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Topic of Research: Community Participation in Promotion and Development of a Region as a Tourist Destination in Himachal Pradesh

FINDINGS

Understanding local residents' perceptions of tourism development is crucial for fostering supportive and sustainable tourism in Himachal Pradesh. These perceptions are shaped by factors such as economic benefits, environmental impacts, cultural exchange, and social dynamics. While tourism can create job opportunities and boost income, it may also lead to environmental degradation and cultural disruption. Residents' attitudes towards participatory tourism planning depend on their trust in authorities, past experiences, and transparency in planning processes. Active community involvement ensures tourism strategies align with local values.

Equally important is assessing the knowledge and skills of residents in areas like hospitality, marketing, and sustainable practices. Identifying skill gaps can inform tailored training programs to empower locals. The willingness to participate in tourism planning is influenced by perceived benefits, previous engagement, and personal interest. Barriers such as limited decision-making access, economic constraints, and lack of awareness often hinder participation. Addressing these barriers through inclusive, transparent, and empowering strategies can lead to stronger community involvement.

This study aims to develop a community-centered tourism model that enhances local participation, preserves cultural heritage, and supports sustainable economic growth. Such an approach ensures tourism benefits both visitors and host communities, creating a harmonious and inclusive development path.