

Investigating the spread of rural tourism with the help of homestays in Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract: The development of tourism in peripheries of an established tourist destination has always remained a challenging topic. The development of tourism in rural regions has either been achieved through developing a parallel destination in the remote or peripheral rural areas or through diversification of tourist traffic to peripheral areas from the destination itself. Himachal Pradesh is an Indian Himalayan state located in the north. Tourism activities were highly concentrated in and around the major tourist destinations of Shimla, Manali, Dharamshala and Dalhousie in Himachal Pradesh. This study intended to investigate the geographical spread of homestays around tourist destinations, thus analyzing the spread of rural tourism around a destination. This study was conducted by analyzing the spatial proximity of homestays to a tourist destination. The results show that there is a huge concentration of homestays in the periphery of a destination. There seems negligible development of tourism in rural remote regions of the state. Further studies might be conducted to investigate whether the tourism is truly expanding in rural peripheries or tourists were only choosing these accommodation units in peripheral areas to have a comparatively cheaper accommodation in comparison to the accommodation facilities at the destination?

Keywords: rural tourism; homestays; periphery tourism; rural accommodation; spread of tourism

1. Introduction

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh had grown consistently during the last decade. This growth is not limited to a few of the destinations. Homestays acted as a tool to catalyze rural tourism growth providing economic opportunity for the local population and expansion of tourism beyond the myth of an established destination. On the one side where homestays provide benefits for the host, there on the other homestays provide tourists with the opportunity to witness local culture and provide an opportunity for a host-guest interaction. This research focuses on the development of homestays in Himachal Pradesh and investigates the spread of homestays in rural areas of the state. By investigating the spread, this was analyzed whether tourism development was limited to peripheries or it has penetrated the remote regions?

Tourism development in the peripheries of a destination had always remained challenging. In the peripheries, either tourism grows with an emergence of a new destination based upon the available resources or tourism starts expanding towards peripheries from a destination. For the development of peripheral areas, a transition strategy was advised. It was suggested that planning must include inputs from the local population and use locally available resources (Salvatore, Chiodo, & Fantini, 2018). In the rural areas, national organizations must not hesitate to invest or the development of rural capital must not be considered secondary. The investment in rural capital must be preferred to have sustainable rural tourism (Garrod, Wornell, & Youell, 2006).

2. Literature review

Tourism was used as a tool for decreasing the gap between urban and rural populations (Liu, Nijkamp, & Lin, 2017). For a long time in the past, tourism was considered to be an urban activity. The concentration of tourism in urban destinations resulted in mass tourism, which ended the democratization of travel (Urry, 1990). An anti-thesis to mass tourism was in the form of special interest tourism or niche tourism. This offers some alternative forms or more valuable forms to tourists. Tourists were segmented based on their interests in different activities. In the need for an alternative form of tourism rural tourism also emerged as a niche. Rural tourism is not confined to a single concept. It did have multiple sub-segments like farm tourism, wine and gastronomy tourism, camping, sports tourism, festivals and events and arts and crafts (Nivolli, 2005, pp. 1-14).

Rural areas were considered a means of cultural tourism to urban populations. The positioning of tourism products in rural areas in past was effectively done by the government organizations (Li, Zhang, Zhang, & Abrahams, 2019). There were developing countries like China that used rural tourism as a poverty eradication tool and used tourism as a tool for economic means. Its contribution beyond economics included social strengthening and a just society (Gao, Huang, & Huang, 2009). For this study, the definition of

rural areas was used as per DoT&CA (2008), which defines rural areas as “*area outside the jurisdiction of a duly constituted urban local body i.e. municipal corporation, Nagar Parishad and Nagar panchayat.*”

Homestays

Definition of homestay as provided by DoT&CA (2008) is “*any private house located in rural areas of the state in good condition and easily accessible in the countryside.*” Homestays had emerged as a segment in tourism accommodation. As it provides various benefits to hosts as well as tourists. Tourists residing in a homestay feel differently and experience differently when compared to a hotel or staying at someone’s home. The experience and feel of the confluence of this domestic and commercial enterprise were felt in a homestay. This dimension of the outcome product is completely an intangible one. The product that emerges in homestay units is a mix of materials at home, ideological narratives at the place and professional management of space (Lynch, 2005a). There emerges a value in the interaction of tourists and hosts, whose nature was mostly intangible. If the value would be delivered to tourists, then it also helps to develop a revisit intention among tourists (Jamal, Othman, & Nik Muhammed, 2011).

Specifically, in terms of tourists, they got benefitted from the authenticity which was served at homestays. This was evident from a study conducted in Naxi homestays in China. Where it was seen that tourists enjoy authenticity at homestays, neglecting the fact that whether that authenticity was real or staged. Tourists simply consider homestays as a tool to witness the culture of the visited regions (Wang, 2007). While providing authenticity, nostalgic feelings also emerge inside a tourist and it further results in memorable tourism experiences. The activities that generate authentic feelings inside a tourist must not stretch for a long time beyond their comfort levels (Mura, 2015). The other reason for choosing a homestay includes authentic socio-cultural experience, safety atmosphere and economical accommodation (Agyeiwaah, Akyeampong, & Amenumeny, 2013).

Contribution of homestays in community development.

Homestays had emerged as a tool for rural communities to utilize the available resources. It helps in strengthening of economic portfolio by using their lifestyles as a tourism product. Results could be seen in decreasing income gaps (Kontogeogopoulos, Churyen, & Deangsaeng, 2015). Tourism had been used as a poverty eradication tool by various of developing economics. China is one of such examples, where tourism was used aggressively for poverty eradication (Zhao & Xia, 2019). For the rural areas homestays as a rural tourism accommodation product was used for poverty eradication in Malaysia. This would also help in reverse migration (Kumar, Gill, & Kunasekharan, 2012).

In the terms of a sustainable community development, homestays play a major role. Homestays provide opportunities for women to strengthen their livelihood and act as a tool of gender equality. This was evident in case of homestays operated by women in rural Nepal. Additionally, awareness about health was improved with the introduction of homestays (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013). Homestays had also helped local population to adopt changes helpful in their daily routines and also helped positively in awareness of hygiene. Moreover, local population gets aware about their cultural and environmental resources and try to put efforts to preserve them (Walter, Regmi, & Khanal, 2018). Hosts also got aware about their cultural values and also tried to protect or modify these for their future (Regmi & Walter, 2016).

Challenges faced in expanding scope of homestays

The act of expanding tourism activities in rural areas might get hampered by various factors. These factors either have economic or socio-cultural roots. Like in Nepal homestays were only operated by a caste, which was considered superior among Hindus (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Walter, Regmi, & Khanal, 2018). Another example was from India, where some traditions had stopped local population to opt for homestay scheme. These included some religious beliefs where women were not allowed to enter in parts of home during the menstrual period or the factor of untouchability. A caste was considered as untouchable among Hindus in India as it was in Nepal. Another factor for not adopting this homestay scheme were clash of harvest season, lack of awareness, lack of confidence and safety concerns (Sood, Lynch, & Anastasiadou, 2017). The studies mentioned in this paragraph was related to rural communities living in Himalayan region.

Himachal Pradesh homestay scheme 2008

Homestay scheme in Himachal Pradesh, a Himalayan state in India was introduced in year 2008. It was introduced in order to expand the scope of tourism beyond the established destination to rural areas of state. The other motives were to provide an economical and comfortable stay in rural destinations of state. The major objectives listed under this scheme included the expansion of accommodation facilities and other tourism activities in rural areas of the state. Another objective was to provide an alternative to ever congesting spaces in urban areas and having jobs for local youth. Last objective was to provide an environmentally sustainable solution of accommodation. It was expected that owner with family must be staying at that home and homestay unit must adhere hilly architecture. There is a limit of 3 rooms under this scheme. If number of rooms exceeds the given number, then benefits would not be provided. Benefits provided included relaxation in charges by local body, relaxation in luxury and sales tax and electricity & water would be provided at domestic rates. Earlier during the year 2021 number of rooms in homestays with benefits were increased from 3 to 4.

Research gap

Homestays were no doubt an asset for rural communities as we had discussed above. Either its benefits provided to communities or to the tourists or to the development of tourism in rural areas, homestays deliver its benefits successfully. Alongside, benefits there were few drawbacks or the reasons grounded in culture or some other factors that stop homestays from expanding their scope. There were various problems relating to development of tourism in Shimla (Batra, 2002) and Manali (Singh, 2008). This study is intended to focus upon the expansion of homestays in Indian Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh. The extend of tourism in all of the states must be carried in order to have a clearer picture of tourism development in rural areas. This research would investigate the uniformed spread of homestays in rural areas of state. Research question for this study were: -

Ques 1: Is the spread of homestays in rural areas uniform or not?

Ques 2: Are the majority number of homestays available in only the rural periphery of an urban tourist destination?

3. Research methodology

3.1. Study area.

Geographically Himachal could be divided among high, moderate and low hilly regions. High altitude regions remain occupied with snow for almost half of the year, which includes area of Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti and Killar in Chamba. In the moderate altitude regions, there are regular spells of snowfall during winters, but tourists remain coming. Himachal Pradesh was attracting tourists for a long time. It was called as land of gods. The major tourist destination for leisure travel were Shimla, Manali, Dharamshala and Dalhousie (Gautam, 2012). The four major tourist destinations in Himachal Pradesh were established because of their colonial past or some personalities been linked to them. Shimla was the summer capital of British India and Dalhousie in Chamba was named after Lord Dalhousie, who was a British official in India. Although Dalhousie is linked with Rabindranath Tagore, who spent a major span of his life at this hillock. Manali in Kullu district was promoted by former Prime Minister Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru of India and latter in tourism policy of 2002 it was planned to be developed as a destination for adventure tourism. Lastly, Dharamshala in Kangra is linked with the seat of Buddhist spiritual leader Dalai Lama. Who came into India in the year 1959, when China occupied Tibet? There are other pilgrimage destinations in Kangra, Bilaspur and Sirmour, which are continually visited by devotees.

There was a blend of attractions in Himachal from religion to colonial to modern. Where we saw that Shimla and Dalhousie in Himachal were established by Britishers, there we saw Dharamshala, which is seat of Buddhist spiritual leader, Dalai Lama also in Himachal. There are destinations like Manali, which gained impetus after visits of Jawahar Lal Nehru during 1958 and 1959. After that tourism developed in Manali with the help of special focus from state and central government (Singh, 2008). Shimla was also a city established by Britishers, and is capital to state of Himachal Pradesh (Batra, 2002). Population in the state of Himachal Pradesh was 6.8 million, out of this 89.9% of population lives in rural areas. The choice of Himachal for this study was made because of its highest percentage of population in the country (Government of India, 2011).

3.2. Methods.

Tourism development was traced with the help of registered homestays in each of district in state. After that analyzing the spatial proximity, the concentration of homestays around a destination was studied. Is the number of homestays spurring up in proximity of established destination or the spread is really identical in remote regions? For this an exploratory approach was adopted and the study was conducted with the help of quantitative data. The data used for this study was secondary in nature. Whole of the data was retrieved from the website of Himachal Pradesh tourism department (Government of Himachal Pradesh, 2021).

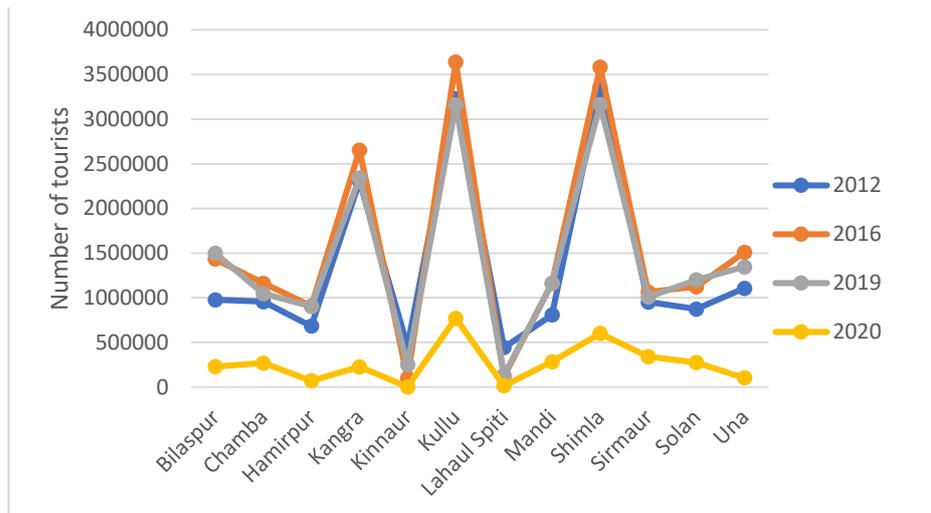
Data about the tourist arrival was achieved from the report of tourist statistics prepared by Department of Tourism and Civil aviation, Government of Himachal Pradesh. On that basis a trend of tourism development was presented. Trend of tourism spread was seen with the help of homestays been registered in the rural tehsils of state. State of Himachal Pradesh constitutes of 12 districts. For this study four districts were considered, which constitute each of the tourist destination in state. Now the district was categorized as per revenue department categorization into tehsils and sub-tehsils (Department of revenue, 2021). Homestays registered with each tehsil/sub-tehsil were analyzed. There were two segments of data considered for this study. First segment constituted the homestays in tehsils/sub-tehsils in rural periphery of a tourist destination. The second segment included tehsils in remote rural regions as compared to destinations itself. A comparison with the help of average and percentage was done and results were thereof delivered.

4. Results

4.1. Homestays in Himachal Pradesh

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh was broadly confined to few of its districts. This was evident from data obtained from the site of tourism department of Himachal Pradesh provided in **Error! Reference source not found.** This could be seen that tourist numbers seem maximum in few of the districts. The data provided in chart was inclusive of domestic and foreign tourists. There seems an increase in number of tourists to Shimla and Kullu districts. These two districts amount for the maximum number of tourists even during the covid year 2020. COVID-19 pandemic had affected the tourism industry in a significant way. This is evident from number of tourists visiting Himachal during the year 2020, where the number got dropped to 18.67% compared to the year 2019 (Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, 2021). Shimla town in Shimla district, Manali in Kullu district attracts maximum number of tourists to the state. This decrease in number of tourists would definitely have further ripple effects upon the population employed in tourism industry. Before COVID-19 pandemic period the tourist numbers were growing on a good pace.

Graph 1 Number of tourists to districts during 2012, 2016, 2019 and 2020 in Himachal Pradesh



Source: (Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, 2021)

This is evident from the data that number of tourists travelling to districts of Kangra, Kullu and Shimla were maximum. Poorly performing districts were Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti, reason being their location and altitude. Even this number signifies, all of the four major destinations lie at an altitude between 1900 m and 2500 m above the sea level. The two regions of Kinnaur and Lahaul Spiti are alpine regions and remain snow bounded during a major part of year. The emergence of Lahaul and Spiti during the last few years and specially after the inauguration of Atal tunnel, which connects Lahaul and Kullu had given great impetus to tourism beyond the snow bound Rohtang pass. Kullu is becoming the leader in number of tourists, as seen in data for years 2016 and 2020. Even during covid-19 pandemic, tourists visiting Kullu were highest in number.

Table 1 Government approved homestays and hotels in Himachal Pradesh

District	Registered homestay		Registered hotels	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Bilaspur	14	0.84	84	2.51
Chamba	106	6.4	225	6.72
Hamirpur	7	0.42	60	1.79
Kangra	268	16.17	672	20.06
Kinnaur	66	4	73	2.18
Kullu	327	19.73	953	28.45
Lahaul Spiti	258	15.57	88	2.63
Mandi	100	6	198	5.91
Shimla	335	20.22	493	14.72
Sirmaur	42	2.53	111	3.31
Solan	125	7.5	286	8.54
Una	9	0.54	106	3.16
Total	1657	100	3350	100

Source: (DoT&CA, 2021)

Spread of tourism is evident from the fact that the newly introduced scheme of homestays in 2008 have registered a total of approximately half the number of registered hotels. Maximum number of registered homestays were in Shimla, followed by Kullu district with a count of 335 and 327 respectively. In Shimla district percentage of homestays is greater than that of hotels and in case of Kullu, it witnesses a reverse trend. Surprising part of this analysis is data of Lahaul-Spiti district, where there were 15.57% of total homestays in state and in terms of hotel its only 2.6%. So, homestays in Lahaul-Spiti were six times that of hotels. Even in Kinnaur percentage of homestays were double the percentage homestays registered. Thus, this could be said that the percentage homestays in Lahaul-Spiti, Shimla and Kinnaur are more as compared to percentage hotels. The homestays were leading the path of rural tourism in state (DoT&CA, 2008).

Table 2 Tehsils surrounding established destinations

Destination	District	No. of tehsils	Surrounding tehsil/ sub tehsil
Shimla	Shimla	26	Shimla rural, Sunni, Theog, Junga
Manali	Kullu	8	Kullu, Bhuntar, Manali
Dharamshala	Kangra	35	Shahpur, Dharamshala, Kangra, Nagrota-Bagwan, Palampur
Dalhousie	Chamba	13	Dalhousie, Bhalei, Pukhri, Sihunta, Bhattiyat

4.2. Established destinations and their surrounding tehsils

The administrative division of state was done by dividing a state into twelve districts and by further subdividing districts into tehsils and sub tehsils. The town of Shimla lie in the east of Shimla district, which constitutes 26 tehsils and sub-tehsils. It is an urban town and wholly surrounded by a tehsil named “Shimla Rural”. For this study researchers considered nearby tehsils of Sunni, Theog and Junga (District Administration Shimla, 2021). These three tehsils’ headquarters lie at a distance of 25 to 50 kms from Shimla town. Another destination considered for study was Manali, Manali lies in East of Kullu district. Manali is also a tehsil and adjoining tehsils were Bhuntar and Kullu. There were total of 8 tehsils and sub tehsils in Kullu district (District Administration Kullu, 2021). Next destination under consideration was Dharamshala, the seat of Buddhist spiritual leader Dalai Lama. There were total of 35 tehsils and sub tehsils and adjoining tehsils were Shahpur, Kangra, Nagrota-Bagwan and Palampur (District Administration Kangra, 2021). Last considered tehsil was Dalhousie of Chamba district. Tehsils adjoining Dalhousie were Bhalei, Pukhri, Sihunta and Bhattiyat (District Administration Chamba, 2021).

Table 3 Tehsil-wise number of registered homestays around established destinations

District	Listed tehsils	Homestay units		Average homestays
		Number	Percentage	
Shimla	Shimla rural	214	63.88	19.7
	Sunni	5	1.49	
	Theog	40	11.94	
	Junga	13	3.88	
	Others (13)	63	18.80	
Kullu	Kullu	53	16.21	46.71
	Bhuntar	39	11.93	
	Manali	111	33.94	
	Others (GHNP)	94	28.77	
	Others (3)	30	9.17	
Kangra	Shahpur	8	2.99	12.76
	Dharamshala	92	34.33	
	Kangra	10	3.73	
	Nagrota Bagwan	1	0.37	
	Palampur	70	26.12	
	Others (Baijnath)	54	20.15	
	Others (15)	33	12.31	
Chamba	Dalhousie	42	39.62	10.6
	Bhattiyat	7	6.60	
	Bhalei	0	0	
	Chamba	37	34.91	
	Sihunta	0	0	
	Others (Bharmour)	13	12.26	
Others (4)	7	6.6		

Source: Himachal tourism website (DoT&CA, 2021)

4.3. Tehsil wise registered homestays in Shimla district

Shimla is an urban settlement, so there is no homestay allowed in Shimla town. There were total of 335 homestays in the destination. Shimla rural tehsil accounted for 214 of the total homestays, which comes to 63.88%. Data relating to all of the districts is provided in Table 3. In the number of homestays, Shimla rural tehsil was followed by Theog with 40 homestays. The reason for this is spatial proximity of a major spot in Shimla with a town of Cheog, which lie in Theog tehsil. A considerable number of homestays were registered in and around Cheog. Next major thing is the road from Theog which goes up to Kinnaur and Kaza of Spiti valley. Sunni and Junga tehsils don’t account for much of the homestays. The concentration of homestays could be seen in the Shimla rural tehsil, which is in close proximity of town.

There were only 18.80% of homestays shared by rest of 13 tehsils and sub tehsils. The average number of homestays per tehsil/sub-tehsil was 19.7. If tehsils around Shimla town were to be eliminated, then this average comes to be 4.85. The diversification of accommodation and thus tourism in rural areas doesn't seem relevant in Shimla district. (DoT&CA, 2008)

4.4. Tehsil wise registered homestays in Kullu district

In Kullu district there were total of 327 registered homestays. Out of which approximately one-third of the homestays lie only in Manali tehsil, which is around the Manali town. Bhuntar account for least number of homestays among the considered tehsils. Another tehsil to be considered separately even after its non-proximity to Manali town was Banjar, which is an entry gate to Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP). There were 94 homestays in Banjar tehsil, which comes to 28.77%. There were only 9.17% homestays in other 3 districts. The average number of homestays per tehsil/ sub tehsil is 46.71. If the four of the considered tehsils were neglected, then average for rest of four contracts up to 10 homestays/tehsil. The divide between 10 and 47 is huge and indicates about the less development of tourism in remote rural areas.

4.5. Tehsil wise registered homestays in Kangra district

There were total of 268 homestays and 21 tehsils/sub-tehsils in Kangra district. Among them 92 out of 268 homestays equivalent to 34.33% were in Dharamshala tehsil. Beyond this Palampur holds maximum of 70 homestays (i.e. 26.12%). Other than these none of the surrounding tehsils or sub-tehsils have considerable number of homestays. Next major tehsil with more homestays was Baijnath. Baijnath is famous for its temple and its proximity to famous paragliding site of Bir, which lie at the border of adjoining Mandi district. The average number of homestays in Kangra town were 12.76 homestays/tehsil. If the above-mentioned tehsils were to be neglected than average number of homestays per tehsil or sub tehsil shrinks to be 2.2. The smaller number of homestays in other parts of Kangra district shows a bad state of tourism development in rural remote areas of Kangra district.

4.6. Tehsil wise registered homestays in Chamba district

There were total of 106 homestays in 10 tehsils/sub-tehsils of Chamba district. Dalhousie is the major tourist attraction in Chamba and Dalhousie tehsil consist of maximum number of 42 out of 106 homestays in district equivalent to approximately 40%. Next major hotspot for homestay was Chamba tehsil, which comprise of ancient Chamba town. The nearest tehsil to Dalhousie is Bhalai, and doesn't account for any of the homestay. In the surrounding tehsils the only tehsil with considerable number of registered homestays was Chamba only. In addition to the adjoining tehsils, we considered Bharmour tehsil, which is a remote tehsil of Chamba district. In Bharmour there are religious attractions and accounts for 13 homestays. In the rest of 4 tehsils there were only seven homestays. Average number of homestays in Chamba district comes to 10.6 homestay per tehsil. If the adjoining tehsils and one tehsil of Bharmour were eliminated, then this average number of homestays per tehsil/ sub-tehsil comes to 1.75 homestay. Again, the concentration seems to have in peripheries of an established destination. This doesn't give a hopeful picture of accommodation in rural parts of Chamba district.

5. Discussion

There seems a consistent tourism growth in Himachal Pradesh during the last decade. Homestays in the study area had really emerged as an alternative to the hotels. This is evident from the number of homestays reaching half the number of hotels in Indian Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh. However, the number of homestays seem high in districts of Shimla, Kullu, Kangra and Lahaul Spiti. This study considered four districts where most famous tourist destinations of Himachal Pradesh lie. It was investigated that what number of homestays lie in the tehsils with close proximity to a famous destination. Spatial proximity of homestays in nearby tehsils to an established destination helped this study in identifying the fact that the development of tourism development was only restricted to nearby areas. There was not much development in terms of tourism in remote areas.

The district of Shimla was having 19.7 homestays/ tehsil. But if we closely inspect that data, then the tehsils surrounding Shimla city did have an average number of 68 homestays and other tehsils which were far away from Shimla town only have an average of 4.85 homestays/ tehsil. There is a huge difference in 68 homestays/ tehsil and 4.85 homestays/ tehsil. This research saw the same cases in all of the four districts. Next district under consideration was Kullu, where there was average 46.71 homestays/ tehsil. But digging deeper we saw that the tehsils surrounding Manali and the tehsil where GHNP entry gates lie did have an average of 74.25 homestays/ tehsil. All other remote tehsils accounted for only 10 homestays per tehsil. This divide of 46.71, 74.25 and 10 homestays/ tehsil show a fuzzy picture of equal tourism development in rural areas of the state.

The next two districts under consideration were Kangra and Chamba. In Kangra, there were an average of 12.76 homestays. Tehsils in close proximity to the tehsil of Dharamshala, where Dharamshala and MacLeod Ganj are major attractions did have an average of 39.16 homestay/ tehsil, The same average for tehsils far away from the established tourist destination was 2.2 homestay/ tehsil. In Chamba district, where the famous tourist destination of Dalhousie lie was having an average of 10.6 homestays/ tehsil. If the nearby tehsils of Dalhousie were taken into consideration, then this average comes to 16.5 homestays/tehsil. This average for the rest of the tehsils which lie far away from established tourist destinations did have only 1.55 homestay/ tehsil. Tourism accommodation in the remote areas of the state was not developed. Its implications can be seen in the development of tourism in remote rural regions in spatial proximity to a destination. There existed the same level of less development in rural areas of another Himalayan country of Nepal (Nepal, 2005) and New Zealand (Thompson-Fawcett, 2019).

6. Conclusion

Tourism inroads to rural areas were always challenging. Tourism in an urban centre remained easy to develop because of its concentration of tourist attractions and facilities. But, tourism in rural areas needs a different and much more dynamic approach. This study concluded that tourism is not growing uniformly in rural areas. In the periphery of an established tourist destination,

there is a good growing number of tourist accommodation units. If the trend of expanding tourism from the core of an established destination is to be followed then that destination would always act as a nucleus. This nucleus would only have an impact limited to a particular radius. In order to have a tourism-oriented development in remote rural regions, there might be a need of developing another nucleus attraction. Tourism is expanding from a destination despite of developing a new cultural resource in rural areas.

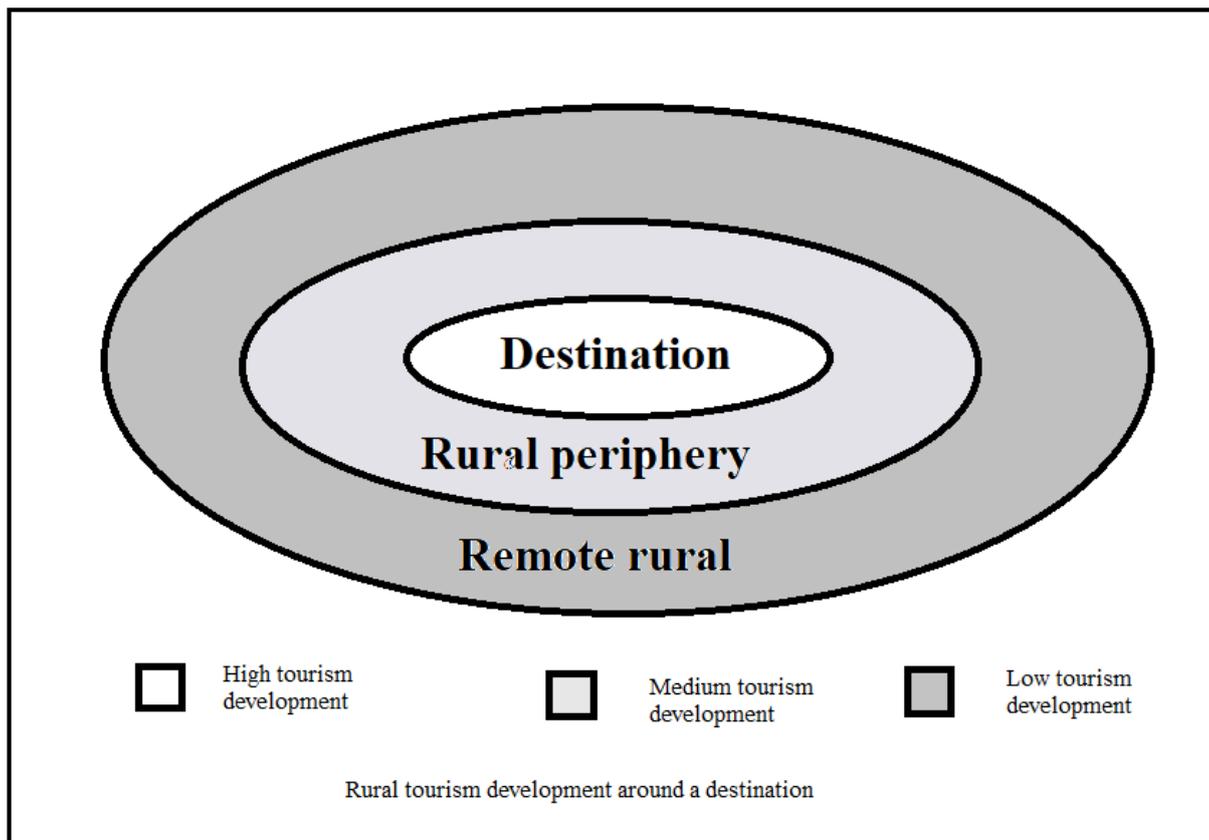


Figure 1 Rural tourism accommodation development around a destination

The figure communicates most of the findings with the help of a conceptual framework. The darker grey color show remote rural area, which holds a lot of resource for tourism but very less has been explored. The tourism development in remote rural areas can be traced with the help of minimum homestays in those regions. The intermediate region identifies the rural periphery of the destination. Tourism had developed up to an extent in this area and it's depicted by a lighter grey color. Few of the resources would have exploited and others also seem close to get presented to tourists. Thus, tourism development in rural area seems to have a growth from core to periphery to remote. This tourism development is in the form of a nucleus and its tightly and loosely bounded resources. Core destination is a form of nucleus where tourism development is maximum in the region. Tourism development in peripheries could be termed as tightly bound, because of influence or ripple effect of tourism from the core destination. Remote rural regions might be called as loosely couples, because of no influence of tourism development at destination in the rural remote regions.

The spread of homestays doesn't seen uniform in whole of the rural areas. Peripheries of a destination seem to have an advantage in growth of rural accommodation. Remote areas still lack accommodation facilities for tourists. The growth of tourism in state might be seen as expanding outwards from a destination in place of the establishment of a new parallel destination. The state of expansion of tourism to peripheries communicated a fact that the destination itself is only expanding. Presently there seem no signs of a type of development that can engulf the whole state. This type of research hadn't been carried out in the past. A uniform approach to tourism development is the need of the hour, where the rural population constitutes approximately 90% of the population. The value of this article lies in the originality of the concept related to the concerns of tourism development in rural peripheries and remote regions to a destination.

6.1. Future implications

For researchers: Tourism in remote rural areas is not growing at a pace equivalent to that of those regions with proximity to an established tourist destination. The development of tourism in the periphery of established tourist destinations might have economic reasons. Under the homestay scheme, there were various economic benefits provided by the state government. The huge concentration of homestays in the periphery of an established destination would be an outcome of the reason that hotel owners were shifting their business from the city centre to government notified rural areas for the economic benefits been provided by the government. The next issue that might be researched would be the reasons for the non-acceptance of this homestay scheme by the remote rural communities in other parts of the state except Kullu, where the study was carried out by Sood, Lynch, & Anastasiadou (2017). Either there were economical or socio-cultural reasons for the non-acceptance of this scheme by remote rural communities.

For industry and governments: The tourism industry might plan their packages into the rural peripheries. There is an availability of various accommodation units in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh. Government must focus on efforts to develop some cultural rural tourism resources. The dependence of rural accommodation units upon the established destination is not good in any manner. There seems a need for a strategy for the development of peripheral and remote areas in a uniform manner.

6.2. Limitations

Although this study was done with the help of secondary data available on the website of the tourism department of Himachal Pradesh. This looks closely into the geographical spread of tourism accommodation units in rural areas but it does not look into the reasons for the non-development of tourism in remote rural areas. This cannot be said with conformity that why there is a huge concentration of homestay accommodation units in the proximity of an established tourist destination.

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