overlooked.

The positive impact of tourism is primarily seen on the area's economic development, creating job opportunities, stimulating capital investment, and promoting small businesses. Furthermore, tourism has the potential to act as a tool for preserving the local culture and heritage. Tourists' spending can provide financial assistance for the conservation and protection of traditions and arts of the area, leading to cross-cultural exchange and increased understanding and acceptance between diverse cultures.

However, the increase in tourist movement is bound to have negative impacts on the ecosystem and eco-balance of the tourist areas, creating environmental thresholds and disturbing fragile ecosystems. Excessive tourism or Overtourism, defined by UNWTO as negative impacts on a destination or a part thereof that excessively influences the perceived quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitor experience, is a growing concern.

Tourism activities are typically suitable for different destination points, depending on the area's natural attraction, historical significance, or local culture. The environment of the area, including natural, cultural, historical, or socio-economic attractions, provides the raw material for tourism development, with local attractions as the initial triggers.

II. POTENTIAL RISK TO LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS

Tourism is an activity that requires certain basic changes to be made to an area to cater to the needs of incoming visitors. This development requires the construction of certain basic amenities such as roads, airports, sewage, clean water, electricity, and accommodation. The construction of transport routes and development of resorts, hotels, and accommodation facilities often leads to the clearing and removal of forests. Forests are natural bioreserves of an area and are formed by a natural vegetation community of trees, plants, shrubs, climbers, and ground cover. Each forest type forms a habitat for a specific community of macro and micro-organisms that are adapted to live in it. The varied flora and fauna form a major tourist attraction as well. Unfortunately, these developments often involve the cutting and clearing of forests.

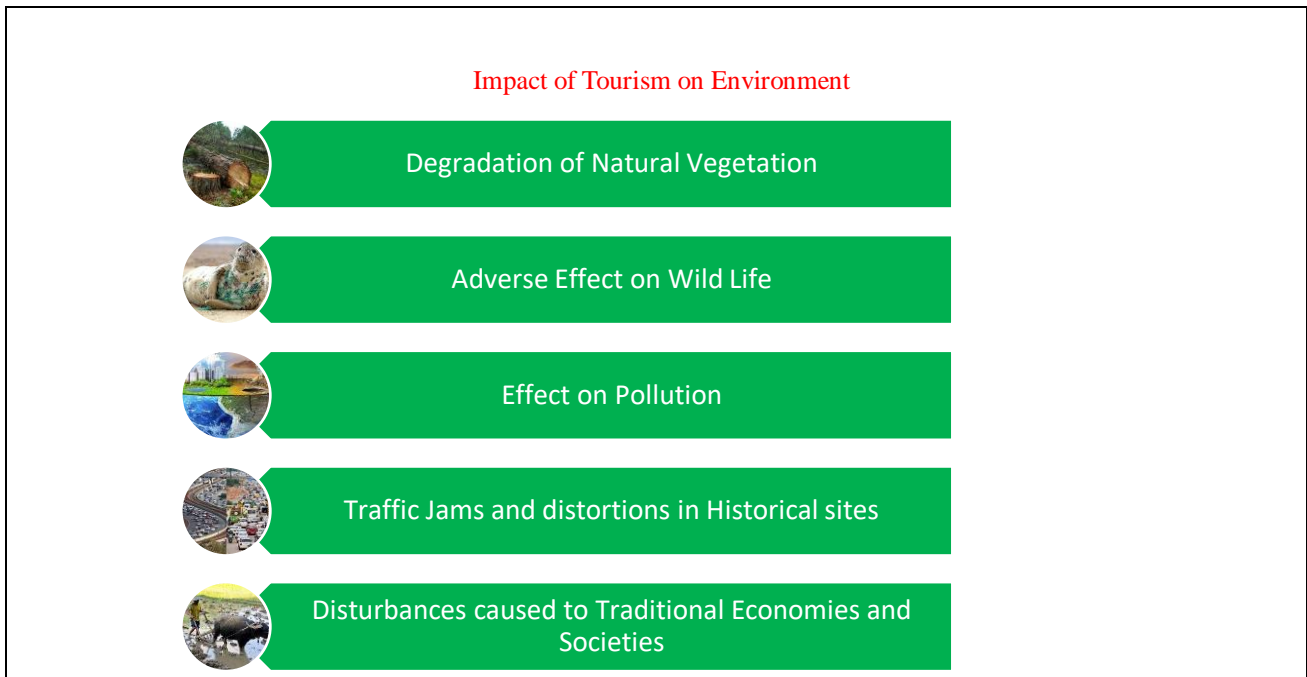


Figure1: Impact of Tourism

Forests are natural bioreserves that contain a variety of plant and animal life adapted to the specific conditions of that habitat. The diverse flora and fauna of a forest can also be a major tourist attraction. However, the clearing and removal of forests has led to widespread deforestation and the exploitation and destruction of many species of plants and animals. Many species have become endangered or extinct as a result.

Forests also play a critical role in maintaining ecological balance in an area. They protect water resources, safeguard watersheds, and help control flooding. They also maintain humidity, precipitation, and temperature in an area and act as carbon sinks, absorbing harmful pollutants from the atmosphere. Removing forests can therefore have a significant impact on the local environment and lead to changes in the climate and other physical factors.

The wildlife of an area is another major attraction for tourists, but increased tourist activity can have a negative impact on local plants and animals. The movement of animals may be disrupted, their habitats may be damaged, and their behavioural patterns may be disturbed. The excessive collection of local species for sale as souvenirs can also lead to the depletion of those species. Hunting and the development of adventure sports can further exacerbate wildlife destruction.

The construction of basic amenities and the removal of forests also changes the landscape of the area, leading to changes in energy flow patterns and physical factors such as temperature, humidity, and rainfall. As a result, a semi-urban landscape may emerge, with accommodation and transport routes, and tourist attractions such as trekking, nature rides, boating, and ropeways. Increased tourist activity leads to changes in consumption patterns and utilization habits of both local and visiting populations, which can put additional pressure on natural resources such as air and water.

Air pollution is a major problem in tourist areas, especially those that are only accessible by road. Trekking paths and adventure trails generate dust and dirt, and construction activities can also be a significant source of pollution. Water scarcity is another issue that often arises in tourist destinations due to increased demand, changing consumption habits, and reduced water reserves. Destruction of forests, urbanization, and commercialization can also lead to changes in the quality of available water. Garbage and waste are often dumped into local water bodies, increasing the biological oxygen demand, and further reducing water quality.

Improper management of waste and garbage also leads to deterioration and destruction of the landscape. Increased vehicle traffic and tourist activity can increase noise pollution and the local levels of toxic gases, which can change the local atmospheric gas balance. Increased noise can disturb the local plant and animal life, leading to changes in their behaviour and life patterns.



In addition to the points mentioned earlier, there are some other negative impacts of excessive tourism that can have severe consequences. One of the major impacts is the degradation of cultural heritage sites. Cultural heritage sites can be destroyed due to overcrowding, improper maintenance, and excessive tourism activities. Tourists often disregard the cultural significance of these sites and do not follow the rules and regulations set in place for their preservation. This can result in irreversible damage to these sites and their cultural value.

Another issue associated with excessive tourism is the displacement of local communities. In some cases, large tourism projects can cause the forced displacement of local communities. This can have a severe impact on the social and economic well-being of the communities affected. Tourism can also lead to the loss of traditional livelihoods and cultural practices, as local people are forced to adapt to the changing economic landscape.

Furthermore, excessive tourism can also lead to the overconsumption of resources and pollution. Large numbers of tourists can put a strain on local resources such as water, food, and energy. Tourism activities can also generate waste and pollution, which can harm the natural environment and local communities. To address these issues, it is essential to develop sustainable tourism practices that focus on environmental, social, and economic sustainability. This can involve measures such as promoting responsible tourism practices, improving local infrastructure, developing alternative tourism activities, and supporting the preservation of cultural heritage sites. By taking a comprehensive approach to sustainable tourism, we can ensure that tourism can be a positive force for the economy, the environment, and local communities.

Even historical sites are not immune to the negative impact of excessive tourism. Indifferent visitor behaviour, such as scribbling on monument walls or taking pieces of stone or marble as souvenirs, can leave behind scars that mar the grandeur of the historical monument. Excessive tourism also has a significant impact on the socio-economic environment of the local community. Tourism can lead to profound changes in the society of the host community, with tourists often serving as a model for local behaviour. This can lead to dissatisfaction with one's own living standards and a desire to imitate tourists. Tourism is also closely linked to the sale of prostitution, various forms of crime, and organized gambling. It can even spread dangerous diseases like AIDS. Tourism can distort local customs, traditions, and norms, resulting in disruption of family and social life, and corruption.

III. POSITIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Environmental degradation is caused by many factors, including those related to tourist development. Over time, the cumulative impact of these factors can cause irreversible damage to the natural environment, even if the damage caused by each individual factor cannot be measured. In fact, humans may already be exceeding the carrying capacity of the planet, meaning that we are using up resources faster than they can be replenished. To prevent further environmental damage and ensure responsible growth of tourism, it is critical to raise public awareness and garner broad support for corrective actions to expand carrying capacity.

To achieve responsible growth of tourism without harming the environment, the following actions should be taken:

1. Tourism should be promoted based on careful assessment of the carrying capacity and support facilities like transport, fuel, water, and sanitation.
2. Tourism development should consider environmental conditions and avoid affecting the lifestyle of local people.
3. Indiscriminate growth of tourism should be restricted, and tourist activities in sensitive areas like hill slopes, islands, coastal stretches, national parks, and sanctuaries should be strictly regulated.
4. Tourists should be targeted as a group that can influence change, through efforts to increase awareness, enlist support for environmental measures, alter personal behaviours, and advocate for responsible development.
5. Public awareness campaigns should be implemented, and public policy should be reformed.
6. Behavioural change is necessary among both hosts and guests. Awareness campaigns, environmental education, hospitality training, and vocational education can help develop more responsible tourists, workers, and developers at all levels of the tourism industry and more responsible inhabitants in the host communities.



7. Both host populations and tourists should be involved in conservation efforts at the destination.
8. The mass media, from local folklores to electronic media, should play a vital role in raising public awareness and involvement in environmental activities.
9. Development of environmental education resource material and use of traditional and modern media of communication should be strengthened and enlarged, including development of orientation centres and provision of education material for visitors.

By taking these actions, we can ensure that tourism can continue to bring economic benefits to local communities without causing irreversible harm to the environment.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Governments encourage tourism development to reap financial rewards that will boost the tourism sector. This rise in tourist numbers and activity frequently puts environmental characteristics at danger. As a result, there is a relationship between the environment and tourism that influences certain aspects of each. However, if grown in an unplanned and unregulated manner, tourism can have major negative effects on the environment, which cannot be denied. It is necessary to strike a balance between the amount and nature of tourist activity and the vulnerability and carrying capacity of the resources being exploited. A growing number of people, groups, and countries are becoming committed to the conservation of natural resources and the preservation of cultural and heritage resources. In conclusion, tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on the environment and local communities. It is crucial to ensure responsible growth of tourism without causing irreversible damage to the natural environment. This can be achieved through careful assessment of the carrying capacity and support facilities, development of tourism in harmony with the environmental conditions, and restrictions on indiscriminate growth of tourism. In addition, change of behaviour among both hosts and guests must occur through awareness campaigns, environmental education, and hospitality training.

Tourists play a crucial role in sustainable tourism development as they can help to increase awareness, enlist support for environmental measures, alter personal behaviours, and advocate for responsible development. It is also important to involve both the host population and the tourists in the conservation efforts at the destination. This can be achieved through the development of orientation centres and provision of education materials for the visitors. Furthermore, public awareness must be generated, and public policy must be reformulated to promote sustainable tourism practices. The mass media, ranging from local folklores to electronic media, should serve a vital role in raising public awareness and involvement in environmental activities. Development of environmental education resource material and use of traditional and modern media of communication need to be strengthened and enlarged.

In conclusion, the development of sustainable tourism is essential to preserve the environment and local cultures. It is crucial to ensure that tourism is developed in harmony with the environment and the local communities to maintain a balance between economic development and conservation of natural resources. Therefore, all stakeholders, including tourists, host communities, government agencies, and the tourism industry, must work together to promote sustainable tourism practices.

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