

2

Review of Literature

Outline of the Chapter

This chapter sets the foundation of the research study as it highlights the various aspects of the related tourism literatures relevant to the study. The extensive tourism literatures have been derived from journals, books, magazines, government reports, thesis etc. The scheme of this chapter is divided into ten parts i.e., Introduction to Tourism, Impacts of Tourism Industry, Community Based Tourism, Definition of Rural Tourism, Origin of Rural Tourism, Significance of Rural Tourism, Alternative Tourism Forms, Benefits of Rural Tourism, Challenges of Rural Tourism and Local Community Development. This chapter also highlights the research gaps identified during the review of literature.

2.1: Introduction to Tourism

Tourism industry has become a global phenomenon and it is growing at a very quick pace. The initial origin of tourism perspective was started by the Romans. During the Roman regime, many developments work was carried out in various aspects with respect to transportation, travel, sports, military etc. and in the process, the concepts of tourism was unfolded. After the Roman era, during the 15th to 17th century, the Period of Renaissance epitomized the concepts of tourism through the experiences of Grand

Tour. However, the real impetus for structuring tourism affairs was experienced during the 18th and 19th century in the period of the Industrial Revolution and finally after the conclusion of the two world wars around 20th century tourism business became an organised affair. In the global context, many nations including developed and developing are actively engaged in the tourism sector, as it creates a gamut of benefits like employment opportunities, foreign exchange earnings, infrastructure development, contribution to the economy as in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and per capita income, socio-cultural heritage preservation, conservation of natural resources etc [36]; [37];[38]; [39].

Tourism engagement not only has positive impacts but also a lot of negative impacts, hence cautious planning and monitoring is required and initiatives like sustainable development, responsible tourism, community-based tourism (CBT) approach and alternative tourism forms is more desirable to mitigate or check the negative impacts.

Some of the negative impacts caused by the tourism industry due to haphazard planning and development are increase in pollution, destruction of natural resources, erosion of social & cultural values, inflation, prostitution, social conflicts, racial intolerance etc [41]; [42].

While developing tourism consideration should not be only on economic gains but also at preservation of social cultural heritage and conservation of biological diversity hence the approach should sustainable tourism development[36]; [43]. According to the Brundtland Commission (1987),the concept of “Sustainable Tourism Development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” [43].

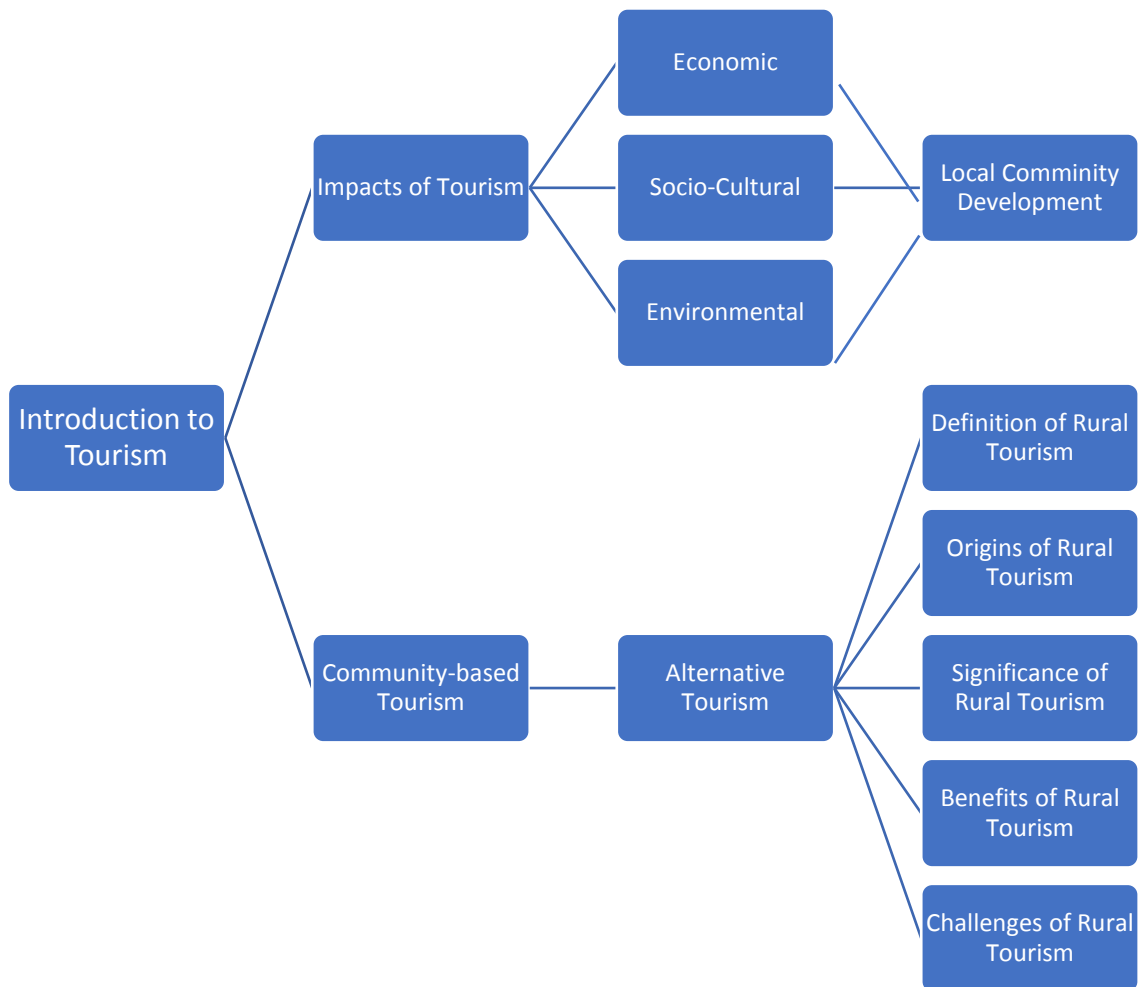


Figure 2.1: - Scheme of Literature Review
 Source: Research Scholar Interpretation

2.2: Impacts of Tourism Industry

Post-World War II around 1960's tourism research was focussed on the positive impacts of tourism and after a decade around 1970's research on tourism was mainly focussed on the negative aspects of tourism and around 1980's onwards studies were more focussed more on both the positive and negative impacts of tourism [44].

Tourism literatures have highlighted three major impacts and they are economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects [45];[46]; [47]; [48]; [49]; [50]; [51]. The above-mentioned researchers have highlighted both the positive and negative dimensions.

2.2.1: Economic Impacts of Tourism

Tourism as an engine of economic development of late it has been the focus of study and research and there is a sizeable amount of tourism literature stating the economic development of society due to tourism. Infact , it has been observed that tourism boom has the potential to not only develop the urban tourist centric areas but also the remotely located areas and its local indigenous communities [52]; [53].

Tourism initiatives being an economic activity creates multiple trade and businesses and is one of the most beneficial sectors in the global economy [54].

It is imperative that any form development has both positive and negative effects-such as increased jobs, supplementary income, tax revenue and/or rise in prices of land and commodities etc. Several tourism literatures have highlighted that tourism enhances the local economies, boosts incomes and standard of living of host communities and tourism stake holders, creates employment opportunities, drives the local economy ,appeal to new businesses and investments and boost tax incomes [45]; [55]; [57]; [58].

Infrastructure facilities developed at tourist centric places for tourists is also used by the residents, hence tourism development also benefit the local communities at large [56]; [49].

2.2.2: Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism

Tourism literatures have advocated that due to increased positive economic impacts of tourism in destinations, host communities at large have seen social cultural benefits in terms of advancement of cross-cultural understanding, preservation of cultural heritage and increase of social stability due to constructive economic results.

Tourism is a platform that provides multiple cultures from multiple domains to engage in meaningful engagement to understand the behaviour, values, traditions etc of social groups. Meaningful engagement between host communities and tourists leads to a better understanding of cultural values and ethos and provide a roadmap for social and economic progression [59]; [60].Tourism development and activities on societies has dual impacts such as affecting host communities' habits, lifestyles, values and ethos resulting in mental imbalances [61].

Tourism literatures on socio-cultural impacts have emphasised on how host communities have professed tourism in relation to numerous social cultural matters [45].

The available tourism literatures have classified the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in two groups. The first socio-cultural impacts highlights on cultural exchange, increased crime and change in lifestyle (demonstration effect) and the latter highlighting on infrastructure growth, enhanced recreational amenities and congestion issues [62].

2.2.3: Environmental Impacts of Tourism

Tourism industry often termed as smokeless industry is indeed a cliché as it creates a lot of environmental affects, when development and growth of tourism is done in a haphazard and unplanned manner. It has been observed that tourism development is done in fast pace and without much considerations primarily due to the quick economic returns it generates thus causing environmental imbalances as all tourism destinations depend on natural and man-made resources [63].The numerous environmental impacts due to the tourism boom has been extensively identified in tourism literatures [64].

Tourism development and growth plays dual impacts on the environment, on one hand it plays the role of a protector and the other destroyer. Tourism growth in some destinations leads to the protection of natural resources like establishment of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, preservation of historical structures and enhancement of community identities [64] ; [49]; [65] and other favourable impacts like growth and expansion of infrastructures and superstructures, monitoring the pollutions and host communities' health benefits [66]. On the other hand, some of the negative impacts caused by unchecked tourism development are pollutions, damage and displacements of flora and fauna, increases wastes, overcrowding etc [40]; [67]; [68];[64].

For tourism destinations to flourish and prosper, the preservation and conservation of the environment is imperative for the well-being of the host communities so that these tourist centric destinations are good to live and good to visit for the tourist and for an enriching experience.

2.3: Community Based Tourism (CBT)

Since the later part of the twentieth century, there has been considerable highlights in the tourism literatures for the involvement of the local host communities as stake holders for sustaining the product [69]. The notion of CBT was found in the tourism literature of [50], where the focussed area was the linkage between tourism and its management by the local communities in emerging countries. Community based tourism initiatives is often considered the most vital tool, for tourism to make crucial contribution for rural and national development of a country[70].

Community based tourism initiative is a pivotal tool for rural communities to pursue holistic development in rural and isolated areas by enhancing employment and income opportunities and not side-lining their socio-cultural ethos and at the same time checking on migration to urban areas. Local community participation in CBT initiatives in their domains ensures that maximum benefit is routed to the communities and the local tourism resources are preserved and conserved for sustainability [71].Community involvement in CBT initiatives accelerate physical development and economic gains [50].

Community participation in CBT initiatives helps the communities to be the beneficiaries and participating actively for their own development by channelising resources, taking decisions and identifying their own requirements [72].Active local community participation is imperative so that visitors have an enriching experience and likewise the host communities can also draw some benefits from the meaningful engagement [50].

CBT initiatives can be termed as an ideal tool for sustainable tourism development since the local community participation is high and all benefits are routed to the community [73]; [74].

Though CBT initiatives is an effective tool for the development of the rural agrarian communities but does possess some element of risk if not planned and developed holistically [74]. If CBT initiatives in a rural setting erodes the socio-cultural values of the rural folks and economic benefits are not directed to the community then there is no real tourism development.

Some tourism literatures suggest that earnings from CBT are relatively small and at times do not even compensate the expenses [75]; [76] One of the major reasons for

CBT projects to under deliver is primarily due to lack of access to markets , poor monitoring, limited participation of the communities, lack of knowledge and awareness and at times these local communities are not a united group [77]; [78]; [79]; [80].

The main thrust of CBT initiatives is that the host community controls the tourism management operations activities, and all the proceeds are directed to the community itself [81]. Hence this kind of niche tourism initiatives can combat the negative impacts of mass tourism in the developed and developing countries. The primary idea of CBT initiatives is to incorporate food and accommodation services, additional services, and tourism management through the community itself so that community members are the stake holders and significant portion of the economic benefits are trickled to the community for overall development.

Table 2.1: Different Form of Community Participation in Development of Tourism

LEVELS	FORMS	ATTRIBUTES
Genuine involvement	Empowerment	“Local people may directly contact explorer tourists and develop tourism by themselves Choguill, [82]; Dewar, [83]; Pretty, [84]. Local people have control over all development without any external force or influence Choguill, [82]; Dewar, [83]”
Emblematic involvement	Partnership	“There are some degrees of local influence in tourism development process (Arnstein, [85].”
	Interaction	“People have greater involvement in this level. The rights of local people are recognized and accepted in practice at local level (Pretty, [84].”
	Consultation	“People are consulted in several ways, e.g., being involved in community’s meeting or even public hearings. Developers may accept some contribution from the locals that benefits their project (Arnstein, [85].”
Non- involvement	Informing	“People are told about tourism development program, which have been decided already in the community. The developers run the projects without listening to local people’s opinions Arnstein, [85].”
	Manipulation	“Tourism development is generally developed by some powerful individuals, or government without any discussion with the people (Arnstein,[85].”

Source: Leksakundi lok [86] and Fariborz Aref, et al[87] (2010)

2.4: Alternative Tourism Forms

The emergence of alternative tourism was due to the extensive negative impacts caused due to the onslaught of mass tourism activities on destinations. Under the umbrella of alternative tourism soft, small scale, nature, agro, rural, village, eco, ethnic, food, wine tourisms etc are incorporated, so that they are in sync with natural, social and community ethos without lessening the economic benefits [88].

Alternative tourism forms are regarded as a key element in tourism development as it highlights on preservation and conservation of natural, socio-cultural and heritage sites of a destination and as a result the concept of sustainable tourism was initiated and played a pivotal role in tourism development. There has been a rapid growth of alternative tourism forms primarily due to the positive environmental and social impacts that sustains the aesthetic and socio-cultural ethics of a destination [89].

Alternative tourism forms not only control adverse environmental and social impacts but also fosters development of other sectors of the local economy and also encourages the participation of the local host communities in the tourism development process.

Alternative tourism initiatives encompass not only environmental but also economic, social, and cultural considerations, hence alternative tourism initiatives can be regarded as synonymous with the notion of sustainable tourism development [90]. As per World Tourism Organization (WTO) the concept of sustainable tourism development refers to “tourist activities leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled, while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems”[91].

Alternative tourism activities are directed to be friendly to the environment and to appreciate the cultural heritage of the host communities and to have a meaningful enriching engagement between the guest and the host communities [92]. Rural tourism is the most renowned alternative tourism form in context to product diversification and sustainability approach. Rural tourism encompasses different forms of tourism like ecology tourism, agriculture tourism, farm tourism, village tourism, eco-tourism, wine tourism etc and thus strengthens regional development [93].

The comparison of alternative and mass tourism impacts is tabulated in table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Mass Tourism vs Alternative Tourism

Features	Mass Tourism	Alternative Tourism
General Features		
1	Fast Growth	Slow Growth
2	Maximizes	Optimizes
3	Socially, Environmentally, Insensitive; Aggressive	Socially, Environmentally, sensitive. Cautions
4	Short term	Long term
5	Remote control	Local control
6	Unstable	Stable
7	Price consciousness	Value consciousness
8	Quantitative	Qualitative
9	Growth	Development
10	Peak holidays period, seasonal	Staggered holiday periods, no necessarily seasonal
11	Capacity for high seasonal Demand	Staggered holiday periods, no necessarily seasonal
12	Tourism development Universally	Development only in appropriate places
Tourist Behaviour		
13	Large Groups	Singles, families,
14	Fixed program	Tourists directed.
15	Spontaneous Decisions	Planned decisions based on reasons
16	Comfortable and Passive	Tourists decide.
17	Monotonous & inactive	Demanding and active

Source: [47] Gartner,1996 as cited in Christou,2012

Tourism literatures have highlighted that there is no definite clear-cut definition of rural tourism, and this form of tourism encompasses other forms and types of tourism under its purview.

- **Agro-Tourism:** This form of tourism activity is conducted in the vicinity of an agricultural farm. Apart from agricultural activity remaining the core occupation, farmers in some of the farms have engaged in alternative activities like agro-tourism to generate extra income [94]. Agro-tourism is an alternative tourism form in which farms are the tour destinations for educational and/or recreational purposes. Tourist from urban areas visits the rural agricultural setups and spend a couple of days at homestays in the village, engaging in agricultural and other related chores and there by enjoy the tranquil atmosphere of a village. Globally it has been observed that due to various factors, farmers are looking at alternate sources of income to supplement their agricultural income by expanding their farm products and services.

- Eco-Tourism: [95] Ceballos-Lascurain in 1987 defined eco-tourism as “ tourism that involves travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestations’ (both past & present) found in these areas”[96]. It is generally accepted that importance of achieving sustainable tourism has given birth to the concept of eco-tourism ,hence these two terms sustainable and eco-tourism is used interchangeably [97].In eco-tourism the travellers are entrusted with the responsibilities of protecting all the places they visit.
- Ethnic Tourism: Ethnic tourism can be related with cultural tourism, however ethnic tourism is the first hand ,authentic and intimate experiences of observing the cultural manifestation and lifestyles of exotic people[98].Ethnic tourism activities includes visiting and staying in natives’ homes, attending festivals, dances and ceremonies and also in some instances participating in religious indigenous rituals of the local tribal inhabitants [97].
- Community Based Tourism (CBT): CBT is purely community enhancement centric tourism development concept, primarily to counter revenue leakages, social and cultural degradation of the community at large. CBT is an also important form of tourism for alleviating poverty and offering alternative form of livelihood opportunities for the community members because of the only involvement of the community stake holders in the development of tourism in all stages in their areas. In CBT the host or the local communities plays a major role in determining the form and process of tourism development [99].
- Culinary Tourism: Culinary tourism is all about travelling to different exotic places and discovering about the unique heritage of the local cuisines and seeking out new culinary experiences. Its only in the last decade or so culinary tourism is gaining importance and being able to carve itself as a niche tourism form despite food and beverages has been an integral part of tourism experience. The International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA)²⁴ defines culinary tourism as

²⁴ The International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA) is dedicated to serving the interests of professionals throughout the world whose livelihoods revolve around the conjoined food, beverage, and travel industries. The mission is to help both professionals and consumers understand the relationship between food/beverage and tourism The Association is truly international and has over 400 members from 19 countries.

the pursuit of unique and memorable culinary experiences of all kinds, often while travelling. Culinary tourism or Food tourism or Gastronomy tourism is the exploration of food as a purpose of tourism and thereby enriching a unique culinary experience [100]. [101] Molz in 2007 later defined culinary tourism as a sense of knowing or experiencing another culture, as well as performing adventure, adaptability, and openness to any other culture.

- Wine Tourism: Wine tourism is a type of Special Interest Tourism (SIT), where the main primary tourism activities are sited in rural set ups and is centred around the Vineyards²⁵ and the Wineries²⁶. Wine tourism is labelled as “a visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivation factors for visitors.”[102]. Wine tourism activities is not only limited to visiting the vineyards and the wineries, but also includes cultural, historical and leisure activities. The amalgamation of wine and tourism significantly contributes to the sustainable growth of the wine growing regions.

2.5: Definitions of Rural Tourism

The type of tourism that highlights rural lifestyles & cultural heritage of rural communities at rural locations and promoting the rural communities economically and socially and enabling an enriching experience between a tourist and a host can be labelled as rural tourism. Academicians have tried to define rural tourism as an alternative type of tourism form and to investigate the practices to assimilate tourism to rural development plans [103]. Though rural tourism is a niche tourism form, and many academicians has defined rural tourism which has helps to formulate the concepts and structure of rural tourism. Out of the many definitions by various writers and academicians, the definitions of rural tourism by MOT (Ministry of Tourism)-Indian Tourism Statistics 2010, brings out all the elements of rural tourism:

“Any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture, and heritage at rural locations there by benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as

<https://www.culinarytourism.org/about.php>

²⁵ A vineyard is a plantation of grape-bearing vines, grown mainly for winemaking, but also raisins, table grapes and non-alcoholic grape juice.

²⁶ A winery is factory that produces wines from grapes.

enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience”²⁷

In the global context rural tourism initiatives has evolved in various types and dynamics and it has become a very popular and niche tourism form and is very popular in some of the continents like Europe, North America, Australia, and some of the Asian countries like Japan, Indonesia and Cambodia and others.

According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), rural tourism activities take place in non-urban (rural) areas where there is low population density, landscape and land use is dominated by agriculture and forestry and there is existence of traditional social culture and lifestyles. Davidson [104] tried to establish rural tourism as a “*Concept which covers tourists activity devised and managed by local people and based on the strengths of the natural and human environment*”. According to Lane [20], authentic rural tourism is defined as a tourism type located in rural surroundings , a holiday or a vacation can be classified as rural tourism provided it should be located in rural areas , be based on rural tourism features , be connected with the local people and be based on villages and small towns. As per the Commission of the European Communities (European Commission 1986, 10): “*Rural tourism is a broad concept that includes not only farm tourism or agritourism—accommodation provided by farmers—but all tourist activities in rural areas.*”²⁸

The international Eco-Tourism Society (TIES) ²⁹2015, defines ecotourism as “*responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people and involves interpretation and education*”.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)³⁰ [105], rural tourism should have the following features:

²⁷ India Tourism Statistics 2010, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2011

²⁸ European Commission. 1986. “Community Action in the Field of Tourism: Commission Communication to the Council.” COM (86) 32. Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 4/86.

²⁹ The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting **ecotourism**. Founded in 1990, TIES has been on the forefront of the development of ecotourism, providing guidelines and standards, training, technical assistance, and educational resources. TIES’ global network of ecotourism professionals and traveller’s is leading the efforts to make tourism a viable tool for conservation, protection of bio-cultural diversity, and sustainable community development.

³⁰ The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is a unique forum where the governments of 36 member states with market economies work with each other, as well as with more than 70 non-member economies to promote economic growth, prosperity, and sustainable development.

- Located in rural areas.
- Functionally rural, built upon the rural world’s special features; small-scale enterprises, open space, contact with nature and the natural world, heritage, traditional societies, and traditional practices.
- Rural in scale – both in terms of building and settlements – and therefore, small scale.
- Traditional in character, growing slowly and organically, and connected with local families.
- Sustainable – in the sense that its development should help sustain the special rural character of an area, and in the sense that its development should be sustainability in its use of resources.
- Of many different kinds, representing the complex pattern of the rural environment, economy, and history.

Table 2.3: - Different Interpretation of Rural Tourism Definitions.

RESEARCHER	DEFINITION
Bramwell & Lane, 1994 <i>quoted in</i> Su, 2011, 1438.	Education, arts, and heritage taking place in countryside not only farm-based but also multi-faceted activities.
Pedford, 1996 <i>quoted in</i> Su, 2011, 1438.	The concept includes rural custom and folklore, local peoples. traditions, values, beliefs, and common heritage
McKercher & Robbins, 1998, 173.	Operated on a small and regional scale that lie outside the mainstream of tourism.
Reichel <i>et al.</i> , 2000, 451.	Rural tourism is based on features of rurality and sustainability. with small scale enterprises in rural areas.
MacDonald & Jolliffe, 2003, 308.	Refers to a distinct rural community with its own traditions, heritage, arts, lifestyles, places, and values as preserved. between generations.
Sharpley & Roberts, 2004, 122	Rural tourism can be both a complement to mass tourism in most countries that have warm climates and also a pioneering initiative in a place where tourism is low.
Negrusa <i>et al.</i> , 2007, 1.	A form of tourism provided by local people in rural area, with a small-scale accommodation, rural activities, and customs of life.
Daugstad, 2007, 404.	Rural tourism is an arena where the tourists and farmers come. together. This provides some physical and/or aesthetic changes. in the area.
Aref & Gill, 2009, 68.	An experience oriented, the rural area is sparsely populated and based on preservation of culture, heritage, and traditions.
Kulcsar, 2009, 122.	Tourism that takes place in the countryside.
Aref and Gill, 2009, 68.	A tourism product that gives to visitors a personalized contact, a taste of physical and human environment of countryside and as far as possible, allow them to participate in the activities, traditions and lifestyles of local people.
Irshad, 2010, 5.	Rural tourism is in rural areas, contains traditional. societies and practices, in small scale.
Lo <i>et al.</i> , 2012, 59.	Rural tourism offers differentiated products to the industry.

Source : Gökhan Ayazlar and Reyhan A. Ayazlar.,[106].

Research studies have highlighted some common features of rural tourism from the vast array of definitions available proposed by different academicians. An all-inclusive definition covering all the features of rural tourism projected is given by Nagaraju & Chandrashekara [18] in absence of a clear-cut definition, according to the duo, rural tourism represent *“any form of tourism that showcases the rural life ,art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience”*.

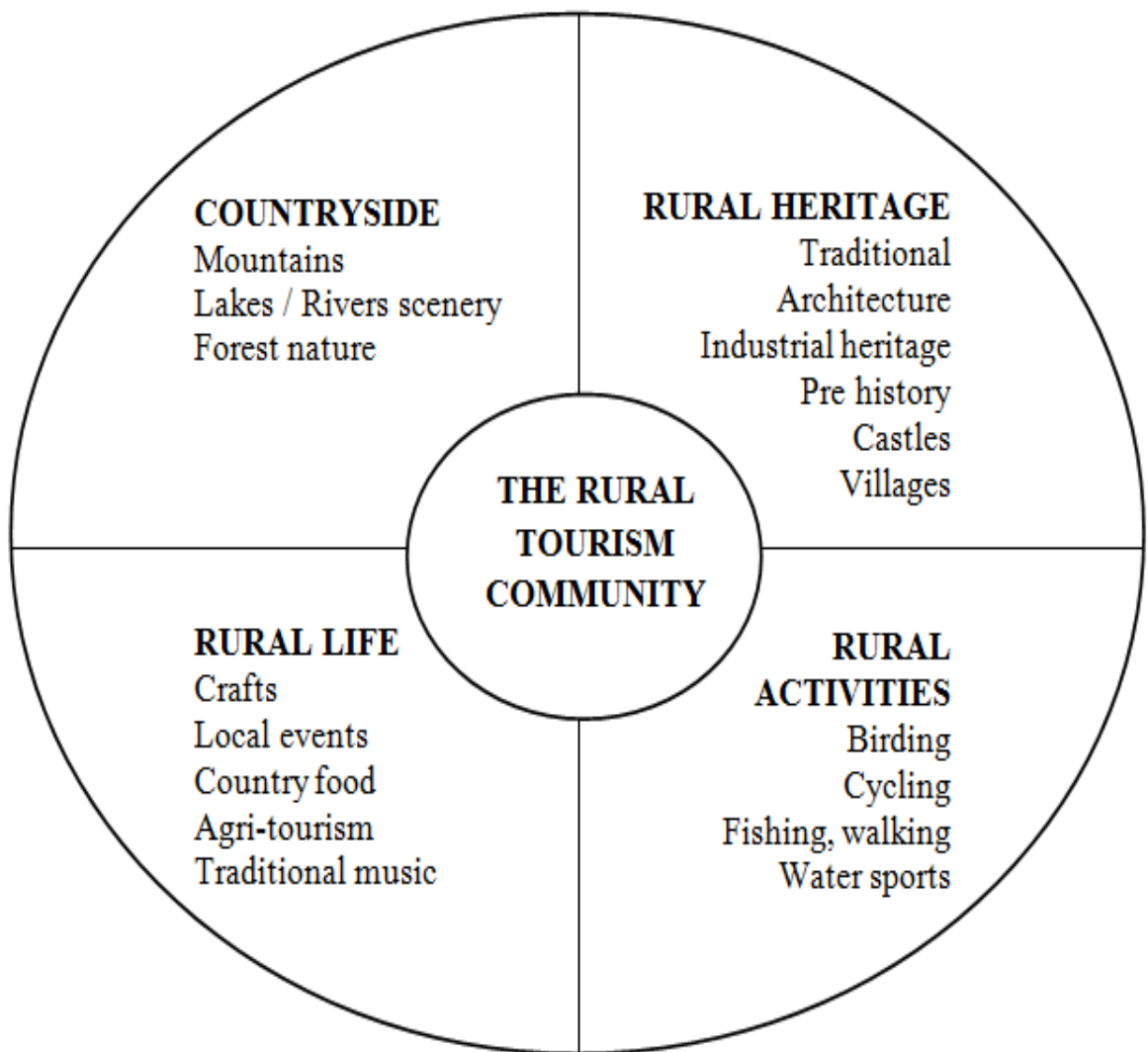


Figure 2.2: The Rural Tourism Concept

Source: Nulty,[22].

According to Lane, [20] rural tourism is a composition of multi-layered activity, hence it is interrelated with some other forms of tourism like ecotourism , farm tourism, agritourism , adventure tourism etc. Infact, these forms are subdivisions of rural tourism. Ecotourism is responsible travelling to protected natural areas like farm and forested [20] .Farm tourism is about travelling to a farm and getting involved with the farmer in farming and allied activities with or without overnight stay [20].Agritourism is about getting visitors involved in a farm’s agricultural activities for the purpose of learning and pleasure. Adventure activities with limited risk and threat can happen in rural setups. Rural tourism should be positioned in rural areas, in small-scale, traditional in character , should grow slowly and organically, relate to local families and be in sync with the pattern of rural environment [107].

Rural areas are those areas, which lie beyond major towns and cities [88].Rural tourism is not only about farm-based holidays, but it is a gamut special interest nature holidays and eco-tourism, health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travels, trekking and ethnic tourism [108].

Rural tourism comprises many activities, natural or manmade attractions, amenities, transportation, marketing and information systems [109].Rural tourism refers to those travelling activities that aim at pursuing natural and humanistic attraction in rural areas [110].

Garrod et al.[111] define rural tourism as experiencing living history such as rural customs, folklore, local traditions, beliefs, and common heritage.

The key features that define rural tourism are, it should be in rural areas, rural operational base, based on small scale and traditional activities and enterprises, relies on the traditional qualities of the countryside, develops slowly under the control of local people and is non-uniform [112].

Macdonald and Jolliff [113]introduced the concept of cultural rural tourism. The concept of cultural rural tourism is focused on the community’s rich cultural fabric, lifestyles, traditions, heritage, art, and values which has been handed down from generations and carefully preserved for tourists visiting these places to have an enriching experience about the community’s unique traditional cultural heritage and also enjoy the rural settings.

Nair et al.[114] after analysing various definitions of rural tourism, five deductions from the various definitions were arrived at namely location centric, reasons for travel, rural tourism activities, magnitude of rural tourism operations and sustainability practices. The deductions arrived at translates to rural areas in regard to location centric, purpose of visit in regard to reasons for travel, tourism related activities for tourist in regard to rural tourism activities, limited tourism operations in regard to magnitude of rural tourism operations and conservation and preservation of resources in regard to sustainability practices. However, in context to different countries version of rural tourism definition, three deductions are arrived at i.e., location centric, reasons for travel and rural tourism activities as depicted in table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Definitions of Rural Tourism of Selected Countries

Selected Countries	Definitions of Rural Tourism
USA	“ . . . includes farm tourism, eco-tourism and other nature-based forms of tourism, cultural tourism that does not relate directly to agriculture or rural adventure tourism”
Australia	“ . . . business or activity that invites visitors to come on-farm or into a rural community to enjoy agriculture, its produce and the natural environment in which it exists”
Italy	“ . . . agritourism which offers an opportunity for the visitor to come into direct contact with the rural world and with those traditions which are reminiscent of nature and of farming customs. Provides an opportunity to experience the area and appreciate the land scape, the quality of local products and of the available services”
England	“ . . . a multi-faceted activity: it is not just farm-based tourism. It includes farm-based holidays but also comprises special interest nature holidays and eco-tourism, walking, climbing, and riding holidays, adventure, sport and health tourism, hunting, and angling, educational travel, arts, and heritage tourism”
Canada	“ . . . tourism that occurs in rural areas. It is characterized as involving access to the wilderness and capitalizing on the advantages of rural areas, namely nature and open space. Within this broad definition, there is great diversity in the types of businesses, beyond ecotourism and agri-tourism. They can also include nature-based activities, sport, health (spa), hunting and fishing, the arts, and culture and heritage products and services”
Japan	“ . . . rural tourism alludes to a multidimensional range of topics and activities related to the local agricultural lifestyle that tourists can encounter, encompassing everything from the study of local food products and cooking methods to farm-related activities and learning experiences focused on the culture, history, and heritage of a locale”
South Africa	“ . . . consists of leisure activities carried out in rural areas, and includes different types of tourism activities such as community-based tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, guest tourism, backpacking, riding, and agri-tourism”
Malaysia	“ . . . tourism that provides opportunities to visitors to visit rural areas and rural attractions, and to experience the culture and heritage of Malaysia, thereby providing socio-economic benefits for local communities . . . the proximity of many of these rural areas to the hinterland and rainforest also offer visitors an opportunity to extend their holiday and enjoy those unique natural resources”
China	“ . . . a new form of ecotourism appearing in the tourism market, based on the unique rural attractions in terms of architecture, economy, culture, and natural environments”

Source: Nair *et al.*, [114], 319-323.

2.6: Origin of Rural Tourism

The very concept of rural tourism can be categorised both old and young form of tourism. It is considered an old concept because rural tourism existed since early periods as people travelled to the rural areas to meet friends and relatives, picnics, and other leisure purposes, which did not bring about much economic and employment enhancement. Rural tourism history can be traced back to the romanticism movement of the late eighteen century and is definitely not a new form of tourism [106]. A new concept because post world war-II in the late 19th century, rural tourism became to form an industry and there was a tremendous boost for the rural areas in economic benefits and employment enhancement.[115]. Rural tourism being a niche tourism form began for different motives in developed and developing countries. In developed countries, the main motive was to experience the travellers with rural village lifestyles and to handle visitors flow to rural areas. As in the case of developing and least developing countries (LDC) main motive was to boost the rural economies and upliftment of socio-economic conditions of the rural folks by developing rural tourism in these areas. The main purpose in developing nations to develop rural destinations was to boost rural economic growth and create job openings [116]. Rural tourism can also be an alternative source of livelihood for the rural agrarian communities, and it has been observed that there are tremendous challenges faced by these communities who solely depend on agriculture as the only source of livelihood. Rural vocational activities of tourism can help the local rural communities socially and economically [24] .

Table 2.5: Principles for Tourism in Rural Areas.

PRINCIPLES	DEFINITIONS
Enjoyment	“The promotion of tourist enjoyment of the countryside should be primarily aimed at those activities which draw on the character of countryside itself, its beauty, culture, history and wildlife.”
Development	“Tourism development in the countryside should assist the purpose of conservation and reaction. It can, for example bring new uses to historic houses, supplement usage and incomes to farms, aid the reclamation of derelict land open new opportunities for access to the countryside.”
Blueprint	“The planning, sitting and management of new tourism developments should be in keeping with landscape and whenever possible should seek to enhance it.”
Rural Economy	“Investment in tourism should support the rural economy but should seek a wider geographical spread and more off peak visiting both to avoid congestion and damage to the resource through erosion and overuse and to spread the economic and other benefits.”
Preservation	“Those who benefit from tourism in the countryside should contribute to the conservation and enhancement of its most valuable asset, the countryside, through political and practical support for conservation and recreational policies and programmes.”
Advertising	“Publicity.”

Source : Richard and Sharpley [109].

Research studies have focussed that the origin of rural tourism was in Europe around the late 19th century especially in countries like France, United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain. However, there is another theory that gives credit of origin of rural tourism in Europe due to Industrial Revolution and advent of railways. Industrial revolution allowed masses to better economic conditions and free time to travel and visit places, while the railways allowed the masses to travel to other places easily from their places of habitat .Rural Tourism a tourism forte started forming an industry in the late 18th century, which later flourished in the 19th century [20]. According to Lane,[20] glimpses of rural tourism started from western Europe, then moved on to north America and then to Australia, New Zealand coming to Asia in Japan and finally moved on to eastern Europe. Rural areas which were isolated ,primarily agrarian ,non-industrialized and difficult to access, got a boost to their rural economies, due to the sustainable development of rural tourism [39].

Tourism research studies have highlighted that there is a change in perceptions of a tourist. A tourist today would like to visit places and experience different things ,which they cannot experience or see in their daily urban life's [117]. Tourists these days are very particular and conscious and would like to visit isolated destinations to have a more wholesome tourism experiences and as a result Tour Operators (TO) are also including niche tourism products in their itineraries and most these niche tourism products are nature based and in rural setups. Due to Globalization and Industrialization and good connectivity in Europe and other developed countries have catalysed people to travel to rural areas and have an enriching tourism experience [118]. Globally it has been observed that the major portion of the urban habitants are visiting rural setups for complete solitude and relaxation away from the urban hustle bustle. Tour operating companies are designing new niche rural tourism products to cater to the ever-increasing tourist, who are willing to explore fresh and unique experiences [20].

The perception of modern-day tourist has changed from urban centric to rural centric. The global tourist attraction has been displaced to '4N'(Nature, Nostalgia, Nirvana ,Native) from '4S'(Sun, Sea, Sand, Sex),hence highlighting the change of tourist perception from traditional mass tourism products to spiritual experiences of rural tourism .[115].

Table 2.6: Classification of Rural Tourism Activities

CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES	NATURAL ATTRIBUTES	HISTORICAL ATTRIBUTES
Farming Customs	Rural Landscape	Folklore
Local food products	Natural environment	Rural historical sites
Farms and Agricultural produce	Wide open spaces	Architecture
Local handicrafts and arts	Hunting and fishing	History
Cooking Methods	Nature based activities	Heritage
Local lifestyle	Walking in Jungle	
Local festivals and rites	Eco tourism	
Local languages	Rural Adventure	
Local music and dances	Safari drives	
Local educational travel	Climbing and riding	
Local sports		
Accommodation		

Source: Nair *et al.*, [114]

2.7: Significance of Rural Tourism

Since the last two to three decades rural tourism has become popular and has created a positive impact on tourist's minds as a special interest tourism form.

In some European countries such as France, Austria, and the United Kingdom, rural tourism projects are well established, and it is recognised as an important tool for rural upliftment and has a high demand [119].

According to Irina-Virginia Drăgulănescu and Maricica Druț [120], *“The aim of tourism development in rural areas is to solve key business objective outside motivation and satisfaction of tourism and economic issues related to the depopulation of areas caused by migration of rural population to urban centres”*.

Rural tourism initiatives not only offer enriching customised holiday products to tourists by ensuring complete peace from hustle and bustle urban city life, but also it creates livelihood opportunities for the local host community, diversifies the local economy and preservation of village environment and local culture [121].

Rural areas in the developed nations that were economically and socially deprived have shown improvement due to tourism activity since 1970's onwards [122]. Infact in certain parts of Europe, rural tourism initiatives have been established as an effective mechanism for rural socio-economic development for over a century [123].

In some developed nations, rural tourism projects have been actively initiated to combat the social and economic confronts due to decline of agrarian and allied activities [124].

In Indian context rural tourism initiatives has a huge potential, where about 68.84% of the population residing in the 6,38,000 villages are dependent on agriculture and allied activities and are eagerly looking at alternative livelihood opportunities [125].

2.8: Benefits of Rural Tourism:

Rural tourism can be the ultimate form to revitalize the rural areas and creating opportunities for alternative livelihoods for the rural folks, planned sustainable rural development, job openings and preservation of natural resources along with local art, culture, and traditional lifestyles. The rural tourism is often an catalyst for developing the rural infrastructure and also contributes in shaping other economic related activities in the rural domain [126]. Rural tourism since its inception in the last three decades has undergone a significant transformation, today rural tourism is not only about rural activities in rural settings, but an important source for rural development, which can lead to the revival of rural areas [127];[128]. In comparison to the urban tourist circuits, the rural areas were perceived to have less level of economic development and low probabilities of developing tourist functions. In reality rural tourism being a niche tourism form have developed itself into a tourist attraction by successfully managing its resources and the quality of the environment. Some of the common benefits brought around in rural areas are the following:

2.8.1: Rural Tourism Enhances and Revitalizes Community Pride:

Successful rural tourism model enhances community solidarity among the rural folks and encourages a favourable image of the community which creates a stronger bond among community members. Thus, the basis for community unity shifts from common cultural background to shared image [129]. Due to overwhelming responses of tourist visiting rural tourism centric places it catalyst a favourable image and the facilities available for tourist play a vital role in moulding a communities character and pride. The unique resources available among communities can increase their earning opportunities by developing their skills and thereby enhancing community pride.

2.8.2: Employment Generation:

Rural tourism can create a pool of job opportunities especially for those who are less skilled and those who do not have ownership to agricultural land to meet their livelihood needs. The rural tourism business creates jobs at comparatively low investment and the jobs have greater flexibility [130]. Local rural folks can engage

themselves in a variety of jobs openings like in accommodation, local eateries, local guides, artisan's etc. The rural tourism platform can provide sustainable livelihood to the rural folks as a source of income regardless of the seasonality factor.

2.8.3: Environmental Protection and Landscape Conservation:

Due to success of rural tourism in some rural centric areas, there has been considerable safeguard of the environmental resources and biodiversity. As the natural resources are the key elements of a rural tourism set up, there has been a lot of positive conservation approach towards a sustainable tourism development direction in the rural centric areas. The environment is a powerful resource for tourism as it plays a major role in attracting tourists to the destinations and due to tourism landscape conservation has become quite effective [18].

2.8.4: Alternative Sustainable Livelihood:

Most of the countries actively involved in tourism sector have understood the importance of rural development and thereby are constantly launching various rural development schemes for offering rural livelihood security, however the desired results are yet to fulfilled due to various shortcomings. Rural tourism has the potential for rural development by offering an alternate source of sustainable livelihood for the rural folks. The progress of rural tourism in richly biodiverse areas has helped local rural communities to alternate sustainable livelihood options [131];[132].

2.8.5: Woman Empowerment:

Though women participation in tourism sector is far higher than the male counter mates, however they have not been able to empower themselves in comparison to that of the males. Empowerment is a broader aspect which necessitates the critical aspect of gender equality in society, where men and women avail the same opportunities, outcomes ,rights and obligations in every sphere of their daily chores [133]. Rural Tourism initiatives has provided opportunities to the rural women folks to get actively involved in tourism activities and also be able to achieve a high degree of work life balance.

2.9: Challenges of Rural Tourism

Though rural tourism initiatives globally have helped the rural agrarian economies as an additional sources of livelihood opportunities [134]and is considered has a pivotal

means for the socio-economic development for the rural areas [135]. The rapid development of rural tourism initiatives purely for economic gains do come with its share of negative impacts and does create an imbalance in some of the fragile rural eco systems.

Some of infrastructural development carried out in the name of rural tourism initiatives in the rural areas can threaten the environment hence construction activities should be carried out appropriately so there is minimum or no damage to the geological and soil profile of the area.

During tourist season times, it has been observed that the rural tourist destination is catering to more than the carrying capacity thus resulting to imbalances in the fragile biodiversity and if it remains unchecked the damages would be irreversible. Some of the major challenges due to unplanned over development of tourism initiatives results to soil erosion, different forms of pollution, attrition of natural resources, threat to biodiversity and creating an imbalance in the eco-system.[136];[137]

The concept of rural tourism initiatives should be small scale but at times due to increased tourism activities in the rural areas there seems to be huge construction activity in context to accommodation units and due to the seasonality aspects, the economic returns from these accommodation units may not be up to expected levels. There seems to be a high rate of business failures in the rural areas as the operating cost of the units are high and people engaged in the tourism activities from the rural communities are not trained and lacks certain traits and experiences [105]. It becomes imperative to initiate capacity building and refresher courses at local rural level, so that the local rural folks involved in tourism operating businesses acquire the proper traits and skills needed to run the operations.

Apart from biodiversity and environmental changes there seems to socio-cultural impacts on the rural communities due to the exposure of rural tourism initiatives. When tourist visits the rural areas there is a tendency of the demonstration effect which brings around changes in the traditional culture of the local rural communities leading to eroding of the rich rural socio-cultural heritage and practices. The most eminent theory on tourist and host community engagement is the Doxey's Irridex or "Irritation Index" [138]. According to Doxey's theory: - the first stage is *Euphoria*- where tourists are welcome and host communities are happy about tourist arrivals. The

second stage is *Apathy*- where the tourists are taken for granted and seen as a source of economic gains only. The third stage is *Irritation or Annoyance*- where the number of tourists crosses over its carrying capacity and as a result there is inflation, increased pollution, littering, crimes etc. the host communities get irritated and annoyed due to the presence of tourists. The fourth stage is *Antagonism*- where the host perceives that tourists are the harbingers of all ills and blames the tourists for all the transgressions in the host society.

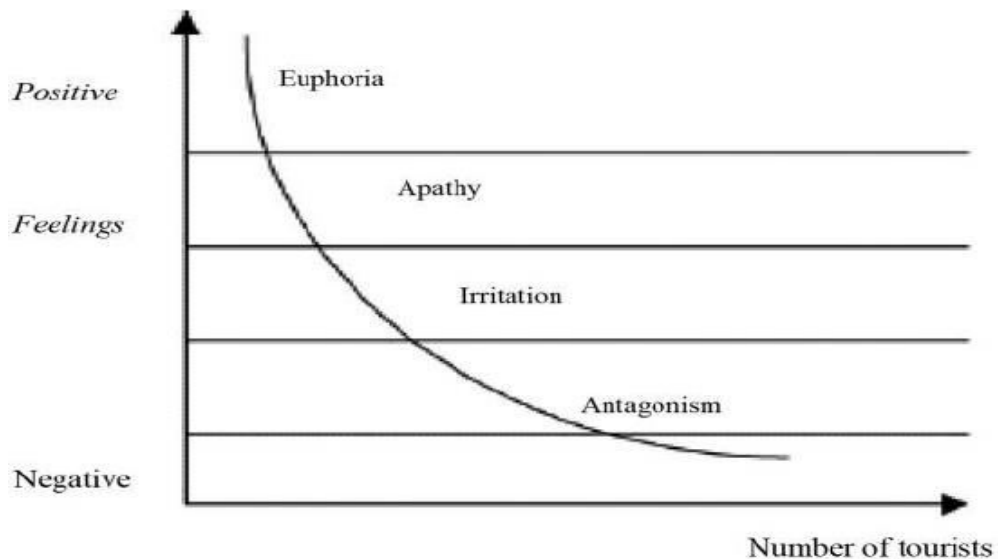


Figure 2.3: Doxey's Model on Host Irritation

Source:- Doxey's-Irritation Index, [138]

Due to tourism engagement local cultural heritage of host communities are subject to commoditization. Indigenous cultural heritage and practices becomes touristic services and merchandises as they are performed for tourist consumption. "We already know from worldwide experience that local culture... is altered and often destroyed by the treatment of it as a touristic attraction. It is made meaningless to the people who once believed in it...[139]. Also, the local culture can be commoditized by anybody, without any permission from the local communities and can be expropriated thus leaving the local communities exploited [139].

Some of the influences which are seen because of engagement between tourism and culture are commoditisation, staged authenticity and alien tourist experiences [140].

Due to tourism engagements the local cultures due to commoditisation have become meagre commodities rather than heritage and the unadopted versions more attractive [141].

Table 2.7: Tourism Impacts on Rural communities.

RESEARCHER	Effects of Tourism on Rural Communities
Friedmann [142]	Through rural tourism initiatives communities in rural areas can empower themselves and have additional livelihood opportunities. Though rural tourism primarily focuses in rural areas, the rural folks not only is economically empowered, but also socially, politically, and psychologically. Rural tourism initiatives also help to improve the local economy and the livelihoods of the community members.
Cloke & Little[143]	Rurality concepts has different interpretations. The rural lifestyles and the rural value eco-systems of the rural community members tends to denote the rurality concept. However, due to rural tourism initiative, the rurality factor should not be commodified and should not be based entirely on economic benefits as demanded by the tourism initiatives.
Burns [144]	Tourism being a global phenomenon and in respect to rural tourism initiatives, it can be an important tool for the upliftment of the local economy and the local community. The very basic concept of rural tourism is the sustainability approach along with the integration of the local places and local communities' development mode. Excessive tourism development and expansion in rural areas may create a gap between the local communities and the tourism stake holders, thus eventually leading to conflicts and the primary agenda of development of the local economy and the local community may be in jeopardy. Excessive expansion of tourism in the rural areas may yield more livelihood opportunities, but it will be hard to see if these opportunities benefit the local communities holistically and furthermore unchecked negative impacts may affect the quality of life of the local agrarian rural folks.
Tosun [78]	In rural tourism initiatives of the rural circuits the community participation and involvement should not be based on rigid framework. However, it is pertinent to achieve the success of rural tourism initiatives that members from the local community members should be involved as stake holders for tourism operations so that maximum benefits are routed towards the local economy and the local community development. Also, it is important to ascertain the scale of community participation in tourism business based on the level of tourism expansion. Quick economic gains cannot be the only reason for community members to participate actively in tourism business, the sustainability factor should not be compromised and the democratic rights of community members to indulge or refrain from tourism operations should also be considered, as in not all community members would be tourism receptive.
Weaver [145]	The exposure to nature, picturesque landscapes, tranquillity, vibrant rural cultural fabric, and the rurality factor has been appealing a lot of tourists to visit the rural environments in the rural circuits. Due to the rural settings many alternative tourism forms like adventure, rural, eco, agro, village, etc tourisms can be initiated or expanded in these rural environments. Thus, the communities in these rural setting have been benefitting both economically and socially due to the development of tourism with regard to the number of tourist arrivals, hospitality services offered to the tourists and the meaningful engagement between the tourists and the host communities. Due to rapid expansion of tourism activities in the rural setting and the growing negative impacts have made the rural communities to act and collaborate with tourism agencies and other stake holders to monitor tourism development under the umbrella of sustainable development.
Simpson [146]	Rural area tourism operations are generally on small scale considering the fragile eco-system of the rural settings and based on the carrying capacity of the regions and not deviating from the path of sustainable development. Due to various initiatives of tourism development at rural settings, the communities' benefits in many folds, as in financial benefits and lower cost of investments for tourism startups, also community stake holders involved in tourism business gets grants and aids to stimulate growth of tourism in the rural settings and also capacity building and skill enhancement courses and workshops are regularly conducted by Government and other agencies to enhance the human resource skill levels. Furthermore, receipts from tourism activities fosters investment for conservation practices.

Source: Compiled by Scholar.

2.10: Local Community Development

The overall development of the local community encompasses three aspects., economic, social, and environmental. Community progress can be measured by TBL (Triple Bottom Line) concept initiated by John Elkington [147]. The TBL method is used in business and sustainability to evaluate and measure an organisation's performance in three key areas: social, environmental and economic. It goes beyond the traditional financial reporting by considering the broader impact of an organisation's activities on society and the environment.

The main concept of rural tourism initiatives is community development. It is necessary that community members should participate in rural tourism initiatives as stakeholders so that purpose of rural community development is achieved. Communities benefiting economically, socio-cultural, and environmentally from rural tourism initiatives has greater local development community.

Successful rural tourism initiatives lead to economic development of a community through rise in the income level, employment opportunity, infrastructure development and tourism entrepreneurial ventures.[148]; [149]; [150]; [151]; [131]; [152].

Rural tourism initiatives in rural areas have socio-cultural benefits like poverty alleviation, women empowerment, community pride, advancement of cross-cultural understanding, preservation of cultural heritage and helps to fight against ills of society such as child prostitution, illegal sale of drugs and liquor, gambling, child labour etc[138]; [153]; [154]; [67]; [43].

Development of community's environment is also fostered by tourism initiatives such as protection of the ecology, flora and fauna, preservation of the rural and natural resources, funding for animal reserves, controlling of pollution [155];[153] ; [154]; [43].

Rural tourism initiatives to foster long term local community development should be developed on sustainable approach so that economic, social and environmental balance is maintained through orderly and cohesive expansion [43].

2.11: Landmark papers for the research study:

For this research, a large number of tourism literatures on rural tourism has been critically referred, so as to enable the researcher to have a clear perspective of the impacts of rural tourism initiatives and vis a vis the upliftment of the local communities due to rural tourism initiatives. The primary reason to initiate rural tourism initiatives in rural areas to benefit the local agrarian communities and the local rural economy. Additional livelihood opportunities can be generated for the rural folks, resulting in extra income [156]. Also, foreign exchange earnings, infrastructure development, cultural exchange, demand for local handlooms and crafts etc are the other advantages of rural tourism development [63]; [157]. Along with the positive impacts, the tourism sector also generates its share of negative impacts like inflation, crime, drugs, prostitution, lifestyle changes of people, etc [156]; [157]. The impacts generated by tourism development can be categorised as economic, socio-cultural, and ecological impacts and can be positive as well as negative. In context of tourism expansion in rural areas, it is imperative to involve the rural communities in tourism development, so as to route the maximum benefits to the local communities and the local economy, in order to have a meaningful guest host engagement. Out of the many tourism literatures referred for the present study, some of the prominent studies related to rural tourism has been reviewed and arranged year wise.

Willard.T.Chow [159] studied the impacts of rural tourism initiatives with the development of the rural areas in Hawaii. In this study the focus was on the benefits of rural tourism expansion in the rural areas of Hawaii with the help of appropriate tourism planning and cautious development keeping in mind the ethnicity and the cultural ethos of the place. Another important aspect raised in the study is the approach adopted for rural tourism development being a community-based tourism sustainable approach and the involvement and participation of the local communities as stake holders for tourism expansion so that maximum benefits would be routed for the development of the rural areas and the local rural communities.

Francios J.Belisle and Don R. Hoy [56] studied the impacts of tourism by the host communities in context to Santa Marta, Columbia. The study was primarily focussed on the effects of tourism development by the residents and the resulting consequences. In the analysis much of the apparent impacts were categorised as favourable in

comparison to some unfavourable by the host communities. The effects were primarily economic and social in the study.

Alistair Mathieson and Geoffrey Wall [3] studied the impacts of tourism development from a global perspective. The study focusses on effects of tourism growth such as economic, socio-cultural, and ecological impacts and the benefits to the various tourism stake holders.

Amar Chand [160] studied the prospect and challenges of tourism in Kullu Manali region of Himachal Pradesh. The study was done to see the existing tourism facilities for the tourist and also to analyse the shortcomings. The study also analysed the factors necessary for proper and effective tourism development like proper planning, adhering to local legislation, active involvement of all stake holders, local entrepreneurship development etc.

Brian S.Duffield [161] studied the economic and social influences of tourism development in rural Scotland. The study also analysed the active participation and involvement of the local communities and stake holders in tourism development and expansion along with measuring the benefits from tourism in terms of expenditures and receipts.

Victor T.C.Middleton [162] conducted a study of the tourism literature of Wales and Scotland rural areas. The study analysed that the tourism sector causes the least ecological damages in comparison to other sectors and also due to rapid urbanization visitors are slowly moving to rural areas from urban areas for holidays and pleasure. Due to the changing trends, there is an urgent need for proper legislation and policies from the tourism bodies of England and Wales.

R.N.Kaul [163] studied the whole concept of tourism and its dynamics. In the first volume of the book, the focus was on the tourism policies of the state, the goals and objectives of tourism, role of national and international tourism agencies and organisations. The second and the third volume of the book, there was analysis of the accommodation sector and the role of transportation and marketing in tourism, respectively.

Hasan Zafer Dogan [61] studied the socio-cultural effects of tourism in developing and developed nations. The focus of the study was to review the impacts of tourism in the local community and also the preventive measures adopted by the local tourism stakeholders to mitigate the unfavourable socio-cultural impacts. The study also highlighted that due to the major focus on economic gains from tourism exposure, the socio-cultural gains effects were generally side-lined and as a consequence some of the local cultural heritage has been weakened or altered. The study also analyses on the conflicts of tourist and host communities, resulting due to immense pressure of tourism-on-tourism local resources. Without undermining the economic gains, the communities and the stakeholders of tourism need to strategize and come up with community centric approaches so that the socio-cultural heritage of the host communities are safeguarded even due to advent of vast tourism exposure.

Yogesh Hole [164] studied the issues and solutions to the development of tourism sector in India. The main focus of the study was to identify the challenges associated with the development of tourism in India and also to explore the remedial measures so that tourism development can be catered smoothly. The output of the study highlighted the abundance reserve of tourism resources in the study area and at the same time analysed the various challenges faced by this sector and ways and means to remove the shortcomings.

Chris Cooper, John Fletcher, David Gilbert and Stephen Wanhill [165] authored the book titled “Tourism, Principle and Practice”. The main focus of the book examined the Tourism phenomenon and its allied dynamics, such as the demand and supply of tourism, tourism destinations and tourism marketing. The various effects of tourism development were analysed such as economic, socio-cultural, and ecological.

Samuel V. Lankford & Dennis R. Howard [38] studied the impacts of tourism sector in Columbia River George area of USA, with the help of a multi-item attitude scale. The main focus of the study was to assess the host communities’ responses for tourism development with help of some selected variables structured in a Likert scale. The findings from the study highlighted that the opinions of the residents were varied and mostly depended on factors that affected them favourably and negatively. Residents who benefitted directly or indirectly from tourism development had positive responses and vice-versa. The findings also highlighted the involvement and participation of the

host communities in tourism development so that desired results could be achieved for betterment for both host and guest.

J.R. Brent Ritchie and Charles. R. Goeldner [166] studied the effects of tourism industry through a structural method adopted to compute the economic impacts triggered by tourism development. The study also reviewed various tourism literatures to find out methods and techniques to estimate the economic impacts. The findings of the study analysed both primary and secondary gains from the economic impacts of tourism development. Methods adopted to assess the economic effects were through observations, assumption through analysis, experiments and statistical analysis using SPSS.

Kunal Chattopadhyaya [167]) studied the economic effects of tourism development with reference to developed and developing economies. The focus of the study was the economic gains through tourism development in Indian context. The study also highlighted the countries from developing economies benefiting economically due to tourism growth. Various case studies were used to justify the views of the researcher.

Nicholas Haralambopoulos and Abraham Pizam [154] studied the social effects of tourism growth in Samos area of Greece. The inferences drawn from the study suggest that there have been favourable economic benefits due to tourism growth and at the same time in the contrary there has been increase rates of crime, prostitution, drugs, and vandalism. As social impacts are not the same in all the places hence to analyse the social effects due to tourism growth, some variables of the residents were adopted and analysed to understand the results.

Nirmal Kumar [168] studied the tourism potential of Himachal Pradesh in context to economic gains. The main focus of the research of the study area is the availability of abundance tourism resources for all the segments of tourist. The findings from the study suggested, despite the availability of the tourism resources, the state of Himachal Pradesh has not been able to achieve the desired results in reference to tourist arrivals and tourism receipts. The challenges identified were related due to the shortcomings of infrastructure, accessibility and state government outlook and approach towards tourism development.

S.P. Bansal and Sunil Gupta[169] studied the prospects and challenges of tourism development in hilly areas. Findings from the study suggested that the impacts of tourism development should not be economic centric only but also to preserve the socio-cultural and ecological aspects, so that these fragile hilly regions are still good to stay and visit. To maintain the fragile eco-systems of the hilly regions, the approach for tourism development adopted should be on a sustainable mode and based on the carrying capacity of the region.

Paul Brunt & Paul Courtney [67] studied the host community's responses on socio-cultural impacts in South Devon, U.K. The study was primarily exploratory and extensive tourism literatures were reviewed. The focus of the study to assess the socio-cultural impacts was drawn from tourism literature's basis namely tourism growth, guest host engagement and culture. The survey conducted with the local residents of South Devon highlighted significance changes in the attitude and lifestyles of the local communities and also pro-tourism and anti-tourism attitudes was noticed.

Caroline Ashley [170] studied the effects of rural initiatives in Namibia, Africa. The focus of the study on local community development was not only to be analysed by economic benefits from tourism expansion. But, also to have a holistic view of multiple livelihood opportunities from different usage of the agrarian land in association with tourism activities. Inferences drawn from the study suggested the role of tourism stake holders and adoption of tourism approaches to be in sync with the rural area's environment.

Allard Blom [171] studied the physical impact of tourism development and the role

Of sustainable tourism development in the study area of lake Balaton in Hungary. The focus of the study was to analyse the prospects of tourism growth to be able to contribute towards preservation and conservation of the study area and at the same time to be able to boost the local economy. The findings from the study also highlighted the insights from residents and tourists' responses on physical impacts due to tourism growth and enhancing the sustainability of the tourism resources.

S.P.Bansal [36]studied the tourism growth and its effects in the state of Himachal Pradesh of India. The focus of the study highlighted the profile of the local host community, the stake holders involved in tourism business and the tourists. The study

also highlights the effects of tourism development on the local communities of Himachal Pradesh and the statistical analysis reveals significant growth of tourism in the state along with favourable and unfavourable impacts. The advent of tourism is not a new phenomenon in Himachal Pradesh and has successfully managed to attract many tourists over the decades along with help of state and private tourism agencies like HPTDC etc.

Ian Knowd [172] studied both positive and negative aspect of rural tourism initiatives. The focus of the study was to examine the concepts of rural tourism and to explore the meaningful engagement between the tourist and the host communities during earlier times. Inferences drawn from the study reveal the dual role rural tourism initiatives play by firstly contributing to the tourism sector and the local agrarian economy and community. Under the umbrella of rural tourism initiative various other forms of tourism can be incorporated such as village tourism, agritourism, eco-tourism, etc.

Kyungmi Kim [173] studied the consequences of tourism impact on the quality of life of the host communities of Virginia in USA. Inferences drawn from the study suggest that the resident's satisfaction was based on the accomplishment of life expectations in context to monetary well-being to social well-being. The study also focussed on the fact that the analysis of tourism impacts affects the satisfaction level of the host communities. The study also reveals the strong correlation between economic gains and material well-being to social impact and community well-being.

Guy Scott [174] studied the rural tourism initiative and its impact in Zambia. The study focussed on the sustainable development of tourism initiatives and the role of tourism and agriculture in contributing towards the local economy and the development of the local communities in Zambia. The paper also focusses on the Government initiatives in easing restrictions on gaming licenses-so as to increase more tourist's footfall and also the importance of the local community participation in tourism businesses.

Jenny Holland, Michael Burian and Louise Dixey [175] studied the prospects of initiating rural tourism development in Uganda and Czech . The paper focussed on both the positive and negative impact impacts of rural tourism development and the keen interest of both the governments in developing the rural tourism concept in their

rural areas. The study revealed that initially there was more thrust from the government of Uganda for rural tourism development as compared from the Czech counterparts. Inferences from the study highlighted the use of the trail concept in packaging a variety of tourism enticements of good quality so that tourists are motivated to travel. Community cooperative societies were developed in Uganda to be stake holders in tourism businesses and in Czech local and new entrepreneurs were influenced to develop the rural tourism initiatives. Despite resistance in both the countries either from the tourism boards or due to security issues especially in Uganda, the rural tourism initiative has been initiated and it is to be seen in the due course of time whether the rural economies and the rural communities are benefitted in both the countries.

Alain. R. Thermil [176] studied the impact of rural tourism development and the perceptions of the local communities of Haiti. The study reviewed the opinions of the rural Haitians in responses to the effect of rural tourism progress in relation to economic, social, and environmental impacts. Inferences drawn from the study emphasizes that the perception of the local Haitians varied with the level of tourism development, though most of responses echoed the positive economic impacts and negative environmental impact.

Bernard Lane [177] studied the growth of rural tourism through a sustainable approach, which could be an important means for rural development and ecological conservation. The focus of the study is to emphasize the dimensions of sustainability in rural tourism development. Inferences drawn from the study highlights on the development of smaller markets and economic gains along with ecological conservation should be the main agenda for this niche tourism form. The study also focusses on a meaningful tourist host engagement vis a tourist information centre so that socio-cultural fabric of the local communities could be well highlighted.

Leena Mathew[178] studied the sustainable eco-rural tourism growth of Kerala in India. The focus of the study is the sustainable approach adopted for the development of eco and rural tourism initiatives. The rural tourism strategies for the sustainable development should include a holistic approach encompassing both macro and micro initiatives in respect to economic, socio-cultural, and environmental sustainability.

Andrej Udovc and Anton Perpar [179] studied the role of rural tourism initiatives for the development of rural areas by comparing two rural destinations of Slovenia, one with high variety of tourism activities and the other being simply farm based. The study analysed how varied tourism activities impacting the growth possibilities of the study areas. Inferences drawn from the study highlights rural tourism being a niche form of tourism is very important for both the study areas, more so due to the sustainable approach and economic benefits.

Naser Egbali, Abbas Bakhshandea Nosrat & Sayyed. K. S.A. Pour [180] studied the impacts of positive and negative rural tourism in Semnam province of Iran. The focus of the study is to highlight both positive and negative effects of rural tourism development in the said study area. Positive effects accounts for economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects, economic benefits include making the local economy strong and vibrant, employment opportunities at local domains so that rural migration could be checked, socio-cultural benefits include in reviving the local culture, community pride and identity and environment aspects include preservation and conservation of the natural resources. Negative impacts include price inflation, changes of the local work structure, increasing pollution and crime related activities, changes in socio-cultural practices and environmental aspects includes destruction and exploitation of the natural resources in the name of tourism development. Findings from the study highlights that in order to achieve sustainable rural tourism development, negative impacts are to be mitigated or minimized through innovative measures and strengthening the positive impacts.

T.Zarenthung Ezung [181] studied the hidden resources of rural tourism at Wokha district predominantly inhabited by the Lotha tribe in Nagaland. Inferences drawn from the study analyses the reasons for poor footfall of tourists, despite the state of Nagaland being bestowed with abundant flora and fauna and rich cultural fabric of the 16 major tribes. The paper also focusses on the aspects of easing entry formalities for tourists, early solution for political stability so that a sense of peace and security is prevailed in the minds of tourists visiting the state.

Deigracia Nongkynrih and Daisy Das [182] studied the impacts of rural tourism initiatives on the income of the families of Mawlynnong village in Shillong. In the study the researcher has used two variables namely education and gender of the

households of the study area to measure influences on the income levels through rural tourism initiatives. Inferences drawn from the study highlights the income generated from tourism is comparatively much higher than agriculture and allied activities, hence rural or village tourism can be an alternative source of livelihood for the rural folks of the study area. The study also rejects any influence of gender and education in the income levels of the household of the study area, however occupation of the villagers determines the income levels. Lastly the paper highlights the success of rural tourism model in the study area is primarily due to the involvement and participation of the rural community in tourism affairs and being positive towards tourism development.

P. Nayak and S.K. Mishra [29] studied the prospects and challenges of promoting tourism in Meghalaya with special reference to Shillong. According to the study, tourism in the state is at a nascent stage but has tremendous potential for tourism growth due to the availability of the tourism resources. Though the state had its share of bottlenecks with militancy, political unrest etc but due to the improvement of law and order, the growth of tourism in the state is back at its track with a large number of domestic and international tourist footfalls. Since the state of Meghalaya doesn't have a very vibrant industrial sector, the tourism sector can fill up the gap to a large extent and be able to create opportunities for economic gains, employment, etc.

Gourab Bera [183] studied the potentiality and challenges of tourism development at Shillong city in Meghalaya. The paper focusses on the low participation of the tribal community in tourism development and on the occasional tourist host conflicts. The paper also focuses on proactive tourism strategies and effective tourism policies for the sustainable tourism development.

Mudang Tagiya [184] studied the prospects of rural tourism initiatives in the Apatami villages of the Ziro valley in Arunachal Pradesh of India. The paper focusses rural tourism as a tool for economic, socio-cultural, and sustainable development of the rural areas. The study also highlights through the implementation of rural tourism initiatives, additional livelihood opportunities will be created for the local agrarian communities and also job opportunities for the rural communities-especially the marginalised segment of society the rural women folks.

Sharad K.Kulshrestha and A.Kumar [185] studied the dimension of rural tourism in Chandigre rural tourism project of Garo Hills districts of Meghalaya in context to rural sustainability and economic upliftment. Inferences drawn from the study highlights the possible challenges in rural tourism development in Garo hills also the scope for developing rural entrepreneurs and at the same time strengthening the rural tourism stakeholders by capacity programmes by the tourism agencies.

Kuldeep Singh, Arnab Gantait, Goldi Puri and G. Anjaneya Swamy [186] studied the need for and importance of rural tourism initiative in Indian context, primarily to create alternative livelihood opportunities for the rural agrarian community and also create job opportunities for the rural masses. The paper focusses on effective strategy formulation for marketing and promoting rural tourism initiatives not only for the domestic tourists but also for overseas tourists as India is known as a land of villages and vibrant cultural fabric. Inferences drawn from the study highlights the benefits of rural tourism initiative for the rural economy and the rural community. The paper also highlights the various issues and challenges of rural tourism development in India and also insights of valuable suggestions to promote village or rural tourism concept so that it can be an important mechanism for poverty alleviation.

Sanjay Sinha [187] studied the prospects and challenges of tourism industry at Cherrapunjee in Meghalaya. The paper focusses on the rich and abundant natural resources at the study area, however the tourist footfall is not subsequent, due to poor tourism management. The paper focusses on the potentials for tourism development in the study area and also analyse the challenges associated with it.

Papiya Dutta, Samiran Patgiri and Krishna Choudhury [188] studied the concept of rural tourism initiative in being able to generate alternative and sustainable livelihood in Northeast of India. The paper focusses on rural tourism being an important tool for economic development, women empowerment and employment opportunities of the rural folks. The concept of rural tourism is very pertinent to Indian context as a country being the second most populace country in the world and where about 75 percent of the population reside in the rural belts in about 7 million villages.

Wesking Khyriem [189] studied the tourism impacts on the economic development of Meghalaya. The paper focusses on the abundant tourism resources bestowed in the

state, but there is a lack of effort in tapping the resourcefulness of this industry. The paper also highlights the unexplored tourism areas, where tourism initiatives could be initiated, resulting in economic development of the rural areas and the rural folks.

Bijoylaxmi Sarmah & Neeraj Sharma [190] studied the eco-tourism and tourist engagement in eco-tourism context in Mawlynong village of Meghalaya. The study focusses on the community-based approach adopted for eco-tourism initiatives so as to have a balance between the quality of life of human beings and the preservation of the resources. Inferences drawn from the study suggest that effective tourist host engagements result in making tourist aware about the local cultural values and eco-tourism practices and the study further negates that meaningful tourist host engagement results in higher degree of sustainable tourism in a region. The study also provides strategies and roadmap for tourism stake holders and allied agencies to replicate the Mawlynnong eco-tourism initiative in other areas of the state.

Baiartis.L.Peinlang [191] studied the impacts of tourism in the state of Meghalaya and the tourism sector being an effective tool for providing an alternative means of livelihood for the local communities, without disturbing the socio-cultural fabric and unbalancing the fragile eco system of a place. . The paper focussed on the tremendous scope for alternative tourism development, due to huge reserves of natural tourism resources. The paper also highlights the tourism development in the rural areas to be community centric as in the entire tourism initiatives should be controlled and operated by the local community stake holders so that maximum benefits could be routed to the local economy and the community members This paper focusses on adopting alternative tourism forms, so that the natural resources could be conserved, and these places are good to visit and live. Lastly the paper focusses of tourism development to be under the umbrella of community-based approach so that the tourism resources could be sustained... The paper also focusses on the measures to be adopted like introduction of niche tourism forms to combat seasonality.

Bhaskar Kumar Kakati[192] studied the trends of tourism growth in the North-eastern states of India. The focus of the study is to explore the reasons for less tourist footfall in the region, despite having abundant tourism resources and a rich vibrant ethnic cultural fabric. The study also proposes a model for promotion of different forms of

rural tourism initiatives with the help of Government Private Community Partnership (GPCP).

Maria Luiza Souca [193] studied the prospects of revitalizing rural tourism concept via creative tourism in the rural villages of Romania. The paper highlights the reasons for marginal growth in rural tourism development in the study area due to primarily lack of involvement and participation of the local community in tourism affairs. And also due to changes in the expectations of the tourists in their tourism experiences. The paper also highlights the need for development of rural tourism initiatives in a creative and innovative manner, so that changes of consumer behaviour patterns could be checked and make tourism experiences more meaningful and valuable. The paper also states the importance of the local community members not only as stake holders but also in long term tourism planning and development so that the real mission of rural tourism initiatives could be achieved.

Priyanka.P.Sai , D. Loukham, J.R.Singh, A. Choudhury and N.M.P. Rani [194] studied the rural tourism initiatives in the two popular villages of Mawlynnong and Sohliya of Meghalaya . The paper highlighted the reasons for tourist visiting these two rural tourism centres and also measured the satisfaction level of the tourists based on climatic conditions and cleanliness. The study also highlighted the need for more training of the local host communities through capacity building programmes so that more local entrepreneurial ventures and avenues could be established so that along with the tourism destination the local cultural fabric could be highlighted.

Dr Kiran Kumari and Pura Omo [195] studied the concepts and prospects of community-based tourism initiatives in Ziro valley of Arunachal Pradesh. The paper focusses on the Apatami tribe's distinctive traditional practises in natural resources management and conservation and being able to attract tourists from mainland India and overseas. Inferences drawn from the study highlights the Community based tourism initiatives in the study area in being able to preserve the inherent ethnicity and at the same time economically benefitting the local tribal community.

Priyanka P. Sai and Loukham Devarani [196] studied the community participation in rural tourism initiative in two rural destinations in Meghalaya, namely Mawlynnong and Sohliya village. The focus of the study was the community engagement along with

the tourism stake holders so that successful and sustainable rural tourism ventures could be initiated. Inferences from the study will help the stake holders of rural tourism to make a comprehensive business plan and strategize accordingly so that there is maximum local community participation and benefits are routed to the local economy and the community members. The study also focusses on formation of cooperative societies in the local communities so that there are a holistic economic and socio-cultural gains from rural tourism initiatives.

2.12: Research Gaps

Based on the review of literature, there seems to be many studies on tourism, and it has become a popular study area for many researchers across the globe. In India context, a lot of studies on rural tourism has been carried out in the country and in the northeast but very few related studies on niche rural tourism are conducted in the state of Meghalaya.

Comprehensive study of present literature on tourism brings out that study of tourism generated through different factors like positive and negative impacts encompassing economic, social and environmental aspects, host community and tourist perception, growth and development of tourism pros and cons etc.

Studies of rural tourism on tourist centric seems to be more dominating than that of local community. Existing tourism literatures have revealed that there are more studies to entice tourists and improving the product rather than on the influences of tourism on the lives of the local rural community.

In existing rural tourism literatures, there seems to be more emphasis on the economic gains rather than on the socio-cultural and environmental domains. Also, studies relating to economic benefits derived through rural tourism initiatives seldom highlights on the quality of economic benefits and how it is beneficial to the local agrarian folks. There is also a lacuna about the views of the local rural people of Meghalaya due to lack of extensive studies on the perception of local people in Meghalaya about the benefits of rural tourism initiatives and hence the overall goal and objectives of rural tourism is in jeopardy.

Tourism literatures reviews have stated that for successful rural tourism initiatives it is imperative for the participation of the local communities and the level of participation governs the sustainability of the tourism project but there are relatively very less studies on the motivation level that pulls the rural communities to be engaged in tourism operations.

There is a good number of tourism literature for recording the perceived impact of tourism, aiding and participation of tourism development but majority of these studies have been done in urban perspective and constrained to mostly western nations and whatever limited research has been done in the rural areas, its primary focus has been to study the impacts rather than exploring the perceived participation from the host communities.

This research is aimed to connect the perceived involvement of the rural host communities with perceived impacts due to rural tourism initiatives so that there is a holistic development of the rural communities and the villages so that these villages are good to live and visit.

Both at national and global levels there has been several studies on rural tourism. However, from the tourism literatures accessed and analysed there has not been any study on rural tourism or alternative tourism in Meghalaya's Ri-Bhoi district.

As a result, a study highlighting the prospects of rural tourism initiatives for the development of the rural communities and the villages of Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya has been conducted.

Existing tourism literatures on community perception can assist stake holders to develop tourism expansion in a sustainable manner, thus fulfilling the demands of the tourists and without compromising the problems related to the host community.

Rural tourism is one of the most challenging and sensitive form of tourism where the role of the local community and their wellbeing is pivotal hence the development of rural tourism initiatives in the rural areas should be incorporated with a sustainable approach along with research studies to preview the mindset of the local community about the positive impacts rather than harping on quick economic gains only.

Table 2.8: Some of the Tourism Literatures along with Research Gaps that is relevant to present study.

S.L. No	Title of Paper	Author & Publication Details	Research Gaps	Relevance to Present Study
1	Capturing Community Participation in Rural Tourism	Priyanka P.Sai and Loukham Devarani (2022)	Reasons for non-involvement and non-participation are not incorporated significantly.	To influence the local rural communities to participate and involve in Rural Tourism Initiatives through various capacity development initiatives.
2	Tourism in Meghalaya: A case study of the Cleanest Village in India	D.Nongkynrih and D. Das (2012)	Role of Community Based Tourism well explained but the Sustainable Approach adopted by the local communities was not significantly incorporated.	Along with CBT initiatives the Sustainable Tourism approach in rural tourism development is important to preserve and conserve the fragile rural eco-systems.
3	Rural Tourism of Northeast India: Prospects and Challenges.	K. Choudhury.et.al. (2018)	Prospects and Challenges of rural tourism development in the Northeast is significantly highlighted however mere projecting the potentials due to the vast tourism resources available will not make the rural tourism projects able to sustain or expand what is missing in the paper the holistic development approach of rural tourism initiatives and also the approach of overcoming the challenges is not significantly explained.	With abundant tourism endowments in India's northeastern states, rural tourism schemes can be an important tool for development of the rural belts so that rural communities and the rural economies are benefitted, hence proper planning and approach with the help of local communities and stake holders will help to develop the rural tourism schemes in the rural belts in a holistic manner.
4	The scope of Tourism in Meghalaya	B. Peinlang (2019)	Tourism in Meghalaya is at times over its carrying capacity and thus creating a lot of pressure to the resources and also to the host communities	With the rural locations having fragile eco-systems, the planning and development for rural tourism initiatives should be done in small scales so that balance is maintained
5	Revitalizing Rural Tourism through Creative Tourism: The Role and importance of the Local Community.	M.L. Souca (2019)	The paper does not significantly highlight how the rural tourism can be revitalized through creative tourism by the local communities.	If rural tourism is to be successfully initiated and expanded the only way is through the local communities engaging as stakeholders in operating the tourism business with help of forming cooperative societies so that the benefit from tourism is not targeted to a few individuals only.

6	Rural Tourism in Meghalaya: Experiences and Satisfaction of Tourists.	P.S. Priyanka (2020)	The paper significantly highlights the experiential engagement of tourists rather than that of the host community.	It is important for both host community and the tourist to have meaningful engagement so that both of them sensitive to each other on various aspects and thus resulting in the rural areas are good to stay and visit.
7	Tourism: Its Impact on Economic Development of Meghalaya	W. Khyriem (2018)	The paper only looks at the quick economic contribution by the tourism sector.	To be able to achieve sustainable economic gains, socio-cultural and environmental impacts should also be taken into consideration
8	Rural Tourism and Sustainability; An Explorative study in Garo Hills of Meghalaya	K.H. Kulshetra and A. Kumar (2016)	The paper highlights that through rural tourism initiatives tourism resources could be sustained. The local community involvement and participation in rural tourism initiatives is not significantly highlighted in the paper.	Rural Tourism initiatives in the rural belts alone cannot contribute to conservation and preservation of tourism resources, it is the collaborated efforts of the stake holders and the local community members that can help in rural sustainable development.
9	Rural Tourism in Nagaland, India: Exploring the Potential	T.Z. Ezung (2011)	Nagaland the land ethnic tribes and indigenous festivals is indeed a potential for rural tourism schemes. However, the paper does not highlight the political turmoil and the underdevelopment of basic infrastructures to boost any kind of tourism forms.	For any kind of tourism forms to develop at any rural belts some basic infrastructure and stable political environment is pertinent, despite the regions having vast tourism endowments.
10	The Impacts of Tourism on Rural Livelihoods: Namibia's Experience	C. Ashley (2000)	The paper highlights the alternative livelihoods for the rural agrarian folks due to tourism development, however the paper doesn't mention the required skill sets required for tourism operations at all levels.	Basic skill sets are required for the rural folks to be engaged in any level of tourism operations. Basic capacity training workshop are to be incorporated at various rural tourism circuits to develop the manpower requirement to handle basic tourism operations and result in guest satisfaction.

Source: Compiled by the Research Scholar.

Table: 2.9: Research Framework and Approach through Review of Literature.

Sl.No.	Research Objectives	Variables	Data	Population
1	To examine the present status of tourism in Meghalaya in general and Ri-Bhoi district	Tourist arrivals, List of new tourism destinations, Government endeavours in developing tourism infrastructures,	Literature Review, Scheduled Survey	Tourism stake holders and local community representatives from the study area
2	To examine the prospects of rural tourism in Ri-Bhoi district	Assessing the natural tourism resources of the study area, Basic existing tourism infrastructures, Framework for rural tourism schemes, Manpower skill levels.	Literature Review, Scheduled Survey	Local Community members & local community tourism stake holders
3	To analyse the impact of rural tourism on host communities with respect to economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects.	Economic Impact, Cultural Impact, Environmental Impact	Literature Review, Scheduled Survey	Local Community members & local community tourism stake holders
4	To study the various challenges associated with rural tourism development in the study area.	Challenges such as local & Government support, infrastructure facilities, local community participation and involvement	Literature Review, Scheduled Survey	Local Community members & local community tourism stake holders

Source: Compiled by the Research Scholar.

SUMMARY

This chapter primarily highlights the extensive review of tourism literatures which is aligned to the present research study. This chapter also highlights the numerous tourism research carried out at global, national and regional level which is linked to the study. The tourism literatures reviewed highlights the phenomenon of tourism sectors and its related aspects. The carried-out research on tourism highlights the impacts of tourism with respect to economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects and also previous studies highlights the effects of these impacts on economy and community. The chapter also extensively reviews about alternative tourism and its various forms like village tourism, rural tourism, eco-tourism etc. Tourism literatures also have highlighted the importance of community-based tourism forms, so that the large rural populations could be benefited. The chapter also highlights the numerous challenges for rural tourism development in regard to infrastructure, support from government and other tourism related agencies and also manpower skill level etc. The chapter also identifies the research gaps which initiated the researcher to study the prospects and challenges of rural tourism in the study area. It also highlights the researcher's framework and approach to the study through literature review.