Community Based Tourism Development in Sikkim of India

– A Study of Darap and Pastanga Villages

Manjula Chaudhary and Rinzing Lama

Abstract: The Community Based Tourism Development is based on the engagement of local communities as the central stakeholder in tourism development. However, for most of the times, this concept of the bottom up planning is usually given in the top-down manner because of lack of awareness on the part of communities. The communities participated from planning to execution level are often catalyzed by external forces such as non-governmental organizations’ encouragement to the local communities, and there has been little exploration of what communities think of their roles in tourism development. This paper studies this aspect in the Darap and Pastanga villages in Sikkim of India. The focus of the research is to understand the perspective of the local communities at a point when tourism has developed with the intervention of outside agencies that have involved locals in many roles.

Keywords: Community-based tourism development, rural tourism, tourism in Sikkim

1. Introduction

The development of tourism as an alternative industry for development was aptly described by Butler (1998) that, “as traditional industries are challenged by mechanization, resource
scarcity and international influence, economic planners are looking for new industries based on these some resources, but which are not facing the same challenges”. Reid (2003) suggested that often tourism is considered an option because its development relies on areas cultural, historic, ethic, geographic, and natural uniqueness. The situations and context that gave prominence to tourism vary from place to place but the common point is that it has fuelled economic growth raising the concerns about equitable distribution of its benefits. This led to spread of tourism to rural and other distant areas and engagement of local communities in tourism. Rural areas became the focus of tourism development for their uniqueness as suggested by Butler (1998) that rural areas provide a special appeal to tourists because of the mystique associated with a rural environment, its distinct culture, history, ethics and geographic characteristics.

Community participation and tourism for community development was difficult to be ignored in rural areas that have close knit community systems. The community based tourism concept has been at the forefront of the promotion of rural development, both in developed and developing countries (Honey, 2008). The theoretical premises of community tourism have a long history, originating for the participatory and empowerment development models that emerged as a new paradigm in development discourse in the 1970s (Cornelissen, 2005). Globally, within the general tourism sector, the focus on community based tourism as a means of enhancing community development, poverty alleviation, cultural heritage, and conservation is increasing (Equation, 2008). In an area of rural setting, the economic well-being and employment opportunities for the local residents may very much depend on tourism industry (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2003: Riz-Molina, Gill-Saura and Moliner-Velasquez, 2010). Telfer and Sharpely (2008) added that community based tourism should respect local culture and find ways to enhance and rescue local culture and heritage.

Although community based tourism has been the subject of increased literature (Beeton, 2006), it does not have a clear definition (Flacke-Naurdofer, 2008). According to Ndlovu and Rogerson (2003) the term community based tourism is contested and often means different things to different people. The community based tourism concept is becoming
increasingly relevant in developing countries, especially in so far as it endorses strategies that favour greater benefits for the control by local communities. It can take a variety of forms, ranging from communally shared systems to individually owned village stays and can be linked to entities outside the community (for example, tour operators or NGOs), especially when it comes to promotion. Community based tourism can be seen as a way of linking the need to reduce poverty with the breaking of structural dependencies based on hegemonic control of the sector by tour operators or the wealthy elite (Timothy, 2002). Importantly, international cooperation and community based tourism for community development in many developing countries are linked because “international agencies increasingly promote tourism and specifically community based tourism as a means to reduce poverty in developing countries” (Spenceley, 2008).

Community Based Tourism in developing countries “tends to inevitably be located in rural areas” (Equation, 2008). India opened for tourism a little late compared to global trends and is discovering and opening more and more destinations in remote and small areas. Tourism Policy of 2002 of Government of India considered the dynamics of rural and community based tourism and introduced the concept of rural tourism to show case the rural life of Indian country side to visitors. Since then the scheme has been implemented in 107 villages across the country and the results have been mixed, but the success stories indicate that wherever successful; host communities” involvement was an important factor (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2012).

2. Community-based tourism development

The eastern Himalayan state Sikkim provides suitable backdrop for the promotion of rural and community based tourism with its predominantly rural setting (75.3 per cent rural population, Census of India 2011) and beautiful natural scapes. The physical features of the state include rugged mountains, deep valleys and dense forests consort with raging rivers, lake and waterfalls. The state has the steepest rise in altitude over the shortest distance and has within its 7,096 sq. kms the entire climatic range, from tropical to temperate to alpine. Sikkim covers 0.2 per cent of the geographical area of the country and has tremendous biodiversity and has been identified as one of the hot spot in the Eastern
Himalayas. Sikkim falls under Himalayan (2) Bio-geographic zone and Central Himalaya (2c) biotic province (Champion and Seth, 1968).

The cultural diversity of the state comes from its three major tribes of Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepalese. The Lepchas were the original inhabitants of Sikkim. The Lepchas are predominantly the Buddhists but many of them are also Christians. But before adopting Buddhism or Christianity as their religion, the earliest Lepcha settlers believed in the bone faith. The Bhutias originally belong to the Tibet. These people migrated to Sikkim after the 15th century and settled in North Sikkim. The Nepalese migrated in large numbers in Sikkim from Nepal. They introduced the terraced system of cultivation. Today, the Nepalese constitute more than 80 per cent of the total population of Sikkim. Nepalese are subdivided into Limboo, Tamang, Chettri, Rai, Gurung, Newars, Sherpa and Bhawan. They are Hindus except the Tamangs, Gurungs and Sherpas, who are Buddhists.

Tourism plays a significant role in the economy of Sikkim and it is Sikkim’s one of the largest revenue generating sector after agriculture, mining and forest (Information and Public Relations Department, Govt. of Sikkim).

The natural strength of Sikkim has been aptly supported by the government policies and Sikkim is the first state to have a policy on ecotourism and it’s strictly enforced. The concepts of rural tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism and homestays have become popular here. There are a number of villages in Sikkim where community based tourism and rural tourism is being promoted.

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India is promoting 11 villages under Rural Tourism project in Lachen in north; Chumbung, Tingchim, Maniram Bhanjgyang, Rong, Srijunga Martam and Darap in west; Pastenga, Pendam Gadi Budang and Tumin in East and Jaubari in South Sikkim.

The UNESCO project for the development of Cultural Tourism and Ecotourism in the Mountainous Regions of Central and South Asia is sponsored by the Norwegian Government which aims to promote cooperation between local communities, national and international NGOs, tour agencies in order to involve local populations fully in the
employment opportunities and income generating activities that tourism can bring in form of rural tourism and village tourism. The following are the villages supported under UNESCO project Dzongu, Kewzing, Yuksom, Uttarey, Darap, Hee-Bormiok, Lachen, Assangthang, Kabi, Chumbong and Rey Mindu.

Two villages, Darap in west and Pastanga in east have been chosen for the study to find out the local community perceptive on Community Based Tourism Development. These villages were identified as successful case studies of rural tourism in the evaluation studies of Government of India (Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013). The rural tourism projects of Government of India are based on community participation.

3. Literature review

Interest in community based tourism grew with the developments of sustainable and participative approaches in tourism and same is reflected in researches as well. The relationship between tourism and local communities was explored by Murphy (1985, 2004), Richards and Hall (2000) etc. Further researches will be explored linking of tourism with the benefits of community such as Pro Poor Tourism; Community Benefit Tourist Initiatives (CTBIs) (Slimpons, 2008); or Comunity Based Enterprises (CBEs) (Manyara and Jones, 2007).

Several case studies of Community Based Tourism have been studied in their contextliterate in Africa (Lepp, 2007; Manyara and Jones, 2007; Kibichro, 2008), Asia (Nyaupane et al., 2006; Okazaki, 2008; Kayat, 2010), Oceania (Dyer et al., 2003), in different countries of Latin America; such as Brazil (Guerreiro, 2007), Ecuador (Ruiz et al., 2008), Mexico (Bringas and Israel, 2004) and Peru (Zorn and Farthing, 2007).

Different researches on Community Based Tourism stresses active participation of the local community and fostering of a relationship between local community and visitors. The role of different public administrations, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), private institutions can be of facilitators. The main limitations of local communities in the implementation of tourism projects are; lack of financial resources, infrastructure or know-how; limitations of a cultural kind; and potential conflicts between the different public
administrations (Nyaupane et al. 2006). For Community Based Tourism (CBT) implementation; inclusion of stakeholders, evaluation of individual and collective benefits, setting of objectives and analysis of decision to be implemented are highly important (Kibicho, 2008). The main benefits of community tourism are the direct economic impact on families, socioeconomic improvements, and sustainable diversification of lifestyles (Manyara and Jones, 2007; Rastegar, 2010).

Perception of tourism is based on the evaluation of the local community’s attitude (including the environment, infrastructure and events); the participation model of people in the local community exerts a powerful influence on the tourist’s experience; and tourism planning effects the community as a whole (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004).

Almost all the countries are planning to promote Community Based Tourism, especially in rural areas for the well-being of local people. Even rural India has immense potential for Community Based Tourism as the rural community based tourism as the rural India is still unexplored (Kumar, R. K. 2007).

4. Case studies

The present study is based in two villages of Darap and Pastanga where Community Based Tourism Development has been implemented. The data through interviews were collected from local communities, the State Government agencies and NGOs. The identified villages provide good case studies on account of their unique backdrop.

**Darap:** Darap is a small village in west Sikkim at an altitude of 5,100 feet or 1554.48 meters above sea level. The word Darap has its origin from the Limboo (Tribal) word “Tan-lop/Therap” which literally means a flat land. This valley is exposed to temperature variations of 05 degree centigrade to 28 degree centigrade. This makes Darap storehouse of various rare and endangered species of flora and fauna and various unique and rare aspects of the Limboo culture are preserved in this valley. The village is inhabited by 95 per cent Limboo population occupies a place of pride in one of the richest limboo culture heritage of Sikkim. Darap has towering Khanchendzonga – 3rd highest peak (also the guardian deity) and is just 7 kilometers from the tourist hub of Pelling offering peaceful environment
similar to Pelling. The village has come up in recent years as one of the major village tourism and offbeat travel destination of Sikkim for its sustainable tourism practices through Community Based Tourism Development.

The initiative to develop the village as a tourist destination by using local resources was taken up by local NGO named Darap Eco Development Committee which was formed in the year 2005. They organized the families and helped develop homestays in the village houses. They also identified potential destinations for visitors and created an infrastructure to develop the tourist spots. Currently 20 homestays and house owners are registered with the NGO but each family in the village is reaping the benefits of the tourism initiative. Each family has two-three single or double bed rooms to accommodate the tourists. For homestay facilities the visitors have to pay USD 30 – 35 per person, per night including breakfast, lunch and dinner. The guides are paid USD 5 per day per group. They have different rates for trekking, excursion and other adventure activities.

Tourists in Darap can pick and choose from an array of products ranging from trekking to picnic to meditation and farming. They can also arrange mountain biking and learning the local language and cooking. The local resident of Darap and President of Darap Eco-tourism Committee received award for State best tourism development committee in 2010 by department of tourism, Government of Sikkim and he is also recognized as “Top 10 locals in tourism in the world” by leap local published in guardian U.K on 19th June 2012.

**Pastanga:** Pastanga in Lingzey is a small village in the East Sikkim at an altitude of 4676 feet or 1425 meters. It is just a two hour drive and 28 kms from Gangtok (Capital of Sikkim). The village name is derived from its older names “Pa-Sing-Tel” in Kulung Language meaning “forefather’s wood collecting place” and “Pasing Tengkha” in Bhutia language meaning “below bamboo forest” that gradually changed to Pastanga. More than twelve varieties of bamboo thrive in the area and the nearby hills.

Attractons include orchids and rhododendrons and various species of birds. The village is inhabited by three ethnic communities namely Rai, Bhutia and Lepcha. The majority population is of farmers and earn the livelihood through traditional organic agriculture, horticulture practice and dairy farming. The village is one of the main producers of large
cardamom and ginger. The village has total of 95 households constituting the population around 500 people.

The majorities among the population are Rai followed by Bhutias and Lepchas. Tourists are rotated among the ten members of KEEP (Khedi Eco-Tourism and Eco-Development Promotion) local NGO, who have homestay facilities, and pay between USD 24 to 26 (depending on the size of the group and type of visitors) per night, of which from 2% to 10% is deposited with the organization for village development, tourist amenities development, conservation activities, operation and maintenance of office and maintenance of office and programs and the rest is paid to the homestay operators, guides, porters and cultural dancers. The guides are paid USD 2 per day per group.

Tourists can also trek to Khedi on the Malinggo trail, a three to five night adventure for which they pay USD 42 per night, and there are plans to offer mountain biking.

5. Role of the local community

The local communities play pivotal role in Community Based Tourism Development with the support of local NGO’s. Villagers participate in tourism by playing host; offering home stays and arranging participation of tourists in village and tourism activities such as basket weaving, planting rice, milking cows, preparing local food, day hikes to pilgrimage sites, mountain biking and cultural shows etc. Their friendly demeanours and traditional ways add value to the experiences of tourists.

Community members work as a team to manage tourism facilities and tourist resources in a proper manner. The different works of facilitation of tourists are divided among community members that work cohesively for a fine tour experience.

Local NGOs; Khedi Eco-Tourism and Eco-Development Promotion (KEEP) in Pastanga and Darap Eco-Tourism Committee (DEC) drive tourism in both the villages..

These have sensitized villagers to tourism and trained them to manage tourism establishments. State government, union government and international organizations have supported these efforts of NGO’s through different schemes.
80 per cent in Darap and 75 per cent in Pastanga villagers believes that Community Based Tourism has created jobs in the village and jobs are good. They believe that the incomes of the villagers have increased with the growth of tourism but general prices have increased too. Villagers derive their incomes from accommodation, providing guides, porters, selling handicrafts, hot stone baths, etc.

70 per cent villagers in Darap are unhappy with the transport facilities and poor road condition from Siliguri to Darap. The villagers in Pastanga are happy with the transport facilities and the road condition (85 per cent). 90 per cent people from Darap and Pastanga says the toilets facilities are not developed for tourists. Both the villages have good recreatonal facilities in their villages. Both the villagers of Darap and Pastanga strongly believe that tourism has helped them to preserve and promote their uniqueness and they take pride for developing their villages for Community Based tourism. 90 per cent villagers from Darap and Pastanga say that tourism is not disturbing our age old traditions is helping in the promotion of their traditions and culture to the world.

Both the villagers believe that their village has good potential to attract tourists, as their tradition, culture and location are different from other villages offering CBT. In Darap, most of the local community members have built the separate home for tourists with good wash room facility. Good hygiene and cleanliness are well taken care of and in Darap and 70 per cent residents participate in the twice-monthly garbage clean-up initiated by Darap Ecotourism Committee. Garbage management facilities are clearly visible in and around the village.

In Pastanga, most of the local communities shared their rooms with the tourists with separate washroom facilities. In Pastanga, the local community now participates in the garbage clean-up initiated by Khedi Eco-Tourism and Eco-Development Promotion. However, the 80 per cent people think the level of awareness is still low among local community. Members of Khedi Eco-Tourism and Eco-Development Promotion, KEEP also conducts a 3 days cleaning campaign in Khedi, during which they urge independent tourists to dispose of their garbage in a responsible manner.
However there are certain areas of concern such as low participation of youth in the CBTD scheme, dropping of members from the scheme or trying to venture on their own once they develop contacts with tourists. The shift from community focus to self might disturb the scheme in the long run.

6. Conclusions and suggestions

This study looks at two cases of Community Based Tourism Development with similar goal. Both the villages in Darap and Pastanga have the major problem training of villagers in a proper manner. Villagers have received training from local NGO’s and government but the primary survey of the villages revealed many gaps in the training. The participation of youth (20-25 years) of the villages in community based tourism is low and 60 per cent of the youths are not involved in Community Based Tourism. They must be encouraged for sustainability of CBTD in future.

There are still areas where these NGO’s can venture to bring more professionalism in their activities such as joining hands for marketing and using travel agents to build a distinct visible image of these villages. A uniform pricing system (adjusted to allow for differences in access and local costs) and system of payment to service providers could be great help. Language is still a major obstacle for tourists coming to these villages and tourists are often dependent on the guide for interpretation, but the guide is not always readily available.

The inputs from Reid model (2003) of Community Based Tourism Development can be used to remove the sore areas in study villages.

Applying community based tourism development model to Darap and Pastanga Reid” s (2003) has suggested a community based tourism development planning model (figure 1) that can be used for further improvising tourism in the study villages.

The process begins through an individual catalyst that provides initial leadership to the planning process; often times this requires the inclusion of an outside expert to facilitate the community group. A task force (or action committee) is then struck, comprised of individuals who have technical expertise, vested interests in the eventual products of the plan and are concerned about the interests of the community more broadly.
This has been well taken care of in the study villages where NGO’s and government act as catalysts and community members were given initial sensitization and training. Interested community members were included in the local committees.

The next phase involves raising community awareness about the issues of tourism development and to seek the involvement of the community in determining the essence of the final product. It is this stage that deviates from traditional entrepreneurial approach to tourism planning as it integrates community residents in visioning and planning for their community’s future in relation to tourism developments. This phase requires, “great skill in the subject area of community development and group facilitation. The implementation of this stage of the process demands time and energy in organizing the community to take charge of the process” (Reid 2003: 133). The skills that are learned by community members during this process should be transferable to other community development projects (thus contributing to the social learning and transformation process previously discussed).

**Figure 1. Community based tourism development planning model**
Source: Reid 2003.

At this stage improvisation is required in the study villages that are still dependent on external support for running tourism after 10 years of implementation of project.

The next stage of model is of monitoring and evaluation. Heretofore the study villages require more inputs. Currently the projects are monitored through regular surveys on the basis of initial set targets but this need to move in an iterative mode through a self-evolving mechanism driven more by locals at every successive stage.

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Community Empowerment and Resource Management through Community Based Tourism Development
A Case Study of Sikkim

Manjula Chaudhary and Rinzing Lama

Abstract
Tourism researches across time and space have examined value of tourism in rural communities (Reid 2003; Jamal & Getz 1999; Reed 1997; Butler 1998) and suggested that
Community based tourism (CBT) development provides an opportunity for sustainable tourism. Community based tourism has evolved as a bottom-up approach to tourism planning and development that incorporates local individuals in the planning process in a meaningful way. It is participative, engaging and promotes tourism in harmony.

This paper is an attempt to assess community empowerment and resource management through community based tourism development in two villages of Rey Mendu and Kewzing in Sikkim and finds that tourism has integrated with community empowerment and resource management in these communities.

**Keywords:** Community participation, resource management, community based tourism development.

**Introduction**

Global economies are driven by services as these develop and mature. India is also experiencing this trend, travel and tourism is an important contributor to services that generates both directly or indirectly USD121 million at 64 per cent of India’s GDP in 2011 (WTTC). The oxford economics global industry model predicts (2011), India’s annual average growth of 7.7 per cent of Travel and Tourism GDP over the next decade.

While the contribution of tourism to the economy is an unquestioned fact, issues regarding its efficacy in terms of distribution of benefits to host populations and equitable spread are often raised and researched. This becomes important in a country like India that opened for tourism a little late compared to global trends and is discovering and opening more and more destinations in remote and small areas. An argument that becomes important here is to promote tourism for development of infrastructure at the destinations to propel tourism in sync with local development that benefits host communities. Tourism Policy of 2002, of Government of India considered this and introduced the concept of rural tourism to show cases the rural life of Indian countryside to visitors. Since then the scheme has been implemented in 107 villages across the country and the results have been mixed, but the
success stories indicate that wherever successful host communities’ involvement was an important factor (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2012).

Community is the strength of any state and the empowerment of local community also means empowerment of the region and state. The present study focuses on the role of community empowerment and resource management in terms of Community Based Tourism Development.

**Community Empowerment and Resource Management link**

Building a symbiotic linkage between local resource management and community development is a challenge in a country like India with widely diverse social systems, different traditional rights over resources and big range of empowerment of local bodies. But community empowerment with its people centric focus involves giving power, confidence, and skills to the communities to shape and influence what public bodies do for them (Nottingham, 2007). Government agencies have tried to involve the local communities in every activity including tourism in order to better manage the local resources. The main objective of community empowerment is to create awareness among the people/members about the opportunities and optimal utilization of resources, enhance their skills, building capacity among the community members and improving cohesion and understanding among the members. It also aims to strengthen the local leadership and improve the local resource base. As per FICCI (2001) report, significant improvement can be made in the income and living standards of the people in of the region or the locality.

Community empowerment ensures accountability of implementation of schemes. Studies like The contribution of Community Based Tourism to community empowerment and capacity building lesson learned from Ban Huay Hee community Mae Hong Son Provience, Thailand (REST, 2005), Community Based Tourism: A success (Harold Goodwin and Rosa Santilli, 2009) and Community Based Tourism and local culture: the case of the amaMpondo, South Africa, 2012), indicates that success of various development activities depend on a number of factors such as level of involvement of the local community, commitment of the
organisation, viability of such projects in the selected region, the extent of change brought by such projects to the locality and the role of nongovernmental organisations.

The case of Sikkim for development of tourism through community empowerment

Community is the strength of any state and the empowerment of local community also means empowerment of the region and state. The present study focuses on the role of community empowerment and resource management in terms of Community Based Tourism Development.

Sikkim is a small state in India s located in the Eastern Himalayias with a rich biodiversity and physical features. The Tibetan plateau marks the border in the north, Chumbi Valley and Kingdom of Bhutan in the east, Nepal in the west and West Bengal in South. People of Sikkim belong to three main tribes. Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepalese. Lepcha tribes are said to be the original inhabitants of Sikkim. They worship spirits of mountains, rivers and forests and coexist with the nature in a harmonious manner. At present Lepchas are a minority in the state and are mostly settled in Central Sikkim. Lepcha’s follow Buddhism and a fraction now belongs to Christianity. Bhutia tribes had migrated from Tibetan Plateau and they are settled in North and South Sikkim. Bhutias are identified by their dress code as it distinct them from the other people. Nepalese tribe are migrated from Nepal and they are settled in almost all the parts of Sikkim. Sikkim is the only state in India with an ethnic Nepali majority. The local language in Sikkim is Nepali.

Sikkim is the first state which came up with a public policy on ecotourism at the national level and strictly enforcing its principles. Here the concepts of village tourism, homestays are becoming popular. The cultural and social life of Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese are one of the main reasons of promoting Community Based Tourism in this region. As they are ethnic tribes of Sikkim and their cultures, traditions, food habits, language and customs are different from each other. There are a number of villages in Sikkim where community based tourism is being promoted such as Yuksom in west, Lachen in North, Kewzing in South and Rey Mindu in East.
Two villages’ viz. Kewzing and Rey Mindu have been chosen for study based on the observations of the role of local community in tourism promotion.

**Objectives of the Study**

The study is proposed with following objectives.

1. To understand the issues in community based tourism development.
2. To suggest a framework for the empowerment of local community and resource management in Community Based Tourism Development.

**Review of Literature**

Community empowerment is an important aspect of governance and involving community in resource management integrates the efforts of the community in the overall scheme. The idea behind this form of management is to have more sustainable and inclusive model of development. Particularly in tourism the traditional approach of managing tourism puts control in the hands of outsiders where locals are marginalised for many reasons. This isolation of host communities finds expression either in the non acceptance of guests by the hostile community or in the commercial use of resources to the extent of tourism killing tourism.

Tourism is an industry that uses community as a resource and sells it as a product and in the process affects everyone (Murphy 1980). Landford (1994) asserts that various community groups have diverging perspectives on tourism and its impacts. The different impacts and divergent perspectives notwithstanding, the concept of sustainable development was coined by Brundtland commission by favouring the idea of sustainable growth in all sectors. Sustainable development became a common phrase after the UN meeting held on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (Paul.S). The concept of sustainability was adopted in tourism that stressed on the the participatory management of local resources and sharing of the benefits among the local community in best possible manner. Tourism like any new development can bring both benefit and problems (UNWTO, 1994).
The conceptual definition adopted by UNWTO on sustainable tourism clearly defines the role of local community. Its main points are:

1. Optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism, development, maintaining ecological processes and helping to conserve natural, built heritage and biodiversity.

2. Respect the socio cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural and traditional values, and contribute to inter cultural understanding and tolerance.

3. Ensure viable, long term economic operations, providing socio economic benefits to all stake holders that are fairly distributed including stable employment, income earning opportunities, and income earning opportunities and social services to host communities.

Community based tourism is based on the concept of ownership, management and control of tourism projects (Lea 1988, Suansri 2003). Communities are a basic element in modern development (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000). Mc Cool and Moisey (2001) suggest that tourism should be seen as a tool for development not as end itself. Community involvement in tourism was widely appreciated among the planners, academicians, and policy makers (Boyd and Singh, 2003, UNWTO, 2004). Andrioits (2005) suggested that the acceptance of tourism development can be measured by the host perception on tourism development. Simpson (2008) came up with the concept of Community Based Tourism Initiatives (CBTI). Community participation integrates right from planning tourism projects and incorporate their efforts to operationalize these projects and at the end the outcome as income/profit/loss equally shared among the participants. Murphy (2004) proposed the surrounding relationship between tourism, community, and development.

Recent works in community tourism focus tourism as an agent of change and source for livelihood. Tourism may dominate many destination but it is not the only source of income for the community. The concept of sustainable livelihood describes the way individuals and communities are sustained through multiple livelihood strategies. (Tao, Wall 2008). Though the benefit of tourism has not reached the rural in India, efforts are on from government, NGOs etc. Sustainable tourism is the major highlight of the recent years but lack of clear
implementation programmes, vague strategies invited criticism from many corners (Wall, 2002). Tourism helps to energize the rural economy and plays an important role in value addition process, (Liu, 2006). Rural India has immense potential for Community Based Tourism as the rural community based tourism as the rural India is still unexplored (Kumar, R.K. 2007).

Methodology
The present study is based on a single sample unit. The survey was undertaken in the month of February 2013, by direct interview method. The study has been done by collecting data from the Government agencies, NGOs who are associated with tourism development activities in the state. Interviews were taken from the Rey Mindu local community and Kewzing local community, which are the two villages where Community Based Tourism is implemented.

a. Rey Mindu Tourism Project
Rey Mindu is located on the out skirts of Gangtok city (capital of Sikkim). This project was launched in 2007 as a pilot project to involve Lepcha Community in tourism activities. 15 Lepcha families staying in this village formed a unit and offered tourists a perfect experience of Community Tourism. The scenic village background along with traditional houses of the community members, promise tourists a different experience. The project was launched initially to attract day visitors who look for a different experience in Gangtok. The initial package included receiving guest at the village entrance, i.e., the Buddhist Monastery, taking them to village tour, showing them the farming activities and local living conditions, offering Lepcha cuisine and cultural programmes. This project is launched with greater care in order to understand the response of the local community and responses of the local community and the attitude of the visitors. Once it started it giving a chance to earn additional income to the community members, the unemployed youth in the village also got a chance to interact with the visitors. The number is restricted to 15-20 visitors a month in order to understand the way the concept is accepted by the visitors.
As it got noticed among the services’ providers as an innovative project lot of queries started coming in. Form the response it is obvious that the concept was well accepted. The novelty of this project is that each family of the village gets involved in the project one way or other. The authentic village experience and traditional living of Lepcha Community is the centre of attraction of the project. It indirectly tailors all aspects of community based tourism like tourism supply chain management and 100 per cent involvement of local community. The money spent by the tourists goes into different hands such as the farmer who offer the vegetables and fruits, local craft men by selling handicrafts as a souvenir and local escort, taking guest for village tour in this manner every family in the community gets benefited by the project.

Microfinance is also tailored with this project in order to develop saving habits among the people. The long term goals include developing village tourism with 100 percent community involvement and making it as a working model in community tourism. Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim, ECOSS (local NGO), which initiated this project with the financial help of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, NABARD (National bank) for financial assistance. The community members have undergone special training through different capacity building programmes aimed at enhancing the skill of the people who are directly associated with the project.

b. Kewzing Tourism Development
Kewzing is a scenic village located an altitude of 2200 meters, 85 k.m away from Gangtok city. Surrounded by hills, and very close to Pelling view point of Mount Kanchendzonga. Kewzing is hardly 10 k.m from Ravangla, a beautiful rural area, where the population mainly consist of Tibetans. The route to Kewzing is featured by Buddhist prayer flags, and monasteries. Kewzing Tourism Development Committee (KTDC) is a community tourism project established in the year 2002 with the help of an NGO, Sikkim Development Foundation (SDF). In 2004 ECOSS (NGO based in Gangtok) has formed a committee for promoting community tourism. This committee consists of 15 Bhutia families staying in Kewzing village at Ravangla in South Sikkim. The conceptualization of Community Tourism
is one of the key motivating factors of the establishment of this project. The committee is headed by President, Vice President and General Secretary.

Out of 15 Bhutia families, 10 families had a regular source of income and remaining 5 families had no regular employment at the time of initiation of the project. With a small financial assistance from SDF (Sikkim Development Foundation) and individual investments KTDC (Kewzing Tourism Development Committee) supported each member of the community to modify their houses with basic amenities. The members of the community were given a comprehensive training on hospitality, guest handling and preparing traditional cuisines. The packages were marketed through a travel agency based in Gangtok and two main websites (sikkimhomestay.com and sikkimtourism.gov.in). The operating principle of this community project is a holistic one. When tourists arrive, they are first received by the monk and the community members in the monastery located in the village. After the traditional welcome they are escorted to the concerned family’s house where the guests would be staying. The guests are encouraged to join the Bhutia family in farming, cooking etc. The package has options such as to have traditional dance form “Bhutia Dance”, spa treatment, soft trekking, village walk etc. the unemployed youths of this committee are given opportunities to guide the tourists.

The revenue sharing mechanism among the committee members gives a clear picture of how committee members benefit out of this project. 25 percent of the published tariff goes as the agency’s margin. 10 percent is towards the maintenance and development of the Monastery and 10 percent is towards the committee fund. Rs 700/- is given to the family for one night stay of the guest. The family members are selected on rotation basis, in order to give equal chance to every family involved in the committee. The family members acknowledge that the interaction with foreign and domestic tourists helped them to understand and share various cultural life, differences in behaviours etc. It also helped them to gain knowledge and motivated them to learn foreign languages.

**Result and Discussion**

1. To understand the issues in community based tourism development
Both the surveyed villages have adopted Community Based Tourism and were found to be successful in operationalizing the scheme. Both the villages have different ethnic communities with different culture, tradition, life style; food and customs are different but have adopted well to host tourists. Both the villages started this venture through homestay and they involve their tourists into various activities. They showcase their cultures and villages in a unique manner. All the local residents in the villages are equally benefited and the revenue generated from tourists is equally shared among them. Rey Mindu and Kewzing villagers are getting some support from local residents, local NGOs, State NGOs and the National NGOs. 90 per cent of villagers in both the villages are willing to work in a team. They have been trained by the local and state NGOs in various fields like how to handle tourists, how to maintain hygiene and how to behave in front of the tourists.

The study of working of operational aspects of tourism also revealed need for more awareness and training. Moreover tourism was found to be a seasonal business and village require multiple options for round the year occupation.

2. To suggest a framework for the empowerment of local community and resource management in Community Based Tourism Development.

Villagers in the study area believe that roads, toilets and recreational facilities have also come up in the villages and created jobs because of tourism. 60 per cent locals from Kewzing agrees that CBT project created jobs in the village and 50 per cent local from Rey Mindu village agrees that Community Based Tourism Project created jobs. 50 per cent villages from Kewzing and Rey Mindu believe after Community Based Tourism project jobs created are good and satisfied.

20 per cent of the villagers in two villages believe Community Based Tourism Development project are good for their villages but there are many who think that the prices of local vegetable, fruits and other items have risen and tourism is disturbing their age old traditions. They could see fall out of tourism such as crowding thefts, alcoholism, drug abuse, garbage and vehicular pollution etc. They also complained of non sensitive behaviour of tourists. Many of the above problems are common at tourist places and could be averted through proper planning. The success of any community based project is based upon how it tailors to the needs of the local community and how efficiently the services can be offered. The model
of Community Based Tourism Development is suggested consisting of pre-project stage, project in progress and the further aspects.

In the pre-project stage, selection of the beneficiary is critical. A detailed survey and study of other secondary data sources are important to finalize the list of beneficiaries. It also includes consultation of the community members to know their interest to participate in the project. Since it involves the intrusion of the private space to certain extent by opening its doors to strangers, and the attitudinal change required to attend the guests and offer them their own home, this stage involve lot of risk and time. Awareness campaigns, capacity building training play a critical role to motivate the members of the community to create a positive impression. Question of anxiety also play a crucial role since the community is uncertain on the benefits arising out of the programme. In the project progress stage, various problems arising out are maintaining the level of coordination with the community members and the sharing of revenue in a fair manner. Continuing interest among the community members which always question the basic objective of the project itself. Finally the future prospects of tourism completely depend on it acceptability among the tourists. Hence the success is counted in terms of the demand of tourists to experience the village tourism concept. Community has a lead role to play to utilise the tourism resources effectively and minimise the negative impacts. As opined by the local residents of Rey Mindu and Kewzing Village tourism is a pleasing job as everyday they come across new faces, new experiences. As there are several other destinations, competing for limited resource, innovative strategies, involvement of locals, management of local supply chains etc, can be imperative for tourism promotion in the country itself. In a world, where the traditions are in a stage of extinction and the cultural life is transforming day by day, community has a greater role to play and tourism can be one of the vehicles to preserve it. Additional revenue and job creation will attract local community to manage resources, up to certain extend, but value based service is the only option to have a long term sustained growth of tourism in the region.
The diagram represents various stages involved in capacity building and community in the initial stage, emphasis is on to ensure participation of the community. It also involves identifying and sharing of local resources. Once the community is aware of opportunities, initiating interest to participate, imparting managerial skills and creating a sense of ownership of the project for regular operation comes. Stage 3 involves management resources for future generation and involves sustainable development. Capacity building also involves soft skill and technical skills as well. “If empowerment of local people is to become more than just a buzzword or hopeful sentiment, it clearly requires the participation of local communities, in partnership with the stage, its agencies and large operators, rather than being a passive host community that happens to have a major attraction on its doorstep” (Nigam and Nerula, 2007).

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