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# **Socio-Cultural Impression of Tourism: A Case Study of Historical Temple Town Bishnupur, in Bankura District, West Bengal**

**Atanu Sen**

*Asst. Professor, Dept. of Geography, Panchmura Mahavidyalaya, Bankura, West Bengal, India*

### **Abstract:**

*Tourism and Amusement industry becomes one of the leading to gear up the national economy of India. It earns the biggest share of national GDP and revenue at same time providing job to skilled and unskilled workers in India. In this way tourism spreads itself from marine environment to mountainous environment from rural landscape to urban architecture. Tourism acts as a benediction by rejuvenating local economy and developmental process but sometimes it may extinguish the local resources and create disguised unemployment. From the socio-cultural point of view it can be said that it combines the cultural traditions with the newer invention of cultural formulation. The tourists from various sides arrived here helps to assemble their culture and living aspects with the local socio-cultural arena. But it also helps to deterioration the unique identity and traditional rural exposure during the context of globalization. The main problems regarding the uncontrolled growth and propagation of tourism may damage local cultural, economic and socio-anthropological dimension of that spots. In this paper it is trying to focus upon negative role of tourism in Bishnupur temple town on its socio-cultural environment. Bishnupur in Bankura district has internationally recognized as one of the cultural heritage for its renowned terracotta made temple, expressing the exotic sculptural beauty and architect of Malla dynasty. This temple town not only famous for its religious significance but it adorns its sculptural beauty, handmade Terracotta craft, conch shells, Baluchari Sari(clothing) and other cultural heritage that makes it as an attractive recreational spot in this district. An Environmental Impact Assessment survey was conducted through sample survey method at major tourist spots in this town to analyze the tourism impact on the livelihood and socio-economic conditions of the local inhabitants. This study shows tourism has sequential influences on local communities by various untreated sewage and wastes, pollutions, road congestions etc. The study also contributes to share real spectrum and information on the contemporaneous tourism impacts and some valuable recommendations on the preservation of its social and civic environmental values.*

**Key words: cultural tourism, Tourism and Amusement industry, Terracotta, conch shells.**

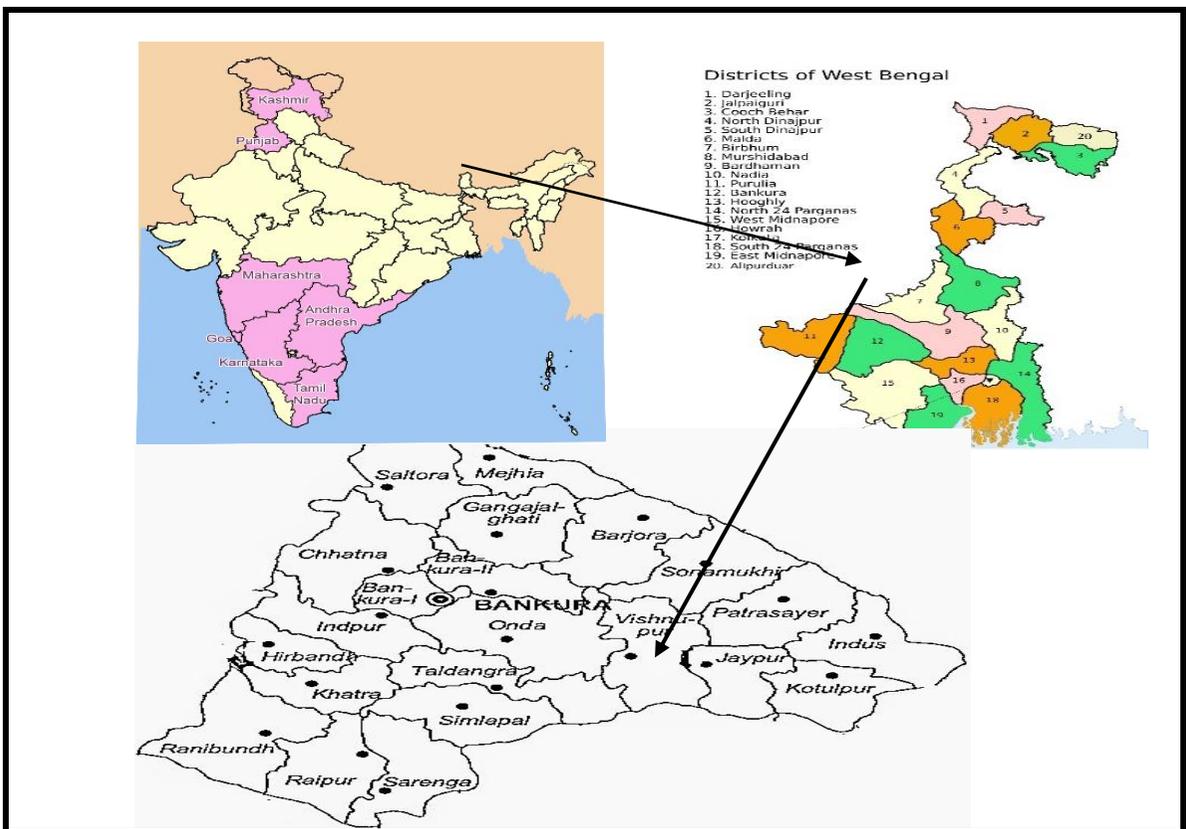
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**Introduction:** Tourism is a temporary mobility of peoples from their own residence to other places for recreation, enjoyment, enrichment of mental health, business and other purposes. Tourist spots are the culturally melting pot in which tourists from various provinces get assimilated with the local residents and this acculturation process influences the host's socio-cultural life. At 21<sup>st</sup> century tourism is a multidisciplinary and complex discipline which can be spatially investigated from various aspects of social science including human geography. The sociological approach focuses the tourism phenomena and its impact on customs, rituals, faith and other socio-cultural and socio-economic life of the inhabitants of the tourist Centre. Now tourism becomes the leading industry of the world (Sarhan et al. 2004) and largest service oriented industry that contributes 6.37% of national Gross Domestic Product. In 2010, total foreign tourist arrival in India was 5.78 million and India has generated about 200 billion US dollars in 2008 and that is expected to increase to US\$375.5 Billion by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate (Ministry of Tourism, 2012). Up to 2010 statistical bureau total foreign arrival in India was 5.78 million which generates 200 billion US Dollar in 2008 and it is expected to increase 375.5 Billion US Dollar by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate. (Ministry of Tourism, 2012). The growing population and economic status often increased the need of leisure and tourism industry at many portions of the globe at present arena. (Shivaru and Kumar, 2015). Today tourism has emerged as a socio-economic giant at Global regional and national level. According to UNWTO tourism industry is helpful for warming up local economy, job creation and multiplier effect in economy. In developing countries, where economy acutely depends on traditional agriculture, which corresponds to poverty, less earning, low industrial development and unequal regional development, tourism can be an effective healer of all these problems. The research on tourism, which acts as a multiple industry having its impact on societal changes at tourism destination is a very emerging issue in sociology. The tourism is now progressing as a multidisciplinary study that incorporates Sociology, Anthropology, Geography, Economics, and Management. At present tourism impact on contemporary social and economic life mainly thrusts on social roles of guests, their motivation, and relation between host and tourists. There are very few areas where tourists are not arrived. Today almost every nation, community irrespective of small or large are benefited by the influence of tourism.

**Rationality of selection of this study area:** Bishnupur in Bankura district of West Bengal named by Lord Vishnu, the family deity of Malla kings. Bishnupur is famous not only by its terracotta temple but its traditional architecture and handicrafts like pottery items, silk weaving makes this place praiseworthy. During 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century it was the capital of Malla kings. Bishnupur flourished for its brilliant and vibrant Terracotta work. The key attraction of this town is its incomparable Terracotta temples. The unique architectures adopted by the Malla king to build up these temples having influences of the neighboring regions. Stone bricks and Terracotta sculpture along with curved roof makes it a well combination of Muslim dome shape and multiple lobe arch types of features. The spectacular temples located at various portions of the town like Rasmancha, Madanmohan Temple, Jor Bangla, temple, Chinnamasta temple and its fort structures of Malla dynasty are

the centre of attractions for last few decades. Bishnupur temple town is located between 22°12'32" N to 22°57'15" N latitude and 87°24'11" E to 87°31'46" E longitude. Local bricks and lateritic elements are taken to build up this temples covered with Terracotta tiles depicting the historic scenes of Ramayana and Mahabharata. Bishnupur also famous for its handloom saris(Baluchari), patachitra, conch shell, brass metal, besides the spectacular terracotta temple. The enriched Bishnupur Gharana music art also famous worldwide for that a school of Hindustani Classical Music still works to alive the local folklore and related practices.

Fig: Study area map



**Database and Methodology:** The research work is conducted through a proper blend of primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through observations, structured and semi structured interview. A questionnaire survey has been operated in the study area upon various stakeholders like local residents, lodge owners, artisans and tourists. On the other hand secondary data has been collected through district hand books, various journals, and published and unpublished web resources. Various seminar Proceedings, articles, journals, environmental documents are deeply assessed for this research work. This present research study focuses upon the tourism impact on socio-

cultural attributes and scenario of Bishnupur. The core adverse impact of tourism on the socio-cultural environment and lifestyles of the local community includes decaying values of Social and cultural systems are the essential elements taken for discussion.

### **Major objectives:**

This research work focusing upon its objectives like.

- a. To find out the positive and negative impact of tourism on the contemporary socio-cultural profile of Bishnupur.
- b. To make a suitable statistical analysis for the direct impact of tourism and recreational industry on the socio-cultural periphery of Bishnupur.
- c. To delimitate the major problems made by tourism and its feasible management techniques.

**Literature review:** Kumar and Kumar (2014) in their research paper analyzed the role of tourism on socio-cultural environment from sociological point of view. According to them the attributes of social system are highly governed by tourist behavior which corresponds the norms, beliefs, societal behavior and traditions. Zhong et al (2010) in their research paper focused on problem and prospect of tourism and it reflects. The tourism operation over the carrying capacities creates harmful situations to their social life's. Matsuoka and Kelly (1988) in their paper focused on the role of tourism development and resort constructions on native Hawaiians socio cultural and environmental conditions. Nayomi and Gnanapala (2015) in their article focused in the area of Impacts of tourism on socio cultural sphere of residents at Kandalama district in Sri Lanka. Proper training, skill enhancement, educational development will lead the tourism positive impacts. Shivaraju and Kumar (2015), in their research article indicated that the unplanned and abrupt expansion of tourism may degrade the socio cultural and economic situation through their case study on Kodagu district in Karnataka.

**A theoretical overview of the impact of tourism in Socio-Cultural environment in Temple town Bishnupur:** Tourism can enhances the level of living in an area by amusement and other recreational opportunities. Tourism provides opportunities to the local people by interacting with tourists, making friendship, getting knowledge about the external world and discover newer possibilities.

The well combination of guests and hosts assimilates the culture and upgrade the level of living. The tourism attraction of local culture and ethnicity enhances the opportunity to preserve its uniqueness and sustainability of existing culture. (Brown 1998).

This type of tourism interest may help to reduce the cultural disparities, and it will provide psychological gratification from the convenience to interplay with various tourists and their demands. The nature of complex interrelation between host and guests (Tourists) may interpreted in four evolutionary stages as connoted by Doxley (Fennel 2007:47-48). These are as follows

- I. Euphoria – tourists are welcomed barring of any planning or scheduling by the local community,
- II. Apathy –In this stage tourists and host relationship becomes formal and commercial. They are considered as a arrival community from which earning can be done.
- III. Discomfort – Local people change their orientation towards tourists. Tourism planner develop the infrastructures planning.
- IV. Antagonism – Irritation and complexities are generated due to unplanned tourism growth. A proper planning should require adopting for overcome this issues.

Tourism must be analyzed with the help of globalization and global consumerism. Tourists, who are the part of consumer oriented society must need the variety of goods, service and amusement. So diversity of tourism products and up gradation as per need of the trend are follows in tourism centres. In our case study area the impact of tourism on concurrent society are as follows.

Positive impact of Tourism:

- I. Enhancement of social way of living.
- II. Enrichment of educational and training facilities.
- III. Enrichment of values and peace education.
- IV. Promotion of cultural modification.
- V. Enhancement of cultural bonding, adoption of newer cultures.
- VI. Conserve the existing cultural identity.
- VII. Historical, archeological sites conservation.
- VIII. Acceptance of social differentiation.
- IX. Psychological attachment.

Negative impact of Tourism:

- I. Abrupt alcoholism, drag abusement.
- II. Pre mature drinking trends.
- III. Sex reacting, prostitution, abolition of social values.
- IV. Language and cultural effects.
- V. Ultramodern lifestyles.
- VI. Slum and ghettos related complexity.
- VII. Earnings and revenue generation becomes slow down.
- VIII. Degradation of traditional social structures.
- IX. Natural and anthropogenic calamities.

**Result and Analysis:** The social impact of tourism showing socio cultural modification and enhancement of the level of living of local community life and promotes social paradigm shift. It indicates the transformation of moral, law, ethics, interpersonal bonding of community life. This interaction between host and tourists may influence their socio-cultural profile in various way. First tourists brought souvenir, terracotta cart idols, Shari in temple town, secondly tourists got the knowledge of international understanding and consumer's preference through their direct conversation. The local people, service

providers, vendors can motivated by the lifestyle and the level of living of the tourists come from the metropolitan and other culturally different provinces. Besides cultural commercialization sometimes theft, smuggling, snatching, and other social pathogens are found simultaneously as the effect of tourism in this study area. The impact of tourism can be assessed from two side, like tourist factor and demonstration factor. Tourists factor are those which are brought by tourists like the demographic and social differentiation on the other side destination factor incorporate the community behavior, social and cultural system, travel circuit, linkages and local acceptance. During the initial phase the tourists are mostly welcomed by the local residents due to promote the local economy but later when the carrying capacity attains saturation the service quality degrades, local residents (hosts) getting irritated, this occurs because the un planned and over expansion of tourism in the destination area. So over utilization of local resources, infrastructural expansion sometimes abolish the parity of living of local community. Tourists mostly thrown plastics cups, napkins, waste foods, plastic bottles, etc which remains in an untreated situations that may generate urban sewage and degrade physical and socio-economic environment. A proper monitoring by municipal agencies is required in this context and appropriate management techniques need to implement by construction of flyovers to prevent congestion, eco-park for bio conservation, conservation of historical sites and temples, town beautification and cleanliness, afforestation etc. for its rejuvenation. To get the tourists opinion regarding the impact of tourism on the physical environment Environmental Impact Assessment model is adopted. For this survey we choose 25 respondent (Tourists) through Random sampling methods during field survey in Bishnupur during the month of October 2017 to November 2017. Their frequencies and percentage distributions are given blow through tables. (Table:1)

**Table:1-Environmental Impact Assessment**

(Tourist perception on some selected attributes of Socio-Cultural environment and their relative status in temple town Bishnupur).

Selected Parameters	Area under construction phase						Total %	Area under operation phase						Total %
	Low impact	%	Medium impact	%	High impact	%		Low impact	%	Medium impact	%	High impact	%	
1.Residential culture	7	28	11	44	7	28	100	4	16	13	52	8	32	100
2.Physical and mental health	18	72	4	16	3	12	100	17	68	6	24	2	8	100
3.Financial condition	10	40	9	36	6	24	100	12	48	6	24	7	28	100
4.Infrastructural development.	4	16	12	48	9	36	100	4	16	11	44	10	40	100
5.Electricity	5	20	9	36	11	44	100	4	16	9	36	12	48	100

y consumption														
6.Labour force	7	28	8	32	10	40	100	5	20	8	32	12	48	100
7.Educational status and training.	14	56	6	24	5	20	100	13	52	6	24	6	24	100
8.Population growth	8	32	8	32	9	36	100	7	28	8	32	10	40	100
9.congestion, crime and social decaying.	3	12	8	32	14	56	100	2	8	6	24	17	68	100
10.Security level	10	40	4	16	11	44	100	7	28	6	24	12	48	100

(Source: Data compiled by author,2018)

From the above data generated through Environmental Impact assessment (E.I.A) it can be said that the high impact of tourism are found in the field of power consumption, labor force, infrastructural development, in the tourism constructed areas, whereas level of road congestion, theft, snatching and other social problems remains high in the tourism operational areas is gradually increasing in its amount. As per the tourist review impact of tourism on socio cultural decaying is not highly significant, although a proper strategic intervention need to apply for protection the socio-cultural environment and architecturally famous temples.

**Perception of the local people (Residents) regarding the impact of Tourism on socio-cultural ambience:** Tourism itself a stronger tool to gear up the local economy, society, through job creation and financial security. Although it have some of its own detrimental impact to the tourist centre as well as for the local residents. For our survey work in Bishnupur we select 50 inhabitant of this town from various ward through random sampling method. We collect numeric data through Likert three point scale. So we easily categories the opinion quantitatively according to their level of intensity (Table:2). For the evaluation of socio-cultural influence of tourism on the local residents, repercussion at some selected ward in Bishnupur town are collected. The socio-cultural impact of tourism is calculated through mean values given in the table

**Table:2-Tourism effect on socio-cultural environment in the study area: (Table:2)**

Sl. No.	Socio-cultural Indicator	Mean values.	Standard Deviation
1.	Growth of population in Bishnupur town	1.04	1.26
2.	Level of Security.	0.76	1.13

3.	Level of strain of administration to provide tourists protection	-0.16	1.43
4.	Crime rate acceleration.	0.56	0.95
5.	Cultural commodification.	1.92	1.18
6.	Enrichment of standard of living.	0.52	1.35
7.	Modification of occupational status/ job orientation	1.40	1.44
8.	Role of tourism agencies in development of pilgrim sites.	0.28	1.04
9.	Drug abasement and alcoholic addiction.	0.88	1.44
10.	Decaying of moral values.	-0.4	1.61
11.	Activity of local developmental organization for its development.	0.80	1.09
12.	Consciousness about cultural ethics and heritage.	1.00	135
		0.72	1.27

(Source: Data compiled by author,2018)

From the above table (Table:2) it shows that the socio-cultural impacts of tourism on some certain selected parameters are remains more than normal level. As per residents perception survey the mean values are remaining high in the field of cultural commodification (+1.92), modification in occupational status (+1.40) population growth (+1.04). So higher the values showing high level of tourism impacts. During winter session when mass tourism arrives here to enjoy the flavor of architectural, sculptural, folk art and craft this impacts are found adequately. It need immediately to adopt a proper management and alternative way to sustain the tourism in a better balanced way so that it becomes a blessing to this area.

**Table:3-The Perception Index based on mean and their corresponds percentage values of local respondents.**

Sl. No.	Average Score	Percentage of Respondents(Residents)
1.	2-2.99	11
2.	1-1.99	40
3.	0-0.99	19
4.	0	5
5.	0-(-0.99)	15
6.	(-0.99)-(-1.99)	7

7.	(-1.99)-(-2.99)	3
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(Source: Data compiled by author, 2018)

From the above table (Table:3) it is found that 11% residents are strongly agree the impact of tourism on socio-cultural environment Nearly 40% residents are moderately agree, where as 19% are slightly agree in this issues. 5% residents are remaining at neutral situation. We also found that 15% are slightly disagree, 7% are moderately disagree, where as 3% are strongly disagree on the potential threat of tourism on socio-cultural environment.

**Table:4- Residents perception Index Mean in the study area (Bishnupur).**

Index Mean	Standard Deviation
0.72	1.27
+ =Showing positive impact values. - = Showing negative impact values. Higher the values more impacts are found.	

(Source: Data compiled by author,2018)

From this above table (Table:4) it can be resolved that in this famous temple town Bishnupur, the Index Mean of respondent survey is found +0.72. So a slight moderate impact is noted from it. During the month of October to March (winter to spring) time maximum tourists visited here. A strategic interventions is needed to apply on this period in this study area for better management of tourism in here.

**Table:5-Community Perception on Tourism progression in temple town Bishnupur.**

Sl. No.	Parameter	Scale of agree				
		Strongly agree	agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Revenue generation from tourism.	56	44	-	-	-
2.	Willingness to continue the host-tourist relation.	40	57	3	-	-
3.	Role of tourism in sustaining the level of living.	37	60	3	-	-
4.	Tourism helps to accelerate infrastructure.	42	56	4	-	-
5.	Community participation importance in	56	42	2	-	-

	tourism development					
6	Importance of community participation in regional planning.	66	27	5	2	-
7.	Tourism are the soul effort for marketization the terracotta craft items.	67	28	3	2	-
8.	Tourism helps for sustaining the local craft and culture	65	23	4	6	2
9.	Tourism creates road congestion and traffic problems.	49	23	3	15	10
10	Tourism persists local community irritation.	-	-	2	3	95
11.	Tourism influence for modification of local cultures.	27	56	3	11	3
12.	Overall development of local community by tourism and leisure industry.	78	20	2	-	-

(Source: Data compiled by author, 2018)

For community perception we take the opinion of that 50 respondents (local residents) are selected from various ward of Bishnupur through random sampling method. According their viewpoint, 56% and 44% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of that tourism contribution in generating more revenue, 40% and 57% are strongly agree and agree in the issue of host guest relationship for societal development, 37% and 60% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of tourism role in sustaining the level of living . Whereas 56% and 42% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of community participation impact in tourism development, 66% and 27% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of in the importance of tourism in planning operations, 67% and 28% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of tourism role in commercialization of terracotta craft objects, 49% and 21% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of tourism role in road congestion and traffic problems. In contrary 95% and 3% respondents

are strongly disagree and disagree respectively in the issue of tourism creates irritation and negative feeling of the local residents. On the other side 27% and 56% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of tourism role in modification and transformation of local culture, and 78% and 20% respondents are strongly agree and agree respectively in the issue of tourism playing positive role in overall development in this study area.

**Suggestions and further recommendation:** Tourism a key factor of development in any tourist spot, which grown up with an ideal blend of natural and socio-cultural attributes of that area. A proper planning and managerial techniques need to adopt in this tourist spot for makes a balance between tourists need and their satisfaction. Besides that the culture, craft items, level of living, ethnic expression, heritage this elements also need to conserve. In a progressive society it is expected to modify and upgrade the social and cultural life of the inhabitants but the leak out of traditional heritage by the modern tourists arrival, is never expected. We must adopt a scientific management of resource that may check its misutilization and it would conserve the nature as well as society from its decaying. Tourism helps to elevate the local economy, financial security for both trained and untrained workers. Sometimes tourists attract by the culture, art and craft and sculpture rather than physical diversity. To protect the negative vibes of tourism in society, NGO and other tourism agencies may play a significant role in Bishnupur. To prevent the scarcity of jobs, various professional and skill development training and programs can be initiated here, students and other aspirants can go through this types of training. A workshop may be arranged on the issues of an ideal way of living and enhancement of life quality. A proper strategy should be taken on improvement of community personality to represent their thoughts, inform every tourism planers and associates regarding the values and ethics of community thought, ideas, and beliefs. A proper monitoring, better management practice, spontaneous participation of community in a broader arena may implement this strategies. So sustainable management of tourism resources, conservation of cultural traits besides its modification, eco-tourism strategy may be taken in this temple town as an alternative way of its further achievement.

**Major Findings:** This research shows mainly the socio-cultural role of tourism in selected study area Bishnupur. It found that both positive and negative factors are governing this types of tourism influence among the positive role job creation, financial security, revenue and tax collection, infrastructural development planning execution are important. On the other hand there are some alarming problems found in this area due to tourism, among them price hiking of land, congestion, pollution social decaying, theft, leak out of local resources, less income from tourism activity, unemployment during non-peak tenure etc. The negative factors associated with social systems are, low level of living, less wages, lower contribution of local community. This study reveals that community playing a positive role in tourism development, they possess a positive attitude to tourism and also aspired to participate this activities. The hotels and lodges also took lots of planning for tourism development like circuit tourism, package tourism, discount offers on lodge booking etc. As

tourism consists both positive and negative effect in this temple town, so a careful strategy, proper management, community awareness and participation, financial infrastructural development, capacity building is highly needed in this context to minimize all this negative effect of tourism in this context.

**Conclusion:** In 21<sup>st</sup> century society and culture of a region becomes mobile and dynamic. So it can be easily assessed that with or without effect of tourism social cultural ambience may be alterable. Tourism influence may not be always harmful for a society, at first community need to understand the power and unity to protect social eradication. If community makes a proper involvement and participation for retaining the cultural traits, beliefs, tradition then the society may be less affected and the negative impact of cultural tourism may be reduced. The present research work focuses on the tourism impact on socio-cultural ambience of the temple town, Bishnupur. Sometime this unplanned and unmanageable tourism expansion may lead to various complexities like pollution, deforestation, and generation of waste disposal in this study area. The road congestion, pollution may hamper the life of the local inhabitants. In contrary tourism played a very significant and satisfactory role in development of socio-cultural environment by increasing infrastructural development, transportation accessibility, commercialization of craft, media promotion etc. Tourism creates some deformity in society as it promoted theft, snatching and other mild crime, less employment, decelerating income in non-peak season in this case study area. Based on the statistical result of survey data it can be recommended for this tourist area, that tourism may implemented in this temple town, in a sustainable and profitable way without deterioration the concurrent environmental health and local cultural ethics and tradition by redacting the eco-tourism conception, cooperation of travel and tourism agencies, implementation of tourism facilitation centres, community participation etc. On the other side if a proper tourism management policies, decision making abilities of the community may not receive and accepted the control over tourism will completely beyond of manageable level.

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