Chapter 8

Impacts of Tourism in the Region

8.1. Introduction

Darjeeling District as a tourism destination has been growing as a mass tourist destination. The whole of district consist of four subdivisions namely, Siliguri, Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong and Kalimpong. Among these subdivision Darjeeling Town belong to Darjeeling Sadar Subdivision is the major tourist destination. There are other two minor destinations namely Mirik and Kalimpong. The tourists comes mainly to visit Darjeeling Town while they may also visit Mirik on their way to Siliguri which is a transit route for tourists who visits Darjeeling Town. Kalimpong is another hill destination which is visited by many tourists in Darjeeling District.

Tourism has impacted Darjeeling District negatively and positively. Some of the negative effects of tourism are very well known, while the positive effects needs to be unearthed in order to arrive at balanced assessment of the role of tourism in the region. The impacts of tourism can be cited under the following headings.

8.2. Social Impact

Tourism affects the society or the local community of the destination. Tourism influences the values and attitudes of the local community both positively and negatively. In a positive way tourism can be boon for local people as it generate employment, augment income, provide avenue for entrepreneurship and improves the quality of lives. On the negative side tourism also can shake the unity of the community through local gentrification (George , Mair , & Reid , 2009)i.e. the creation of a group of local elite. The negative and positive impacts of tourism are seen Darjeeling District in the following ways.

8.2.1. Promoting Harmony and understanding through Intra-State Tourism

West Bengal could be called an ethnological museum, due to the presence of numerous ethnic groups and tribes. Intra-state tourism in Darjeeling District has contributed immensely to the better understanding, and harmony among the various ethnic groups. A large number of
domestic tourists who visit Darjeeling District are Bengalese from various districts of West Bengal (Survey of Domestic Tourists , 2012) . Though there has been tensions, between two dominant ethnic groups, namely, Nepalese and Bengalese over the status of Darjeeling hilly region; both are tolerant and understanding towards each other, when they came to face to face in a tourist destination such as Darjeeling District. It is amazing to note that there has been no reported incident reported of harassment or antagonism on Bengalee tourists during the days of agitation for a separate state in Darjeeling District, which spread over a period from 2007- 2013.

8.2.2. Usefulness of Tourism Infrastructure to Local People

Darjeeling has been a tourist destination form its very inception. The reason for the occupation of Darjeeling by the British, was for enhancement of heath rather for trade. Though trade and defence requirements were also played, a role in the occupation of Darjeeling District, the need for a sanatorium dominated these (Kennedy, 1996)The infrastructural and super structural developments of the Colonial Era, (as roads, hotels and boarding houses) is continued even today in various ways. It is clear from the fact that now, the hilly regions of Darjeeling District, can boast of having 8450 hotels with 80,000 hotel rooms (Tourism Department GTA).

The infrastructural developments of Darjeeling can be seen as a prelude and aftermath of the establishment of Tourism. The British developed infrastructure in view of making it summer resort which was a base for the establishment of a vibrant tourism industry, while the developments after the independence can be considered as the aftermath of the establishment tourism. With the tourism, Darjeeling District would not have had such an infrastructure.

Today local people are also benefiting from the infrastructure meant for tourism. The survey conducted among the local people proves that infrastructure which are made for tourists are also useful to the local people. It is to be noted that 98% local people agree that markets made for tourists are useful for local people, 94% of the local people hold the view that entertainment facilities made for tourists are also beneficial for local people, 50.8% of the local people comments that accommodation meant for tourists are also useful to local people in occasions such as marriages and social gatherings. Among the local people 98.7% of them agree that roads constructed for the transport of tourists are also useful to local people and
98.7% of the local people approve that transport and communication facilities meant for tourists are also of great help to local people (Joseph, Survey of Local People, 2012).

In Darjeeling District, tourism has made a positive impact on the life of local residence by the making of tourism infrastructure beneficial for local people. Thus, tourism has impacted the society in a positive manner.

8.2.3. Congestion and over crowding

Darjeeling Town was built by the British and made it a Municipality in 1850 and it was meant for 10,000 persons. The population in the town area has grown beyond its actual capacity. According to 1991 Census, the population of Darjeeling Town was 73,062 and 2001 the population of Darjeeling Town rose to 1,07,530. The population of Darjeeling Town has grown 47% from 1991 to 2001. (Kanchan, 2013). The population of Darjeeling Town is in 2011 is 118,805 (Bhutia S., 2015) and when tourists arrivals the population of the town crosses two lakhs; as the annual influx of tourists according to Tourism Department of GTA is approximately 162,281 (Sonam Bhutia, Executive Director, Tourism Department GTA Personal Communication, 25 April 2015). With the arrival tourists in the seasons the town gets congested and the local people feel the pressure more than anyone else and the daily commuters find extremely difficult to get vehicles as most of the vehicles will be hired by the tourists (Tshering Lama, Personal Interview, 18 June 2014).

8.2.4. Sex Tourism

There are no official statistics available on sex tourism. Darjeeling hill experiences the bad consequences of sex tourism. The whole of Darjeeling District there is one red light area that is in Siliguri. Prostitution is on the increase as tourism grow. The number of HIV patients are on the rise in the hills every year. Tourism is one of the causes for the rapid spread of this disease (Mashqura Fareedi & Pasang Dorjee Lepcha , 2004).

8.2.5. Scanty Benefits of Tourism to the Local Communities

Tourism is one the pillars of the economy of Darjeeling District. Though tourists spending contribute around 350 crores a year (Bhutia S., 2014) to the local economy, the local people do not get much benefit from it. They are mainly engaged in service occupation such as management of hotels and restaurants, photography, taxi driving selling vegetables and souvenirs. (Chatterji, 2007) The lion share of the benefits goes to the plain men as they own
and run the hotels or lease them. (Mashqura Fareedi & Pasang Dorjee Lepcha, 2004) Tourism has not made major inroads to rural areas. So the local communities do not benefits from tourism in a major way.

8.3. Environmental Impact

The environmental impact of tourism in the region is both negative and positive. The negative impact include, impact on land due to unplanned construction, destruction of flora and fauna, vehicular pollution, unimpeded growth of taxies, littering by tourists, over burdening of environmental carrying capacity, water shortage, traffic jam and water pollution. The positive impact on the environment by tourism consists of the preservation of rare Himalayan Flora and Fauna.

8.3.1. Preservation of rare Himalayan Flora and Fauna

The East Himalayan region is well known for its exotic flora and fauna. The region is blessed with numerous variety of soft wood timbers, rare orchids, medicinal plants, aromatic plants and above all, rare species of butterflies. (Chakravarti, 1986). Natural History Museum, an institution of the Colonial era preserves rare specimens of Himalayan flora and fauna. Padmaja Naidu Zoological Park has a vast collection of flora and fauna, and it also protect the rare species of animal such as red panda and Himalayan wolf through its successful breeding programmes. Lloyd Botanical Garden preserves many English tree and plants.

It is interesting to note that 1, 24,575 hectares of the land that is 38.28% of the total area of the district is forest. Two national parks and three wild life sanctuaries are coming under this forest area. They are Singalila National Park, Neora Valley National Park, Mahananda Wild Life Sanctuary, Senchal Wild Life Sanctuary and Jorepokhri Wild Life Sanctuary. (Karmakar M., 2011, p. 39) Wild Life Tourism is one the segments of tourism which is popular in the region. It is tourism that provides motivation and reasons for the preservation of rich flora and fauna in the region.

8.3.2. Impact on Land- Vulnerable to landslide due to unplanned high rise Construction

The fragility of the environment in Darjeeling hills is evident from its formation its structure, geology, earth quake magnitude and landsides. For the last few decades, landslides have become a common occurrence. Many areas in Darjeeling hill are land slide and earth quake prone. The vibrant growth of tourism has led to the construction of many hotels and lodges in
Darjeeling Town which is venerable to natural calamities like earth quakes and landslides. Due to unplanned high rise construction in Darjeeling Town, the whole town has become a concrete jungle and causing threat to environment and the land (Saha, 2008).

8.3.3. Destruction of invaluable Flora and Fauna

It is a well-known fact, that Darjeeling Hilly region possess rich biodiversity compared to other regions of the country. The richness of the biodiversity is due to great climatic variations corresponding to diverse habitats. Though Darjeeling Hills is a home for vast variety of flora and fauna, certain species of animals and plants are on the verge of extinction due to un-mindful disforestation carried out under the pretext of development. It is reported that a new road to Sankdapur, from Manibhanjan was constructed through the forest, destroyed many species of rare plants. (Rai B. P., 2008).

As the Tourism Industry progressed in Darjeeling hills, the need for tourist accommodation also increased, many hotels and resorts were constructed by felling the trees. After the formation of DGHC, it unleashed a massive destruction of forest for making guest houses and resorts for tourists. Hundreds of valuable silver fir trees (Abies spectabilis), Sorbus spp, Quercus Lamelosa, Quercus fenestrata, castanopsis hystrix, Castanopsis pachyphyla and Rhododendrons were mercilessly cut down for the construction of tourism huts. The DGHC destroyed the habitat of Himalayan Salamander while constructing a tourist Lodge in Jorepokhari. It has been reported that while constructing the tourists resort at Jorepokhari the labourers working there, killed about three hundred salamanders on the strict instruction of the Chairman of DGHC. The alarming rate of destruction of forests in the hills together with the disappearance of wildlife bring in various problems like water crisis, climatic changes in rainfall pattern and temperature. (Rai B. P., 2008) The attraction of Darjeeling Hills as a tourist destination depends on its climate and natural beauty. The deforestation caused by the tourism Industry can be a death knell to the destination itself.

8.3.4. Vehicular Pollution

Vehicular pollution has become a widespread phenomenon. The quality of air in the area is badly affected because of the pollution. The fresh air of Darjeeling hills, which was attracting tourists is getting contaminated due to unabated vehicular pollution (TERI, Background Papers for Seminar on ‘Sustainable Tourism in Darjeeling Hill Area’, March, 19, 2002).
Tourism industry is has been indirectly contributing to the increase of number of vehicles, thus causing vehicular pollution in the region.

**8.3.5. Rapid growth of Taxies and increase of Road Accidents**

Large number of tourists visiting the region has proportionate effect on the number of taxies plying in the region. The rapid growth of taxies with has to the increase of accidents which has become a norm especially during the tourist seasons, thus putting the lives of tourists and local residents in danger (Mashqura Fareedi & Pasang Dorjee Lepcha, 2004).

**8.3.6. Littering by tourists**

Littering by tourists is a common phenomenon in Darjeeling hills. The large portion of waste generated by tourists are not disposed properly and this affect the environment and health of residents. (Mashqura Fareedi & Pasang Dorjee Lepcha, 2004) The collection and disposal of waste is the responsibility of the municipality. The Darjeeling Municipality which collect taxes from the local residents for the disposal of waste, spared the tourists from such tax. From 2013 the Darjeeling Municipality decided to introduce tourist tax for removing waste generated by the tourists during their stay. (The Telegraph English Daily, 2011) Though this is not warmly welcomed by all the stakeholders of the industry it is a move in the right direction. (The Telegraph English Daily, 2011) The local community has been putting up with inconvenience, health risk and paying taxes which tourists were exempted till now (The Statesman, English Daily, 2011)

**8.3.7. Over burdening of the Environmental carrying capacity**

Darjeeling Town is originally made for just 10,000 people by the British and made it a Municipality in the 1850 now the population of Darjeeling Municipality area according to 2011 census is 120,414. The infrastructural development in Darjeeling Town has kept pace with the increase in population. The annual tourists’ arrival in Darjeeling hills 2010-2011 is 470,000 (Tourism Executive GTA). Darjeeling Town being the major destination the annual arrive would easily be about two lakhs. It is certain that during the tourist season Darjeeling Town is having a population of over two lakhs of people: residence and tourists together. Darjeeling Town is not able to contain the heavy tourist flow and the environment is polluted with excessive number of vehicles and littering by tourists. (Mashqura Fareedi & Pasang Dorjee Lepcha, 2004). During the tourism seasons the town experience maximum congestion and bring about maximum pressure on natural resources like water and good air (Das S.,
Congestion and traffic jam are daily occurrence during the tourist season (Babu Joseph, Survey Tourists, 2012.). All the hoteliers interviewed state to the fact that they were having excess guests during tourist season and they had to refuse room for walk-in guests. Therefore, it is to be rightly assumed that Darjeeling Town is having more tourists than it can comfortably accommodate. Excessive number of visitors create traffic jam and vehicle pollution thus negatively affecting the quality of environment and quality of visitor experience and it can be easily assumed that the environmental carrying capacity of Darjeeling Town has crossed it limits.

8.3.8. Over burdening of the already worn out solid waste management system

According to the 2002 annual report of the Darjeeling Municipality, Darjeeling Town produces about 50 metric tons of solid wastes every day. Hotels contribute about 8 metric tons of waste daily. The solid waste management system of the Municipality is in a deplorable state. With the meagre 150 staff available for the collection and disposal of waste, the Municipality could only dispose about 60% of the waste generated daily. (Chhetri B. & Lakpa, 2013) Tourism industry in Darjeeling, though not fully responsible for this deplorable condition, is unfortunately adding to the already worst scenario. Tourism industry as a responsible industry has not taken any initiatives to redeem the situation.

8.3.9. Aggravating the water shortage

Darjeeling Town is infamous for water scarcity. There exist a wide gap between supply and demand. From April to June every year acute water shortage is experienced in Darjeeling Town. Per capita water supply is far below the prescribed norm of 135 litres per person, and only 50% of the households are connected to Municipal water supply. The local people are forced to collect water from nearby streams. The Municipality records shows that only 40 litres of water supplied to per person in the Municipality area. (Chhetri B. & Lakpa, 2013) Tourism industry in Darjeeling cannot survive without water so the industry is forced to tap water from the mountain streams thus denying access to the local people for most important natural resource that is water (Tshering Lama, Personal Interview, 18 June 2014).

Water sacristy is not only the problem of Darjeeling Town. It is felt at all the four towns namely, Darjeeling, Kurseong, Mirik and Kalimpong of Darjeeling Hills. The existing water storage and distribution network in all these towns are very old and are inadequate for the current population, increasing with the inflow of tourists. It is also reported that the existing
treatment plants either do not function and or are below capacity. Leakages of the existing of the storages tanks are also often reported (Tshering Lama, Personal Interview, 18 June 2014).

8.3.10. **Traffic Jam**

During the tourist season the number vehicles plying the road will increase many times. A large number of vehicles carrying the tourists to and fro create traffic jam due to carelessness of the drivers who are sometimes new to the region and not able to negotiate the curves efficiently. Darjeeling as a destination has becomes very congested and traffic jam became the order of the day especially during the tourist seasons (Tshering Lama, Personal Interview, 18 June 2014). The survey conducted among 600 tourists 8.5% of them feel that traffic jam is one the menaces they have to face while travelling to the destination and back (Babu Joseph, Survey of Tourists, 2012).

8.3.11. **Pollution of Water Bodies**

Water pollution has become a problem in Darjeeling hills mainly due to the absence of proper sewage facilities. Many of the hotels and other accommodation facilities would prefer to put their sewage pipe into the near water bodies such as mountain streams, for the sake of convenience and to reduce the cost of construction. (TERI, Background Papers for Seminar on ‘Sustainable Tourism in Darjeeling Hill Area’, March, 19, 2002). This practice is continued even today.

8.4. **Economic Impact**

The economic impact of tourism is also both negative and positive. The negative impact consists of the effect on prices while the positive impacts are generation of employment and promotion of cottage industries in the region.

8.4.1. **Generation of Employment and Income for local people**

Tourism is one of the major contributor to the economy of Darjeeling. The local people rely on tourism for employment. Tourism provides various types of employment to the local people. Many among the local people earn their livelihood by employing themselves in the hotels and restaurants, as tourist guides and brokers, drivers of the vehicles which carry tourists, porters who carry the goods for tourists etc. Tourism is an important activity by which local people are getting employment and income. Tourists spending contribute to the
local economy around 350 crores a year. (Bhutia S., 2014) The labour intensive nature of tourism contribute in a remarkable manner to the enhancement of local economy. Creation of employment and income to the local are the best positive impact of tourism in the district. (Mashqura Fareedi & Pasang Dorjee Lepcha, 2004)

8.4.2. Promoting Local Business and Cottage Industries

Local business like handicrafts sales, wayside restaurants by local entrepreneurs, cottage industries all earn their income mainly from tourism (Bhutia S., 2013). The products of the cottage industries include blankets, knitted woollen goods, handloom fabrics, *kukris* (choppers), baskets, mats and trinkets. Some of these products are mainly purchased by the tourists. The Tibetan Refugee Self Help Centre and the Bhutia Association of Training-cum-Production Centre and Hayden Hall at Darjeeling produces handicrafts items for the consumption of tourists.

8.4.3. Augmenting the Revenue of State Government and Municipality

Tourism being one the most prominent industries of Darjeeling District, the state government and the Municipality are benefiting from it in terms of taxes. Newly introduced tourist tax, in the name of ‘a clean and green initiative’, (The Telegraph English Daily, 2013) is one of the sources of income for Darjeeling Municipality. The Government of West Bengal benefits from tourism in the form of taxes on property, services, and vehicles.

8.4.4. Effect of Tourism on prices

The prices of local commodities and services could soar high because of the demand from tourists. This can affect the life of local residents. In Darjeeling this is reflected especially on taxi charges and most essential commodity like water. The taxies tend to hike charges during the tourist season. The local commuters are suffering from low availability of taxies, during the tourist season, as the taxi drivers prefer to ferry tourists rather than local people, because of the higher earnings. Though there are government regulations regarding the fairs no one seems to bother about that. Tourists too are harassed to pay higher amount than what is prescribed by the government while the local people are at great disadvantage as a higher amount is demanded from them during the tourist season. (Tshering Lama, Personal Interview, 18 June 2014)

Water is a rare commodity in Darjeeling Town and even in other hill stations like Kalimpong and Kurseong. The water scarcity is felt acutely in Darjeeling Town where the most number
of tourists seek accommodation. All the hotels in the town, have a notices placed at the reception informing the tourist about the water shortage and warning them about wastage of water. The hotels are able to buy water at a higher price and they are also in a position to tap all the water available from the mountain streams and carry it to the destination on trucks. The local people are not in a position to buy water at an exorbitant price and have to be contented with the little water they are able to collect from the common taps which are provided by the Municipality. The average houses in Darjeeling Town are forced to buy water to meet their daily needs that too at a higher cost.

8.5. Cultural Impact

The cultural impact of tourism too should looked at form positive and negative point of views. On the positive side, of the cultural impact is seen in the promotion of culture of the destination area, enhancement of national integration, popularizing the cuisines of Darjeeling, cultural preservation, preservation of heritage and linking of cultures. On the negative side, the commoditization of culture is taking place, as culture is increasingly looked as a product to be sold rather than some to be preserved.

8.5.1. Promoting of the Culture of the Destination

Darjeeling District as a destination comes under the Buddhist Circuit under the Tourism policy of Government of India 2002. Darjeeling has a strong presence of Buddhist monasteries and monks. Tibetan Refugee Centre in Darjeeling Town is internationally known. Apart from Buddhist monasteries, and a culture based on Buddhism, Darjeeling also has a sizable number of Hindu and Christian population with their distinctive religious and cultural traits. Colonial culture is seen in the architectural style of many buildings and also of the parties and dinners organised by the heritage hotels, cultural shows put up during Darjeeling Carnival and also in the entertainment shows offered by the educational institutions, which trace back their origin to the colonial period.

With presence of aboriginal groups like Lepchas and Bhutias, whose distinct cultures are exhibited through, their unique languages and colourful costumes, magnificent dances, rhythmic music and peculiar way of life, Darjeeling is a unique destination for culture, and many foreign tourists who visit Darjeeling, expressed culture as one of their motivation to visit the destination (Babu Joseph, Survey of Foreign Tourists, 2012). It is to be said that tourism has been a great force, which has promoted the culture of the destination, through
advertisement, exhibition, popularization of local fairs and festival, various tours packages such as monastery tour, village tours, and heritage walk.

8.5.2. Enhancing National Integration through Intercultural Contacts

Darjeeling District as a tourist destination is popular among domestic tourists. Tourists from as many as 25 Indian states are visiting Darjeeling. The survey of Domestic tourists show that the local people are very tourist friendly. Among the Indian states the state of Maharashtra has the maximum number of tourists visiting Darjeeling, followed by Gujarat, Delhi and Kerala (Babu Joseph, Survey of Domestic Tourists, 2012). Interaction of local people with so many tourists hailing from various states of India, leads to increased cultural contacts and enhancement of the cause of national integration.

8.5.3. Making the cuisines of Darjeeling Popular

Darjeeling District is famous for its variety of cuisines. International as well as domestic tourists appreciates the cuisines of Darjeeling. Many of the local dishes like momo, thukpa, waiwai, churpee, sael roti etc. have become popular dishes in the various cities of India. Among the 260 foreign tourists surveyed many have expressed great satisfaction of over the tasty food they have enjoyed (Babu Joseph, Survey of Tourists, 2012). It is Tourism that made these cuisines of Darjeeling famous.

8.5.4. Cultural Preservation

The culture of Darjeeling is unique in many ways. The various indigenous tribe with their own languages, colourful attires, fairs and festivals, religious ceremonies, cultural expressions like dances and dramas are feasts to the eyes of tourists visiting Darjeeling. Many of these attributes of culture were on the point of extinction, tourism encouraged the revival of many of these attributes and brought to light its uniqueness and splendour.

Today in Darjeeling, tourists are entertained with dances of all the hill tribes in the Nightingale Park especially during the season. The ‘cultural show’ organised by GTA is a unique spectacle of rich cultural heritage of Darjeeling. Fairs and festivals like Tea and Tourism Festival, Carnival, Food Festival are offering opportunities for the revival and preservation of the unique culture of the destination area.

Various museums, such as, Lepcha museum in Kalimpong, Himalayan Mountaineering Institute Museum at Darjeeling Town, preserve the rare artefacts and exhibit the art and
architectural skills of the hill communities to the tourists. Thus tourism is providing a motivation for the preservation of the culture.

8.5.5. Preservation of Heritage

Darjeeling is well known for its heritage. The cultural heritage of Darjeeling includes British cultural heritage, which is preserved mainly by tourism through a chain of heritage hotels, with the organization of cultural shows parties along the colonial style. Indigenous cultural heritage is preserved through cultural shows and museums. Architectural heritage of can be categorized as Greco-Roman, Gothic, Indo- Aryan and Tibetan, which are depicted in the historical buildings of Darjeeling are preserved and promoted through heritage walks. DHR, the world heritage, most precious among the heritages of Darjeeling is fully preserved by tourism. Tea industry which is part of the heritage landscape of Darjeeling is a popular tourist attraction, which is further popularized through tea tourism. Therefore, it is to be said, that tourism play a vital role in preserving and promoting the heritage of Darjeeling.

8.5.6. Linking of Cultures

The theme of the World Tourism Day in 2011 was the linking of cultures. Tourism as movement of people form the place of residence to the destination promote contact with different cultures; this is the best way to promote peace, tolerance, knowledge and mutual respect for each other’s cultures and way of life.

Darjeeling being a tourist destination of international repute, attract people from various counties and cultures. The most number of international tourists come from England. They love Darjeeling because it has some remnants of colonial heritage. Apart from the English tourists, there are many who come to Darjeeling from other countries. Survey of tourists conducted in 2012, reveals that there are tourists coming to Darjeeling from as many as 35 countries (Babu Joseph, Survey of tourists, 2012). The interaction of international tourists with local people and among themselves in the destination area leads to the interlinking of cultures. These international contacts through tourism, which occurs every year between the tourists and host community, is one of the best ways to achieve the lofty aims of tourism, which are promotion of peace and tolerance among the people of different nations.

8.5.7. Commodification of cultures

Darjeeling District is famous for its rich culture. Culture is the result of adhering to a particular style of life for many generations. It gives coherence and meaning to the life and
existence of a community. When each and every aspects of a culture is exposed to outsiders, it can lose its unique meaning for the community. Tourism promotes the exhibition of cultures of the destination thus making it a commodity to be exchanged for money. In Darjeeling District the commoditization of cultures is taking place, as the various aspects of the cultures are being exhibited for tourist consumption in the form of cultural shows and monastic tours, festivals, costumes and attires, sale of handicrafts. It is one of the negative impact of the tourism in the region, though the impact is not so strong, care should be taken so that that cultures do lose their moorings.

8.6. Conclusion

The society of the destination area, feels the effect of tourism in many ways; some of which are positive others negative. On the positive side, tourism acts as a powerful agent which promotes harmony and understanding between various communities in the state, development of infrastructure which is also beneficial to local people. On the negative side society is burdened with congestion and overcrowding, spread of sex tourism and forced to satisfy itself with the little benefit compared to the owners of the tourism facilities who are non-residents.

The environment of the destination too impacted in various ways. The negative impacts of tourism on the environment include the following. The land is made more vulnerable with unscientific construction of high rise buildings, making the hill slope prone to great damage to life and property of the residence and tourists, in the wake of an earth quake or other natural calamities. Destruction of invaluable flora and fauna for developing tourism sites with manmade facilities. Tourism also brought many more vehicles which pollute the environment, increase the number of road accidents and create traffic jam. Littering by tourists also makes the environment unhealthy and dirty. Over burdening of the carrying capacity and putting strain on the worn out solid waste management system, augmenting the water shortage and polluting water.

It is to be noted that, tourism also protect and conserve environment, through the sponsorship of breeding programme in the zoological parks, starting wild life sanctuaries and promotion of eco-tourism initiatives.

Economic impact of tourism on the negative side includes effect on prices, while on the positive side it includes generation of employment and income for local people, promotion of local business and cottage industries.
Cultural impact of tourism on the positive side, king include the promotion of the culture of the destination, enhancement of national integration through intercultural contacts, popularising the cuisines of Darjeeling, preservation of culture and heritage and linking of cultures. On the negative cultural impact of tourism on the destination is the commodification of cultures.

Impact of tourism on local government include the receipts though taxes while on the local residence include the use of touristic infrastructure like roads, markets and accommodation facilities for the use.

The impact of tourism on Darjeeling District is varied. Some are negative while others are positive. So tourism is boon and at the same a curse for the local people. It is interesting to note that rural people have not experienced the merits and demerits of tourism as it has not made major inroads into the rural area.