



Challenges and Opportunities of Environmental Impact of Tourism: A Case Study of Bishnupur in Bankura District (West Bengal)

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Abstract:

Tourism is an important sector to any country for the development of the economy. But tourism industry is directly related to the environment. Bishnupur has internationally recognized as one of the environmental "micro hot spot" due to the biological diversity and distribution of the eastern ghat. Unique culture heritage of the area has made ideally suits for tourism and a most attractive recreational spot in the country. The quality of the environment, both natural and man-made, is essential to tourism. However, the relationship of tourism with the environment is complex. It involves many activities that can have adverse environmental effects. Many of these impacts are linked with the construction of general infrastructure such as roads and railways, and of tourism facilities, including resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, etc. In this paper it is trying to focus upon negative role of tourism in Bishnupur town on its socio-cultural environment. Bishnupur in Bankura district has internationally recognized as one of the cultural heritages. Its renowned terracotta made temple, expressing the exotic sculptural beauty and architect. On the other hand, tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment by contributing to environmental protection and conservation. It is a way to raise awareness of environmental values and it can serve as a tool to finance protection of natural areas and increase their economic importance. An environmental impact assessment survey was conducted through sample survey method at major tourist spot in this town to analyze the tourism impact on the livelihood and socio-economic conditions of the local inhabitants. We describe that the effects of tourism on natural resources, environmental pollution, physical environment and tourist activities. This study shows tourism has sequential influences on local communities by various untreated sewage and wastes, and pollution, road congestions etc. we explain environmental impacts of tourism on global scale, positive impacts of tourism and, finally, how tourism can contribute to environmental conservation.

Keywords: *Bio-Diversity, Environment, Hot Spot, Livelihood, Inhabitants, Tourism.*

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the biggest and fastest growing sectors in the global economy and has significant impact of environment, culture, society and also on economy both positively and negatively. The unfavorable impact that tourism can have on the environment both undermines the basic resources for tourism can have in

coastal areas and heavily affects other non-tourist economic activities. There is a need to minimize the various impact which badly affects, tourism sectors by proper tourism planning, managing and undertaking in a way that is environmentally sustainable, socially beneficial and economically feasible. West Bengal is considered as the core of various tourist destinations and provides a lot of historical places that are eye catching to the tourists. Bishnupur is one of the tourist spots located in the Bankura district of West Bengal and it has its own identity on the Indian tourist map. According to Dafta (2018), the specialty of Bishnupur is the presence of old and historical beautiful temples such as terracotta temples built by Mala rulers and Radha Krishna temples built during 1600 to 1800 CE and many more. This place is known for its terracotta pottery, traditional handloom, jewelry, and artifacts. As a tourist spot, Bishnupur has the full potential to attract tourists therefore the Government has started various initiatives such as the renovation of the temple structure of Bishnupur, Bishnupur mela to attract tourists by facilitating the place. There are a lot of things that should be done by the government to bring up Bishnupur as the tourist center of West Bengal.

2. Significance/Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to understand the challenges and opportunities of the Bishnupur tourist spot. The economic impact on tourists has provided a lot of attention to tourism in Bishnupur in the last few years. A large number of business enterprises are generated by the Bishnupur that helps in the economic development of the place. Various new job opportunities such as tourist guide, hotel and lodges, small car divers and handloom business generated in the tourist place (Ghosh and Das 2017). The challenge faced by Bishnupur tourism is that it depends on the season. Most tourists face challenges related to infrastructures such as bad quality of transportation and lack of authentic souvenirs. The relationship of tourism with the environment is complex. It involves many activities that can have unpleasant environmental effects. The main purpose paper is to review various environmental impacts of tourism and the effects of tourism on various national resources, environmental pollution and on physical environment. This study is important to find the way through which the challenges can be addressed and find opportunities for Bishnupur. The tourists who visit Bishnupur often face the challenge in their journey due to narrow and congested roads.

3. Objective of the Study

- To identify the challenges in rural heritage tourism in Bishnupur.
- To study the opportunities for the Bishnupur tourist spot.
- To understand the contribution of Bishnupur tourism in the economic development of the state.
- Tourism impact of positively and negatively on the environment and to find out the direct impact of tourist activities.
- To determine the various factors that affect the tourism potential of Bishnupur.
- To study the environmental impact of tourism in Bishnupur.
- Tourism has the potential to create beneficially effects on the environment.

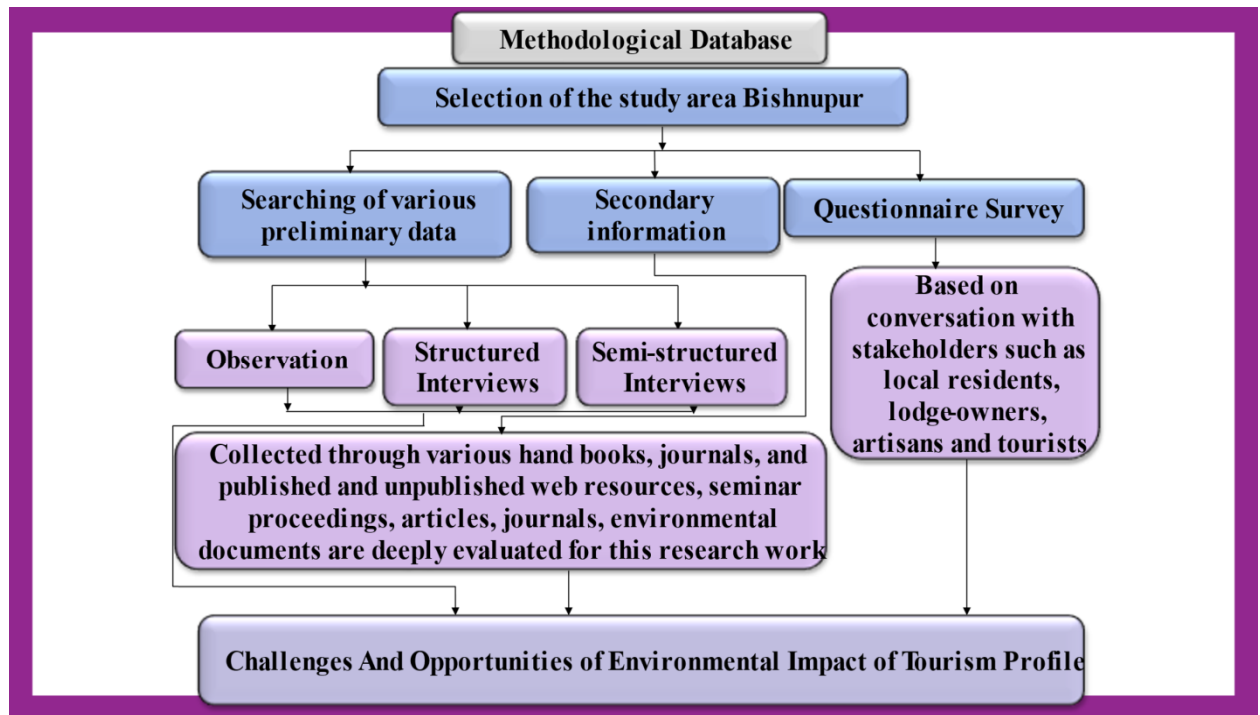
4. Hypothesis of the Study

H0: West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation (WBTD) should invest more in promoting the rural heritage of Bishnupur.

H1: West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation (WBTD) should not invest in promoting the rural heritage of Bishnupur.

5. Methodology

As per Walsh et al. (2021), the population is considered as the individuals present in the study area whereas the sample is considered as the people chosen from the population to complete the study. The population is considered as the group of people possessing the same feature whereas samples are extracted from a population that helps in completing the study. Tourism impacts study was carried out by a field service method using a specially designed questionnaire from October -2021 to 15th November 2021. Information relating to the impacts on the environment in Bishnupur town was collected by local peoples and other native communities and the tourist spot.



6. Sampling Design

Various types of sampling method techniques are used to select samples from the population including probability and non-probability sampling methods (Sharma 2017). In this study, a simple random non-probability sampling method has been used to select samples from the targeted population. The sample size in this study is considered as 50 which means 50 people from the population have participated in the study.

7. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques help to collect the relevant data that helps in the completion of the study. According to Sadan (2017), primary and secondary are the two types of data collection techniques that are used in the study. The primary source of data collection method involves surveys, interviews as well as questionnaires. A secondary source of data collection method involves journals, pdfs, and articles. In this study primary source of data collection method has been used (Trinh 2018). Questionnaires have been formed to know the opinion of the respondents.

8. Results of the data tables

1. Do you agree that tourists face infrastructure-related challenges while visiting Bishnupur?

Table 1: Respondent's opinion regarding Infrastructure related challenge faced while visiting Bishnupur

Respondent's opinion	Number of Respondents
Strongly Agree	20
Agree	15
Neutral	2
Disagree	8
Strongly Disagree	5

(Source; created by author)

2. Do you think that the government should provide proper funds for the renovation of temples present at Bishnupur?

Table 2: Respondent's opinion regarding support of the government in the renovation of temples present at Bishnupur

Respondent's opinion	Number of Respondents
Strongly Agree	17
Agree	13
Neutral	3
Disagree	7
Strongly Disagree	10

(Source: created by author)

3. Do you agree that employment generation in Bishnupur tourism depends on the season?

Table 3: Respondent's opinion regarding the dependency of employment generation on season

Respondent's opinion	Number of Respondents
Strongly Agree	30
Agree	15
Neutral	1
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	3

(Source; created by author)

4. Do you think that infrastructure improvement will help generate a large number of business enterprises?

Table 4: Respondent’s opinion regarding the impact of improved infrastructure on the generation of a large number of business enterprises

Respondent’s opinion	Number of Respondents
Strongly Agree	19
Agree	11
Neutral	5
Disagree	8
Strongly Disagree	7

(Source; created by author)

9. Graphical Representation

1. Do you agree that tourists face infrastructure-related challenges while visiting Bishnupur?

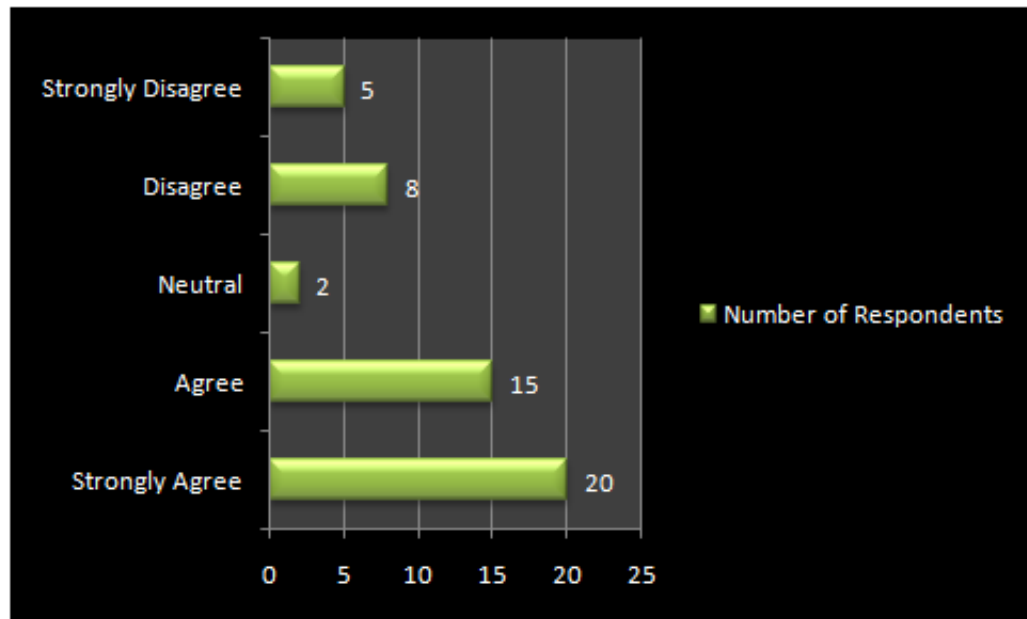


Figure 1: Respondent’s opinion regarding Infrastructure related challenge faced while visiting Bishnupur

(Source; created by author)

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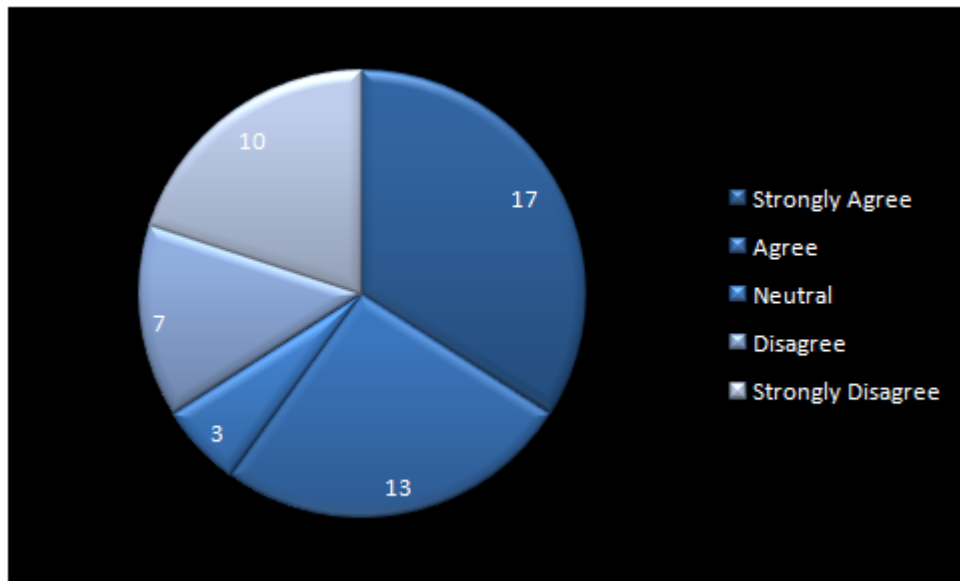


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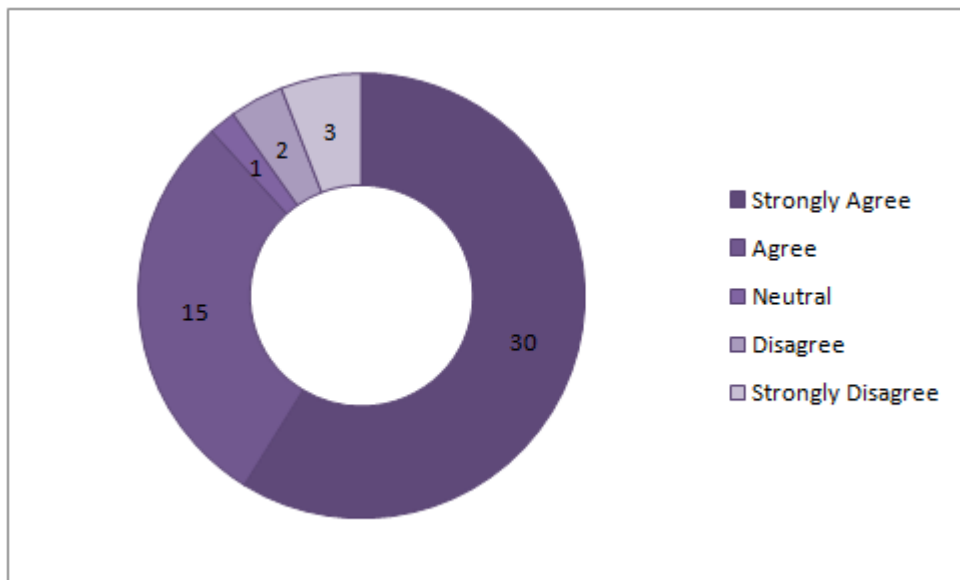


Figure 3: Respondent's opinion regarding the dependency of employment generation on season

(Source; created by author)

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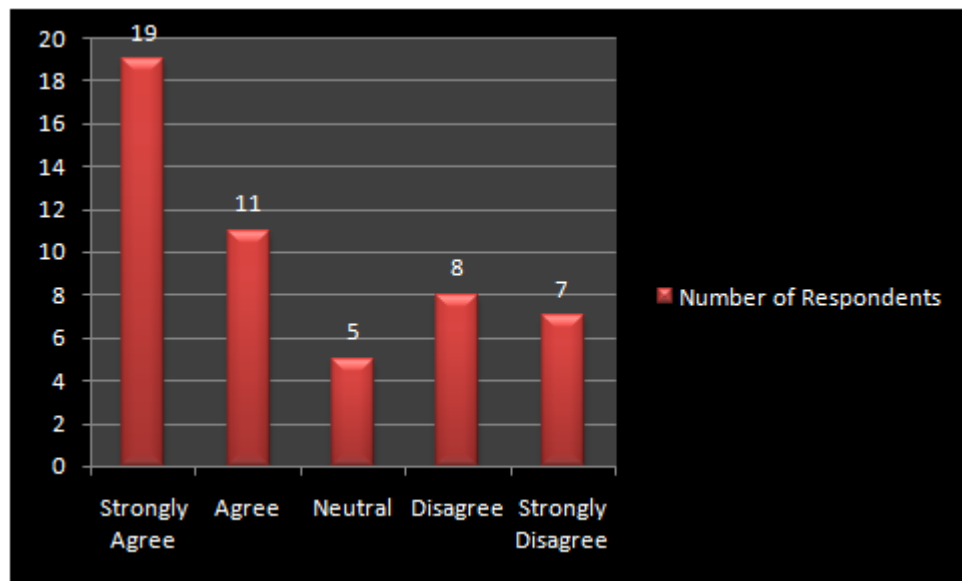


Figure 4: Respondent’s opinion regarding the impact of improved infrastructure on the generation of a large number of business enterprises

(Source; created by author)

10. Analysis of the Data

From table 1, it has been cleared that out of 50 respondents, 20 are strongly agreed that Bishnupur tourism faces challenges related to the infrastructure whereas 15 respondents supported the opinion of strongly agreed respondents. 2 respondents provided neutral opinions whereas 8 responded disagreed with the challenge of infrastructure at Bishnupur tourism spot. 5 respondents strongly disagreed with the opinion of strongly agreed and agreed on respondents and supported the opinion of disagreed respondents (Saha and Paul 2021).

Table 2 reveals, 17 respondents were provided with a strongly agreed opinion regarding the needs of funds for the renovation of temples present at Bishnupur. 13 respondents out of 50 respondents were agreed with the opinion of strongly agreed on respondents. According to Basu (2020), 3 respondents provided neutral opinions regarding the need for funds for the renovation of temples present at Bishnupur. 8 respondents disagreed with the opinion of strongly agreed and agreed respondents whereas 10 respondents supported the opinion of disagreed respondents.

From table 3, it can be found that the majority of the respondents agreed that the employment generation of Bishnupur tourism depends on season. 15 respondents supported the opinion of strongly agreed respondents whereas 1 respondent provided a neutral opinion. 2 respondents disagreed with the opinion of strongly agreed and agreed on respondents and didn’t find employment generation dependency on the season. 3 respondents strongly supported the opinion of disagreed respondents and denied the opinion of strongly agreed and agreed respondents (Rani and Sofique 2019).

From table 4, it can be seen that out of 50 respondents, 19 respondents strongly agreed that infrastructure improvement will help generate business enterprises in Bishnupur. 11 respondents agreed with the opinion of strongly agreed respondents. 5 respondents provided neutral opinions whereas 8 respondents disagreed with

the opinion of agreed and strongly agreed on respondents. 7 respondents strongly disagreed with the opinion of strongly agreed and agreed on respondents and supported the opinion of disagreed respondents.

11. Findings of the study and Results

Banerjee (2018) stated that, Bishnupur tourist spot has its importance in the Indian tourist map and has beautiful temples that attract a lot of tourists every year. It has been clear from the data analysis; the journey of the tourist becomes difficult due to narrow and congested roads. Tourists have to travel a long way that makes their journey uncomfortable. Various infrastructure challenges include unavailability of transport and non-availability of proper drinking water make the journey difficult for the tourist. Despite having beautiful temples, the journey of tourists becomes uncomfortable.

According to Karim and Ahmed (2019), the government provides very low funding for the renovation of temples present in Bishnupur that is considered a major challenge. Bishnupur has ancient temples that need to be renovated; however, due to lack of social and human capital engagement, no good facilities are present at the temples. Bishnupur tourism is considered seasonal tourism as tourists don't visit the place from November to March, which affects the employment generation in Bishnupur. Most of the business in Bishnupur depends on the arrival of tourists such as hotels, lodges, and tourist guides. The negative impacts of tourism development can gradually destroy environmental resources on which it depends. On the other hand, tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment by contributing to environmental protection and conservation. It is a way to raise awareness of environmental values and it can serve as a tool to finance protection of natural areas and increase their economic importance. These jobs are affected due to the seasonal visit of the tourists. According to the author (2021), Bishnupur has various positive sides that can attract tourists. Getting support from the government can improve the condition of Bishnupur that will improve the generation of business enterprises in Bishnupur.

12. Discussion:

Tourism is considered one of the important sources of income in India. A lot of revenue is generated from tourism and it generates a lot of employment that helps in the development of the country. In the field of rural and heritage tourism, Bishnupur has captured a good position as it has many things that can capture the attention of tourists. Focus should be given more on eco-tourism and proper planning on balanced use of resources. The negative impact of tourism development can gradually destroy environmental resources on which it depends. The objective is to see the impact of tourism both positively on the environment and to find out the direct impact of tourist activities in the respective tourism area. Tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment by casAs per Sinha et al. (2019), the government has started the Bishnupur Mela to attract people to visit Bishnupur. However, Bishnupur faces a lot of infrastructural challenges that make the visit uncomfortable. The study potentially bears an interesting ramification on unpleasant tourism activities at important tourist place and its impact on the environment.

13. Conclusion:

The present study revealed that tremendous damage to the environmental wealth such as pollution, loss of bio-diversity, deforestation, over consumption of resources, wildlife threatens and solid waste disposal by tourism in Bishnupur. Bishnupur is considered one of the famous tourist spots of West Bengal and has major scope for development. West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation (WBTDC) must invest in improving the infrastructure of Bishnupur to provide satisfactory visits to the tourists. Government should implement a proper marketing strategy to promote the heritage of Bishnupur. A lot of eye-catching things are present in Bishnupur that can draw the attention of the tourists therefore it is important for the government to solve the economic issues faced by the community. We describe that the effects of tourism on natural

resources, environmental pollution, physical environment and tourist activities. In addition, we explain environmental impacts of tourism on global scale, positive impacts of tourism and finally how tourism can contribute to environmental conservation.

14. Recommendations/ Suggestions:

- Government should renovate the temples present at Bishnupur to increase the number of tourists that will help in the development of the state.
- Government should focus on the infrastructural issues to provide a comfortable journey for the visitors. They should construct broad and smooth roads and offer a lot of transportation facilities to provide a satisfactory journey to the tourists.
- It is recommended to resolve the conflict arising within and between communities to use the funds provided by the government.
- Proper marketing strategies should be implemented to promote local artisan that helps in promoting the significance of Bishnupur.
- Government should warn the tourists not to leave garbage everywhere.
- The main review various environmental impacts of tourism and the effects of tourism on various natural resources, environmental pollution and on physical environment.
- Undertaking in a environmentally sustainable, socially beneficial and economically feasible.

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