



International Journal of Marketing and Technology

(ISSN: 2249-1058)

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Title

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN MINIMIZING LEAKAGE:
A CASE STUDY IN MANAS NATIONAL PARK**

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ABSTRACT:

Though tourism is advocated for removal of poverty in the developing countries, the complete benefit of tourism does not accrue to the host community due to high amount of leakage of tourism revenue. This leakage is due to the dependence on the import of commodity, service and human resources. The local community's involvement reduces the leakage rate and increases the retained revenue. By this study undertaken in Manas National Park of North East India, the authors found that there is more than 55 percent of the tourism revenue leaked from the destination. The tourism business owned by non-local actors has more leakage than that of tourism business owned by local community. The study has identified some potential areas of the tourism business where the local community can be involved and can be benefited. The paper concludes providing some suggestions.

Key words: Leaked revenue, retain revenue, local community, manas national park

1. Tourism and economic development:

In recent years tourism is being advocated for eradication of poverty in developing countries by UNWTO. Observing the importance of tourism industry particularly in developing countries, the UNWTO has introduced the programme of Sustainable Tourism for Eliminating Poverty in 2003 and this programme has been extended in many developing countries. However, it is seen that the less developed regions are frequently unable to take full advantage of tourism (Scheyven, 1999). Even, number of authors like Lindberg, Enriquez & Sproule (1996), Weaver (1998), Walpole & Goodwin (2000), Mbaiwa (2005), Akama & Kieti (2007), Stone & Wall (2004) etc. argued that tourism has failed to promote local development and improve the livelihood of local community in LDCs. Community participation in tourism is being regarded as a solution for getting sustainable tourism and local economic development. A group of authors like Aabo (2006), Ashley and Garland (1994), Cengiz1, Ozkok and Ayhan (2011), Khan (2009), Halstead (2003), Lai (2003), Wearing & Mc Donald (2002) advocated community's involvement for sustainable tourism. According to them, while the local community is paying the cost of tourism development in the form of degradation of environmental resources, commercialization

of landscape and congestion; the main economic benefits are not flowing to the local community making tourism at the destination unsustainable. Some authors criticized tourism on the ground that benefits often accrue to a small section of the local population (Britton, 2004; Kiss, 2004). Because the host communities (Sandbrook, 2008) have little control over tourism development since they have lack of ability to ensure positive outcomes (Scheyvens, 1999). This is because, the host has operational, structural and cultural limitations to participate in tourism (Tosun, 2000, 2006). Lacher and Nepal (2010a, 2010b), Lindberg, Enriquez & Sproule (1996) etc. argued that the failure of the tourism sector is due to high extent of leakages of tourism revenue. Authors likes Sandbrook (2008, 2010), and Lacher and Nepal (2010a, 2010b) documented leakage amount of tourism revenue and amount of retained revenue in the destination level economy. There are few researches regarding the community involvement for capturing tourism revenue in the local level economy particularly in National Parks. The community's involvement in tourism is very much important because the community has to participate in sustaining the protected areas. The present study has filled this research gap by drawing on research conducted in the Manas National Park (MNP) of N E India, through the documentation and examination of local community's involvement in minimizing tourism leakage in the local economy. The present study has fulfilled the following objectives:

- (1) to compare the leaked revenue and retained revenue between the two groups of the service providers viz. owned by non-local actors and local actors. (2) to identify the potential area where the local community can participate to minimize leakage.

2. Data and Methodology:

2.1 Study Area:

The Manas National Park is one of the important world heritage sites (nature) situated in the North East India. The park is famous for tiger. The Manas National Park was declared a sanctuary on October 1, 1928 with an area of 360 km². Manas Tiger reserve was created in 1973. In 1955 the area was increased to 391 km². It was declared a World Heritage site in December 1985 by UNESCO.

MNP is located at the confluence of Indian, Ethiopian and Indo-Chinese realms resulting in the magnificent biodiversity. The Park which is situated in the North-West Bank of River

Brahmputra is about 175 km away from Guwahati, the capital of Assam. As per information provided by the forest department of Assam, there are 61 fringe villages in the park with total population 28,795 in 4,885 households. The main livelihood of these people is agriculture and other activity related to forest resources. People are aware about the conservation of forest resources and interested in tourism.

2.2 Tourism Revenue, Tourism Leakage, Retained Revenue:

The definition of tourism revenue, tourism leakage and retained revenue was adopted from the works of Sandbrook (2008). Sandbrook (2008) defined Tourism Revenue (TR) as the money which was spent by the tourists in the study area, either directly or indirectly through their tour operator. This excludes money paid by tourists to Tour Operators which was subsequently spent on other elements of the holiday or retained as profit, as this money was never present in the study area and is therefore not considered relevant for calculation local leakage. Sandbrook (2008, 2010) in his works divided spending of tourists into four categories viz. (a) accommodation, (b) activities (in the National Park or on a local community walk), (c) out of pocket spending (on shopping, handicrafts, tips and donations) and (d) tour staff (drivers and guides accompanying tours). Sandbrook (2008, 2010) argued that Leaked Revenue (LR) is that amount of tourism revenue which does not accrue to a local person, either as a payment or as profit to a locally owned business. The profit of the camps or service providers which had non local ownership was included in leakage revenue. To estimate the leaked revenue, attempt was to see how tourist expenditures were distributed spatially by source (S K Nepal, personal communication, June 12, 2010; Lacher and Nepal, 2010a, 2010b). The percentage of leakage rate was calculated as $LR/TR \times 100$ as it was suggested by Sandbrook (2008) in his work. Thus, following definition can be adapted from the study Sandbrook (2008)

Total Leakage: Total Tourism Revenue - Total Retained Revenue or Net Income.

The percentage of leakage rate was calculated as $LR/TR \times 100$.

Retained Revenue (Lacher and Nepal defined it as Net Income, 2010a, 2010b) is the Net Tourism Revenue to the study area which is spent in the local food, items, service and employment.

2.3 Data Collection:

For the purpose of analysis, primary as well as secondary data have been collected. For getting primary data, this study relies on the case-study method. The three tourist entry points were selected after two weeks of pilot survey by the first named author, conducted in October, 2009. In the early part of November, 2009, the second-named author was there initially to meet key informants (during November 2010) and to identify and finalize study locations and to design the questionnaire. After preparation of the questionnaire, the first named author did the main survey from October, 2010 to April, 2011 because the tourism is a seasonal business and the season of tourism in MNP is October to April. This fieldwork conducted a complete census of all tourism businesses in the villages, with a focus on sources of revenue, expenditures pattern and leakages. Besides the questionnaire survey, an in-depth interview was done with local entrepreneurs, village leaders, NGOs workers, Range Officers and other key informants. It should be noted that leakage is not necessarily the only indicator for successful economic development. The significance is that how many local people are involved in the tourism business and how much amount of tourism revenue is captured by the local community. The secondary data related to the number of tourists flows into the destination, amount of entry fees collected by the park authority etc were collected from the Range Offices of the park.

One year data were considered for the study. There were two reasons: First, in most of the previous studies undertaken to calculate the amount of leakage, one year data were used (Sandbrook, 2008, 2010; Lacher and Nepal, 2010a, 2010b). This approach was adopted in this study too. Secondly, through informal discussions with camps managers and activists of NGOs related to local tourism business, the authors got that the tour camps owned by non-local actors, usually purchase commodities from the rural gate-way (Lacher and Nepal, 2010a) i.e. from the nearby town Barpeta Road. This implies, the investigators saw the homogeneity regarding the data related to the spending pattern. Of course nominal price had changed in the last few years. This change does not significant from the point of view of the demand pattern of the tour camps. The employees, irrespective of local actors or non local actors, are being engaged since the last five years, commodities were purchased from the same sources. Therefore, one year data was looked to be representative and significant for calculation of revenue, expenditure and leakage and net revenue or retained revenue.

When study area is small, impacts can best be measured through primary data collection and cross-checking with local secondary sources (Walpole and Goodwin, 2000, Sandbrook, 2008). This is the approach adopted in this study. Sometimes, primary source is more significant than secondary sources. In case of MNP, all the private owned lodges or resorts are maintained by the appointed managers. They do not provide the actual data to the Chartered Accountants regarding number of visitors, number of Jeep Safari or number of Elephant Safari etc but provide less than that so that they can keep the uncounted amount in their own pockets. Therefore, the actual figure is higher than that amount showed in the reports provided to Chartered Accountants. Besides, the Gypsy Safari Association and the Elephant Safari Association do not maintain any book keeping but the revenue collected by these two associations are very much significant as per the local economy is concerned. In that situation, only primary data is looked to be helpful for the study. For authenticity of the data, cross checking of data were made from different sources. The data related to the number of tourists available with the forest department, the tariff published in websites etc. also increased the accuracy rate.

As per as locality is concerned, the definition provided by Sandbrook (2008, 2010) was adopted. He argued that a local person was defined as an individual resident in the study area who had lived there for at least 3 years. This approach is slightly modified. The people living in the fringe villages declared or listed by the forest department under the study area and the people living the study area as a permanent resident (with the dependent family members on him) for at least 3 years was regarded as locals. Since different Forest Ranges have administrative control over different places, people living under a particular Forest Range were regarded as non-local actor in another Forest Range.

2.4 Data Limitations:

Since the poor and rural businesses have the habit of poor record keeping, it is very difficult to measure economic transactions (Walpole and Goodwin, 2000). Basically primary data were collected in this study, but, as described above, it was often necessary to use recall, assumptions and estimates where reliable first-hand data could not be obtained. Triangulation from different sources was used to improve the accuracy of data where possible, but it is

acknowledged that the overall values obtained give a general rather than precise indication of the role of tourism in the local economy at MNP.

3. Result and discussion:

3.1 Structure of the Tourism Industry at MNP

In MNP, there are three forest ranges viz. Panbari Range (Western), Bansbari Range (Central) and Bhuyanpara Range (Eastern). There is no tourists entry point in Panbari Range. One tourist entry point is in Manas Gate of Bansbari Range and one is in Kokilabari and the remaining one is in Chowki of Bhuyanpara Range.

The survey in the study area identified 9 businesses which regularly sold goods or services to tourists. Out of these, 6 were tour camps with catering, 1 was Jeep Safari Association, 1 was Elephant Safari Association and the last one is service provider to the day visitors. These businesses provided a total of 98 jobs dependent on tourism, 41 of which were held by local staff. Bansbari lodge, Birina Lodge and Manas View Jungle Resort-these three tour camps are owned by non-local actors. Mathanguri Tourist Bunglow is the only tour camp owned by the state government. Florican cottage is the only tour camp run by NGO, Manas Ever Welfare Society (MEWS) in Bansbari Range. Manas Gypsy Safari Association is locally owned and Elephant Safari Association is run by a NGO, ANAJARI, in which both local and non local youth are members. All these service providers are situated in the Bansbari Forest Range. In the Bhuyanpara Forest Range, *Thobgang* Jungle Tourist Camp, situated in the Kokilabari Beat, is run by a local NGO, Manas Maozigendri Eco-tourism Society (MMES). It provides the services trekking, tribal village walk, Jeep Safari, Elephant Safari, tribal traditional dance etc. In Chowki under Bhuyanpara Range, the tourist entry point for day visitors is being managed by a local NGO, Manas Souchi Khugur Eco-tourism Society (MSKETS) and for that the NGO collects vehicle entry fees.

One accommodation per room (twin bedded) per night at the locally owned tour camps (run by NGO) in the study area costs between Rs 950 and Rs 1500 for Indian tourists and Rs 2000 for foreign tourists whereas the externally owned camps charged between Rs 1050 and Rs 2000 for the Indian tourists and Rs 7500 for foreign tourists. Of course, Birina lodge provides the facility

of tent in which cost per tourist is Rs 412.5 per bed. The Government owned tour camp, Mathanguri Tourist Buglow provides lodging facility more cheaply and it ranges Rs 210 to 1200 for Indian tourists and Rs 500 to 1500 for foreign tourists.

3.2 Tourism Revenue and Leakage and Retained Revenue:

The Tourism Revenue (TR), Leaked Revenue (LR) and Retained Revenue (RR) in MNP in the study year were INR 10.66 million, INR 5.93 million and INR 4.73 million respectively. Thus leaked rate in MNP was 55.63 percent of the total tourism revenue. This leakage rate is significant compared to that of other nature based tourism destinations. It has been recorded as 60 percent in Komodo National Park, Indonesia (Walpole & Goodwin, 2000) 48 per cent in Kuhmo Municipality, Finland (Rinne & Saastamoinen, 2005), 50 per cent in Komodo National Park, Indonesia (Goodwin, 2002) and 75 percent in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda (Sandbrook, 2008).

Out of TR INR 10.66 million, tourism revenue from day visitors was INR 2.89 million and the tourism revenue from tourists that stayed overnight was INR 7.77 million. The leaked revenue from tourists that stayed overnight was INR 4.73 million (60.89 per cent). In case of the tourism revenue collected from day visitors, the leaked revenue was INR 1.19 million (41.5 percent). This indicates that the leakage rate is higher in case of the revenue collected from the tourists staying overnight compared to that of the revenue collected from day visitors in MNP. This is because, there are few non-local actors, except the government, to drain the tourism revenue from the day visitors.

Out of the tourism revenue collected from the tourist staying overnight in camps, only INR 2.75 million (35.5 percent) was generated by the tour camps owned by local actors and INR 5.01 million was generated by the tour camps owned by non-local actors. There are two reasons for that: firstly, the tour camps run by local NGOs are new compared to the tour camps run by the non-local actors. Secondly, the local tour camps have lack of capital and infrastructural facility to provide sufficient accommodation facilities to the night campers.

Though the non-local tour camps grip maximum amount of TR (INR 5.01) compared to the local tour camps, the local tourism business including tour camps and other service providers

hold about equal amount of tourism revenue to the revenue collected by the non-local tourism business. From the INR 106, 64,545.25, local tourism business accumulated INR 5282345.25 and non-local tourism business accumulated INR 5382200.00. Out of the total tourism revenue accumulated by the local tourism business, the amount of retained revenue is INR 3986205.25 and amount of leaked revenue is INR 1296140.00 (24.54). But in case of the tourism revenue collected by the non-local tourism business, the amount of retained revenue is just INR 744900.00 and the leaked revenue is INR 4637300.00 (86.16). There are several reasons for that. Firstly, the tourism business owned by the non-local actors engaged non-local skilled workers and purchase required food and house keeping items from rural gateway, Barpeta Road. On the other hand, the tourism business owned by local-actors prefer local commodities and local people for their business for which tourism revenue retain within the host community.

The calculation of TR, LR and RR service providers wise is shown in the Table 3.2.

3.3 Potential area for community's involvement:

The tourism value chain as showed in the Table No. 3.3.1 and Table No. 3.3.2 indicates that the night campers had to spend largest amount of money in lodging or accommodation (45.24 percent) followed by food (27.23 per cent) and jeep safari (19.12 per cent). This indicates that the local community can provide lodging facility to the night campers in their own houses or can provide the same through forming association or NGOs. The MNP is one of the largest national parks in India. Therefore more areas can be accommodated as tourist entry points. In those entry points, the local community can provide Jeep Safari service to the tourists.

Out of total tourism revenue INR 106,64,545.25, day visitors contributed INR 28,90,580.25 (27.1 per cent of the total tourism revenue). The MSKETS has taken this advantage, maintained the site and charged vehicle entrance fees from the day visitors by taking due permission from the park authority. The local community can adopt it as model and can start services for the day visitors to capture tourism revenue.

4. Suggestion and Conclusion:

It is evident from the above discussion that though there is significant amount of tourism leakage (52.7 percent) in MNP, tourism has been providing important impact on the local community. Lacher and Nepal (2010a, 2010b) advocated high revenue high leakage concept. Thus, the local community can be benefited though there is high revenue leakage in the destination. Leakage cannot be avoided but it can be minimized. Accordingly leakage can be necessary and unnecessary (Supradist, 2004). We cannot avoid leakage in terms of import of fossil fuel or park authorities entrance fees. But we can avoid the leakage in terms of imports of food grains, fruit juice, rafting or jeep safari. By increasing linkage of local industry or business with the tourism, we can minimize unnecessary leakage. Like MMES or MSKETS, new service provider NGOs should be formed and should encourage such NGOs to open and start new tourist entry points in the park. This will encourage the local people to involve into the tourism industry and will decrease the dependence on forest resources. The government has to do a lot for the sustainable tourism by encouraging the people of the fringe villages. There are number of schemes under state tourism department. Maximum people from the fringe villages should be covered by such type of schemes. This will not only reduce the leakage rate but also improve the economic condition of the host community and hence develop sustainable tourism.

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Service provider	Types of visitor	Estimated tourist	Average spending	Estimated TR	Estimated LR	Estimated RR
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mathanguri Lodge	Night stay	170 (50)	1,788.24	3,04,000.00	2,27,500.00 (74.84)	76,500.00
Mans View Jungle Resort	Night stay	300 (0)	2,730.33	8,19,100.00	6,51,400.00 (79.53)	1,67,700.00
Birina Lodge	Night stay	456 (0)	1,255.81	5,72,650.00	4,25,050.00 (74.23)	1,47,600.00
Bansbari Lodge	Night stay	400 (70)	7,755.5	31,02,200.00	27,49,100.00 (88.62)	3,53,100.00
Florican Cottage (NGO)	Night stay	438 (47)	2,715.56	11,89,415.00	2,55,695.00 (21.49)	9,33,720.00
Thobgang Jungle Tourist Camp (NGO)	Night stay	355 (80)	3,833.80	13,61,000.00	90,445.00 (6.65)	12,70,555.00
Manas Gypsy Safari Association	Day visitor	5550 (NA)*	372.22	20,65,830.25	8,32,500.00 (40.29)	12,33,330.25
Manas Elephant Safari Association	Day visitor	462 (124)*	451.29	2,08,500.00	1,17,500.00 (56.35)	91,000.00
Manas Soucki Khungur Eco-tourism Society (NGO)	Day visitor	27720 (NA)	16.50	4,57,600.00	Nil	4,57,600.00
Park Authority	Night stay	2119(247)*	102.45	2,17,100.00	2,17,100.00 (100)	Nil
	Day visitor	6893 (50)	53.26	3,67,150.00	3,67,150.00 (100)	Nil
Total		36,732	290.33	106,64,545.25	59,33,440.00 (55.64)	47,31,105.25

Source: Field survey

Note: \$US = INR 45 (approximately) during the study period)

Figures in the parentheses in column 3 indicates the number of foreign tourists and in column 6 indicate per cent leakage

* Figures are not summed up since these figures are already included

(accessed on 17th September, 2011).

Table 3.2: Tourism Revenue, Leaked Revenue and Retained Revenue in MNP

Table 3.3.1 : Tourism value chain of the tourists stayed over night in tour camp

Heads	Tourism revenue	Per tourist	Percent
Accommodation	35,04,825.00	1653.99	45.24
Food	21,09,440.00	995.49	27.23
Rafting	1,81,600.00	85.70	2.34
Jeeps safari in camps	14,81,500.00	699.15	19.12
Activity			
Elephant safari	2,52,000.00	118.92	3.25
Cultural programme	27,500.00	12.98	0.36
Entrance fees from tourist stayed over night	2,17,100.00	102.45	2.80
Over all spending in visiting experience including entrance fees in tour camps	21,59,700.00	1019.21	27.89
Total	77,73,965.00	3656.19	

Source: Field survey

Table 3.3 : Tourism value chain of the day visitors in MNP

	Heads	Tourism revenue	Average
	Jeep safari by day visitors	20,65,830.25	59.68
	Entrance fees from day visitors	3,67,150.00	10.61
Activity	Vehicle entrance fees by NGO	4,57,600.00	13.22
	Total	28,90,580.25	83.51

Source: Field survey

Note: Total day visitors:34613

