

## Prospects of Homestays in Uttarakhand: A Case Study of New Tehri District"

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**Abstract:** Tourist nowadays have great affection towards nature and culture of tourist sites wherein they seek tranquillity and harmony which has derived home stay as important form of tourism. This research work investigates the potential for home stays in New Tehri District, Uttarakhand. State is, renowned for its scenic beauty, offers a compelling backdrop for tourism, and the study explores the viability and anticipated outcomes of introducing home stay accommodations in the region. The research employs study based on primary and secondary data with in-depth analyses to assess the willingness and interest of the local community in embracing home stay initiatives. The primary objectives include identifying prospects of home stay tourism in the region at the same time it would highlight role of customer satisfaction in sustainable rural home stay operations. Rural home stay offers economic benefits for host families, emphasizing income generation and community development. Against the backdrop of Tehri's scenic beauty, this research delves into the symbiotic relationship between customer satisfaction and the unique charm offered by home stays in the district.

Investigating role of customer satisfaction is integral part of the study, with an examination of how home stays can align with satisfaction of customer who are staying in these home stay. Comprehensive study with the aim of identifying prospects and customer satisfaction will be conducted using structured questionnaire which will be distributed to 10 leading rural home stay of the region based on room inventory collected data will be analysed using SPSS software.

**Key words:** Rural Home stays, Customer Satisfaction, Room Inventory

### 1.Introduction

#### 1.1 Homestay

Homestays are a kind of accommodation where visitors pay to stay in homes (Andriotis & Agiomirgianakis, 2013). In homestays guests interact with the host or the host's family, who usually live in the same place. Some common areas might be shared with the host family. Essentially, it is an alternative accommodation option that allows tourists to stay with specific families [1]. A homestay emphasizes the local styles, culture and traditions (Bhuiyan, Siwar, 2013) Truong & King (2009)

Homestays are a new idea in tourism and hospitality that is gaining popularity. It is seen as a great alternative to staying in hotels. In a homestay, you stay in someone's home giving you a cozy and home-like atmosphere (Wang, 2007; Gunasekaran & Anandkumar, 2012; Agyeiwaah, 2013). The host not just provides a place to stay, but they also help and support tourists during stay. Unlike other types of accommodations, staying in a homestay allows visitors to experience local life and culture firsthand (Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen, & Duangsaeng, 2015). Visitors spend time with the host family and experience their customers, values, and culture, and also get a glimpse of rural life [2] (Jamal, 2011). Hosts have the opportunity to earn extra money and meet people from different parts of the world (Inversii, & Rega, 2018). Homestays are changing the traditional hospitality scenario and can contribute to the sustainable development of local communities.

## 1.2 Homestay in Uttarakhand

Staying in a homestay is the ideal way to enjoy the friendly hospitality of the Himalayas in Uttarakhand. It is the best way to experience the warmth and kindness of the people in Uttarakhand. People in Uttarakhand are welcoming, follow the ancient tradition of treating guests like gods. People of Uttarakhand greet visitors with open arms and give personalized care and services. In Uttarakhand there are numerous registered homestays, where tourists explore scenic rural areas, also immersed in the local culture of cuisine and discover hidden stops with the assistance of the local residents.

In Uttarakhand, there are numerous tourist destinations that embrace their natural beauty and cultural heritage. Tourists miss out these scenic spots due to lack of proper accommodation, food facilities for tourists. The Uttarakhand government introduced the Atithi Uttarakhand Grih Awas (Homestays) regulation for the development of areas which are missed.

The regulation is initiated to provide a clean and effective residential experience for the foreign and domestic tourists. It also provides a chance to the tourists to immerse themselves in the Indian cultural traditions and the flavors of Uttarakhand cuisine while staying with a local family [3].

## 1.3 About study area - New Tehri

New Tehri is renowned for Tehri dam [4]. New Tehri is the only planned city in Tehri Garhwal district, Uttarakhand, India. It is located at an elevation of 1750 meters above sea level, with 11 wards [5]. It has become a lovely hill station that is attracting more tourists and creating new opportunities for the tourism industry [6]. Tehri lake offers a range of amenities for guests, including opportunities for boating, jet-skiing and various other sports activities [7],[4].

## 1.4 Research Problem

To assess the viability and challenges of promoting homestays in the New Tehri district of Uttarakhand, examine factors such as local community engagement, infrastructure development, and the overall economic impact on the region. Additions explore the significance of customer satisfaction in fostering sustainable rural homestays in New Tehri, Uttarakhand. Also investigating factors influencing customer satisfaction such as service quality, cultural experience and assessing their impact on the long-term viability of success of homestay initiatives in the New Tehri.

## 2.0 Review of Literature

The sustainable potential of homestays in Uttarakhand citing the region's natural beauty and cultural richness as key factors. Homestays offer a cultural exchange. This not only enhances the tourist experience but also boosts the economic growth of local communities, providing direct benefits to host families [8].

Homestays become a good business in rural areas as it is creating jobs and bringing money to communities. It suggests that homestays could work well in big cities too, where attractions can be expensive. However, there is a need for better connections between hosts and travelers ensuring safety for both sides. So, Homestays have the potential to play a significant role in the future of the tourism industry [9].

Tourism in Uttarakhand can be more environmentally and culturally sustainable. Managing waste, saving energy and using renewable energy can make homestays better for the environment. Additionally, supporting indigenous tourism and empowering local household financially can contribute to cultural sustainability. The importance of promoting cultural exchange, economic empowerment and environmental protection through homestays [10].

Homestays in the Indian Himalayan regions impact social, economic, and environmental issues. The study finds that homestay tourism helps reduce rural poverty and the movement of people away from rural areas. The research

suggests that safety is crucial, and both guests and hosts should make decisions based on the law. The study also uncovers challenges like a lack of good infrastructure, hospitality skills, trained tourist guides, and effective communication [11].

The importance of homestays in the hospitality industry in Madhya Pradesh. The government should actively promote the growth of homestay tourism in specific regions. It also recommends that the government set clear development goals and establish precise rules and regulations for homestay tourism. The need for considering the market's role and meeting tourists' demands alongside government guidance and planning [12].

Promoting rural tourism contributes to the economic development of rural areas. The study area of author is Nepal. In Nepal, a new way to attract tourists is through homestays, where visitors can experience and learn about different rural lifestyles and cultures. This not only brings joy to travelers but also helps alleviate concerns about poverty. The income earned by people in poor rural areas is considered a positive result of homestay tourism. Homestay programs also create opportunities for women's entrepreneurship & contribute to the country's tourism industry, impacting the economy positively [13].

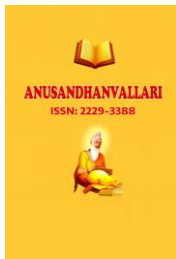
The crucial importance of understanding and enhancing tourist satisfaction with homestay experiences in Uttarakhand, India. It discusses the correlation between various factors and tourist fulfilment, highlighting the significance of reception, facilities, protection, local elements, and cultural performances. The need for effective marketing, improved amenities, and safety measures is stressed, with an emphasis on expanding homestay offerings, particularly heritage homes. The study concludes by underlining the role of stakeholders, including hosts and the government, in assessing and improving tourist satisfaction for the long-term sustainability of homestays in India [14].

The research focuses on raising awareness and understanding of community-based homestay activities and their perceived contributions to the socioeconomic and physical sustainability of rural areas in Selangor. The study delves into the incorporation of local people's lifestyles, cultural heritage, traditional cuisine, economic endeavors, recreational offerings, and environmental conservation within the framework of community-based homestays, all of which collectively attract guests to rural accommodations. The findings indicate that the homestay industry plays a crucial role in providing substantial supplementary income to local communities. Data collection involved conducting in-depth interviews with homestay owners and heads of homestay operations. [15].

A SWOT analysis to understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (challenges) of developing homestays in Cibodas village. Despite the availability of accommodations for longer stays, these homestays are perceived merely as sleeping places rather than captivating attractions. The study suggests six ways to make homestays in the Cibodas more appealing: (a) get community more involved in developing, (b) create a unique tourism using the natural, and cultural aspects, (c) improve the skill of community, d) advertise tourism, e) train & educate people to the better hosts & f) get support from relevant institutions in an organized way [16].

Research explores how homestay businesses have influenced the coastal villages of Mararikulam in Alappuzha district. It illuminates the positive transformations in both the economy and society as rural communities embrace homestay ventures. Author suggested that if the government simplifies procedures and rules, more entrepreneurs can benefit, fostering greater social and economic development in these communities [17].

Tourism is essential for Uttarakhand's economy, but it's crucial to consider its impact on the environment. The focus is on a new kind of accommodation called home stays, which are gaining popularity in rural areas. While home stays can bring economic growth and jobs to rural places, there's a concern about their impact on local culture and the environment. Currently, home stays are small and not well-organized, but as they grow, they might have significant effects on the Himalayan regions [18].



Homestay is an ancient tradition because even in the past when people visited hilly areas, they used to stay in the homes of local residents. The only difference now in modern era is people visiting hilly areas to experience unique culture, language and nature of the region and for accommodation they choose homestay to enjoy this distinctive cultural experience. Since, hotels and resorts are scarce [19].

The rural tourism prospect of Bhujikot, which is located in Tanahun District Nepal. The located in Tahnahun district Nepal. The author emphasizes that Bhujikot is suitable location for rural & ecotourism destinations if proper implementation of systematic homestay service is given. The author also stressed the point that there is a need to develop the basic infrastructure like roads, community health care service, trekking roads etc. to transform Bhujikot into a favorable homestay destination [20].

The study is to promote sustainable development in rural areas through tourism that respects the local community. This involves preserving culture, minimizing negative impacts, involving locals in decision-making, managing visitor numbers, maintaining product quality, enhancing customer satisfaction, and the rural economy with a focus on long-term goals. Homestay can bring positive changes to struggling rural areas by providing employment income & capital [21].

The research relies on information gathered from existing sources (secondary data). Author study focuses on North East India. According to the author's study, development of rural tourism can be really helpful for a country like India, where a large part of the population lives in villages. This kind of tourism not only improves the economy but also brings positive social changes. The North- East region of India, despite being less developed, has great potential for tourism because of its rich natural resources, diverse landscape, and cultural heritages. So, the concept of homestays helps people in the North Eastern region earn money, improving their livelihoods and living standards [22].

The study area of the author is Sikkim. The author's study is conducted through direct interviews as part of a survey fourteen homestays' owners in Kewzing were interviewed for the study. Data was also collected from government agencies and the Kewzing Tourism Development Committee (KTDC) which is involved in tourism development activities in Kewzing. The author concludes in the study that homestays bring about positive changes. They generate new employment, especially for women who run the homestays, adding to family income. The youth also find opportunities as tourist guides. Overall, homestays empower the community, make efficient use of resources & help maintain the authenticity of the community [23].

The research emphasizes that Community Based Tourism (CBT) is a groundbreaking concept aimed at enhancing the economic conditions of underprivileged individuals globally. The study highlights the growing strengths of rural Bangladesh, citing increased literacy, women's empowerment, and significant improvements in village sanitation. Homestays emerges as a promising avenue for positive change and progress in the country's tourism industry [24].

The author in his work emphasized the potential of homestay tourism in Uttarakhand and the crucial role of the state government in its development. Study suggested that successful growth in the home stay market requires proper planning, effective management, and active participation from all involved parties. There is a need to create the benefits of owners and ensure smooth operations [25].

The author has conducted a study on homestays in Himachal Pradesh. A SWOT analysis was performed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the homestay product such as the local culture and lifestyle in Himachal, a Himalayan state. Presently, the product lacks organization and is fragmented, with a lack awareness among both tourists of homestay operators. The study suggests that the local community should actively promote their own products such as the local culture of lifestyle, to attract tourists who are interested in experiencing these aspects [26].

A study conducted in Malaysia at Banguris Homestay & Sungai Slreh homestay investigates the motivations of existing successors. Interview with twelve participate revealed that family support, extra income and personal interest are essential motivational factors. Author concluded in his study that to keep homestays thriving, authorities should focus on the factors that attract individual taking on the role of hosts [27].

This research explores the possibilities of using home stays to promote ecotourism in the East Coast Economic Region (ECER). The study relies on secondary sources of data, mainly focusing on home stay accommodations in ECER. The findings suggest that home stays could offer an alternative lodging option, potentially contributing to sustainable ecotourism development in the region. The key to success lies in careful planning, effective implementation, regulatory measures, and proper financial allocation for home stay operations in ECER [28].

### 3. Research Methodology

It includes logical and systematic way to solve research problem and can be understood as a process of scientific conduction of research. Research methodology means structured and scientific approach of collecting and analyzing data.

**3.1 Primary Data:** Primary data refer to the data which is collected for the first time by the researcher, this data is generally collected by the researcher through survey or through questionnaire. For the conduction of this research 10 structured question were asked from the respondent who have visited different homestay in New Tehri district of Uttarakhand.

**3.2 Secondary Data:** Data which is not collected by the primary user, it includes all those data which has been collected by some other individual earlier

**3.3 Reliability Analysis:** Collected data of the research work was verified for checking reliability using Cronbach's alpha.

The value of Cronbach's alpha is above .8 is considered good, hence the data to research is very much reliable

**Table No. 01 Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.814	10

#### Objectives:

1. To identify the prospects of homestay in New Tehri district of Uttarakhand.
2. To investigate the role of customer satisfaction in sustainable rural homestay operations.

### 4. Data Analysis & Interpretation

Data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS. structured questions were asked from the respondent who have stayed in selected Home Stay of New Tehri District of Uttarakhand. Mean and Standard Deviation were calculated to reach conclusion and interpretations.

**4.1 Mean:** Mean is most preferred tool of statistical analysis and is one of the important measures of central tendency.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n x_i}{n}$$

**4.2 Standard Deviation:** Standard deviation is used to calculate how much deviation does data have from its mean position. Higher the scattering greater is the standard deviation.

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \mu)^2}$$

Where,

- N= Size of the population unit.
- $X_i$  = Each value of the population unit.
- $\mu$  = Mean of the population unit.

**Table 02: Item Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
State of Uttarakhand is famous for its cultural heritage	4.69	0.48607	100
Tourist visiting state of Uttarakhand have affinity towards regional culture of Uttarakhand	4.68	0.4899	100
There is an immense potential of home stay Tourism for the state of Uttarakhand	4.7	0.52223	100
Scenic and quite location of the state of Uttarakhand makes this state a perfect choice of home stay Tourism	4.67	0.49349	100
Development of Home stay Tourism will help in the economic development of the state	4.7	0.52223	100
New Tehri District of Uttarakhand is one of the most preferred tourist destinations for home stay tourism.	4.62	0.58223	100
Customer satisfaction is one the important aspect of successful home stay operation	4.63	0.50562	100
Training of staff working in home stay is required to enhance customer satisfaction.	4.67	0.51355	100
Amenities and Infrastructure plays crucial role in generating customer satisfaction in home stay	4.66	0.51679	100
Success of Home Stay Operation highly depend on customer satisfaction of the Guest	4.61	0.5104	100

- NOTE—1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree Mean interpretation: 1 - 1.80 = Unsatisfactory, 1.81-2.60 =satisfactory, 2.61-3.40= Neutral, 3.41- 4.20= Good, 4.21- 5.0=Very Good.

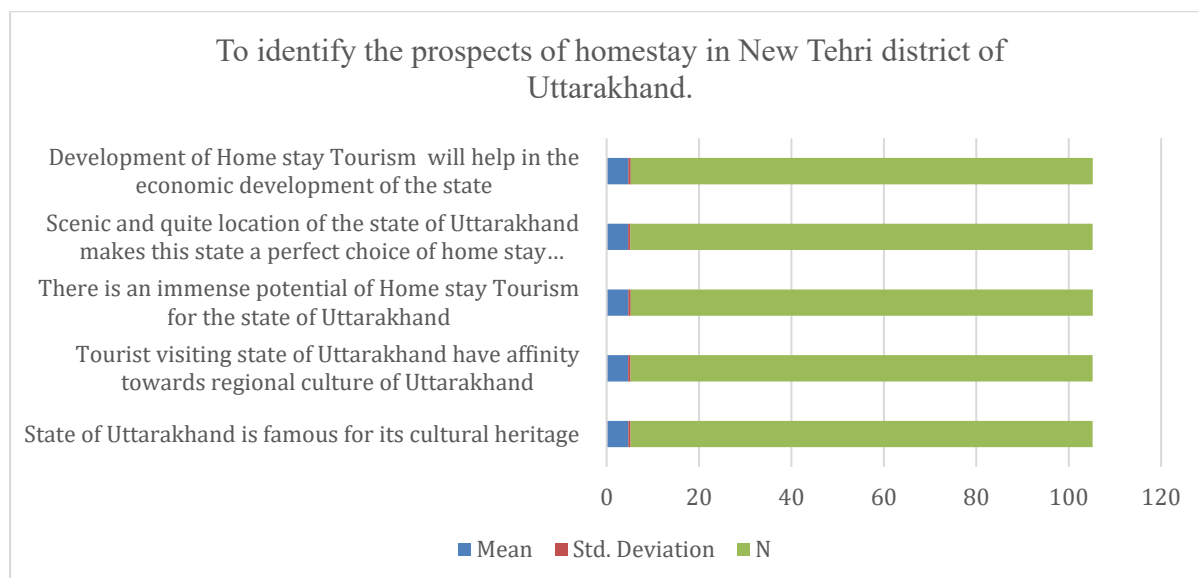


Figure:1

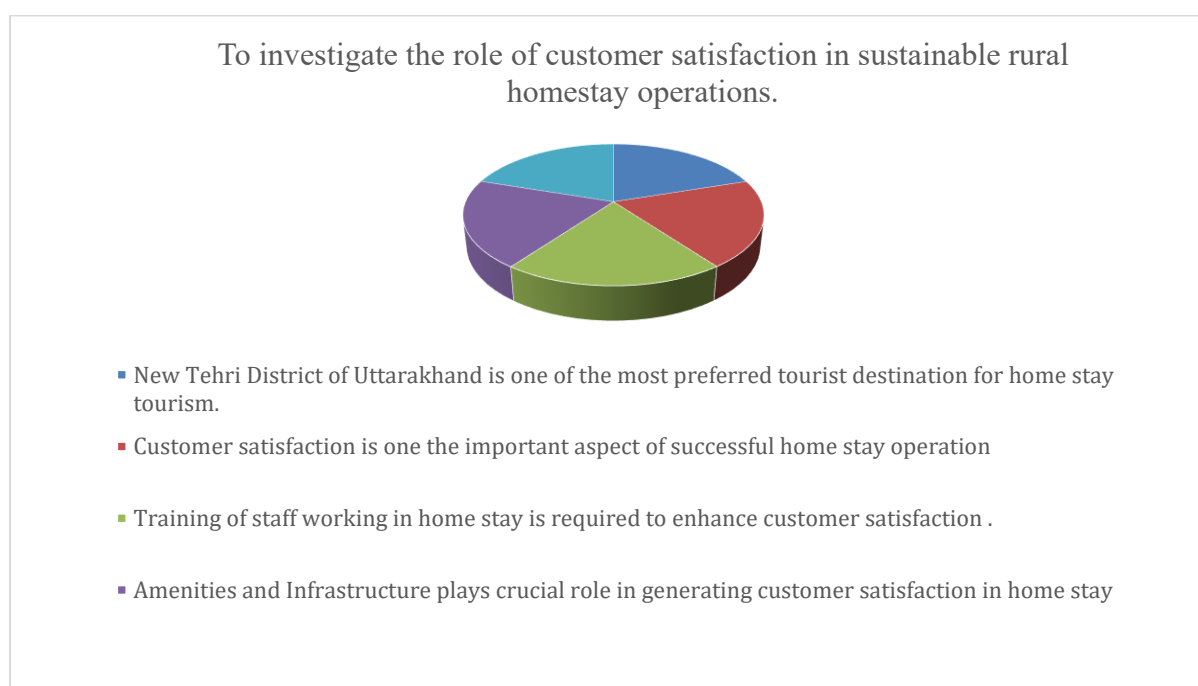
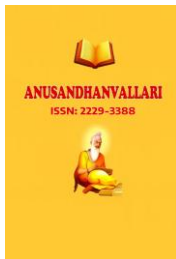


Figure:2

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

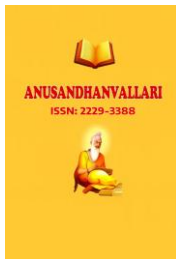
Home stay tourism is one of the popular forms of tourism in the state of Uttarakhand as large number of tourists use to arrive in the state for the purpose of relaxation, more over tourist have inclination towards knowing the cultural heritage of the state of Uttarakhand which makes home stay as one of the preferred choices of stay. New Tehri district of Uttarakhand is the cultural hub of Uttarakhand as the Kingdom of Garhwal was dominated by King of Tehri, connectivity of this place from the state capital Dehradun makes it perfect destination of home stay tourism. Existing Home stay offers unique stay to the guest and help in community-based self-employment.



Existing model of home stay tourism should be expanded and should understand management concept such as customer satisfaction, efforts should be made by the home stay operators to train their staff so that greater amount of customer satisfaction can be reached which can result in revisit intention of the guest. Good amount of emphasis can be laid on the development of infrastructure so that Tourist inflow can be enhanced.

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