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# Motivational Factors for Community Participation in Rural Tourism: A Case Study of Nongrum (Mawphlang) Village, East Khasi Hills District

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**Abstract:** *The central objective of the study was to investigate upon the economic impact of existing tourism initiative and also to discover the potential economic, socio-cultural and environmental factors for community participation in prospective tourism development initiative which is the most promising and sustainable tool of alternative income generation in the most prestigious Khasi heritage village which is also the site of the famous preserved sacred grove in the state of Meghalaya. The study was structured and conducted on the basis of widely accepted theories. Interview schedule and observation were used as tools for data collection on account of convenience of these tools in the context of the study area. The findings of the study can be of significant contributions to understand the motivational factors for sustaining community participation in rural tourism in general and eco-tourism in particular.*

**Keywords:** *Community participation, rural tourism, Mawphlang sacred grove, economic motivational factors of participation*

**Introduction:** Nongrum village is situated in Mawphlang Tehsil of East Khasi Hills District, with a road distance of about 26 kilometres from Shillong, the capital city of Meghalaya state. According to the 2011 census, Nongrum village has about 120 households with a population size of 632 peoples. Nongrum village is an important site for historical, cultural, botanical and eco-tourism researches on account of being a site of the famous *Mawphlang sacred grove* where flora and fauna are believed to be protected by a deity, and also on account of being a location of the *Khasi heritage village* where the culture and customs of the Khasis, the aborigines of Khasi hills, are depicted and displayed in their original forms in one place.

Rural tourism is a broad concept which encompasses various types of tourism activities that take place in rural setting. Some popular forms of tourism which find their rich resource base in rural areas are cultural tourism, adventure tourism, agri-tourism and folk tourism. The essence of community participation in rural tourism development has been discussed by many scholars and authors. Without the consent and cooperation of host community, there can be no tourism. Imagine a situation of tourists who want to visit a heritage village where the local people are anti-tourists. In that situation tourists may either be banned from entry or they may be allowed to enter but do not find even the least of satisfaction. People's decision for persistent participation in rural tourism is determined by the outcome of their previous participation. This also implies that the investment made by host communities in the form of manual labour, intellectual contribution, time and monetary contribution in the long run is determined by the outcome of participation itself. **Krishna (2002)** used the term 'social capital' to describe collective actions for mutual benefits within a particular group or community. People get involved themselves in rural tourism if it holds promises to generate employment opportunities (**Toshun, 2002; Ashe, 2005**), help small businesses (**Davis et al, 1988**), brings capital investment opportunities to the community (**Bahaee et al, 2014**). The socio-cultural factors for participation include the possibility to create a platform to raise local culture to the world and if that participation itself helps in upbringing a sense of personal dignity, increase interpersonal skills and community spirit, and also if

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local vies and opinions are valued and incorporated in decision making to fit into the common interest of all. The sustainability of rural tourism relies on the serene beauty and untarnished condition of geographical landscapes. Moreover, when it comes to the tribal belts, attention should be paid on people's longing and deep connection with nature. Any attempt of upbringing economic development should also integrate attempts to preserve and promote existing land, water and forest resources. Hence, the environmental dimension of tourism is equally as important as economic and socio-cultural dimensions for ensuring people's participation in rural tourism.

**Theoretical framework:** The following theories provide a core understanding of the source of motivation and stimulating factors of people's interest to participate in rural tourism and other community development initiatives.

**Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943):** Maslow's theory of needs relates to the fact that human struggle to achieve one need after another determines the mode and level of interaction in society. Maslow demonstrated human needs in the form of a pyramid. The bottom line of the pyramid represents physiological or basic needs in which on achieving these needs, it is natural for human beings to proceed on to upper more complicated needs ranging consecutively from safety needs to the needs of belonging to social groups and gradually to self-esteem needs until reaching the top of the pyramid which represents self-actualization.

**Vroom's expectancy theory (1964):** The theory relates to the fact that people's behaviour is determined by the consequence of their behaviour. The outcome out of a particular behaviour is comprised of three elements viz. *expectancy*, *instrumentality* and *valency*. Expectancy refers to the belief that the use of efforts in a particular aspect should eventually lead to desired achievement in that aspect. Instrumentality refers to the belief that reward should be achieved in accordance with the attainment of desired expectations. Valency refers to the belief that the reward should be designated with a value or it should contain certain value.

**Davidson's wheel of participation (1998):** Davidson's model of community participation was presented in the form of a wheel comprising of four sequential modules, each module having three successive sub-modules, each indicating a positive change in community participation as the wheel rolls in a forward direction. The four modules in a wheel assumed to be moving in a forward direction are information->consultation->participation->empowerment. The 'information' module consists of three slightly different sub-modules viz. minimal communication->limited information->good quality information. Minimal communication indicates a non-participation in which the community is neither consulted nor informed in decision-making process except when legally required. Limited information indicates a situation in which the target community people are informed but do not have the right to choose the kind of information they want. Good quality information indicates a circumstance in which the information provided is in accordance with the need of the community. The 'consultation' module is comprised of limited consultation->customer care->genuine consultation in a forward rolling wheel. Limited consultation indicates a circumstance in which information is provided to the community but in a way in which there is no responsibility on whether the community responds or not. Customer care indicates the existence of customer-oriented service. Genuine consultation indicates a situation in which a concerned community is allowed to get involved actively in discussing issues prior to implementation of a project or programme. The 'participation' module consists of effective advisory body->partnership->limited decentralized decision-making. Effective advisory body represents a kind of community participation in which a concerned community is invited to draw up proposals for planning and implementation. Partnership indicates a more community-oriented approach in which problem solving is undertaken in partnership with the concerned community. Limited decentralized decision-making indicates a greater community participatory approach in which the concerned community is allowed to make their own decisions on some issues. The 'empowerment' module is comprised of three successive modules viz. delegated control->independent control->entrusted control. Delegated control indicates community delegation with limited decision-making powers over a particular area or project. Independent control indicates a greater level of community participation in which entire service is done by the host community under the look out of the controlling council or agency. Entrusted control indicates the most community oriented participatory approach in which overall decision-making power is solely transferred to the concerned community.

Therefore, on account of the above theories, community participation is a choice to make which is largely determined by understanding and meeting people’s needs, people’s awareness on the outcome of their participation and full empowerment of community in decision-making, implementation and share of benefits.

**Objectives:**

1. To study the economic impact of rural tourism on community economic well-being.
2. To find out the economic, socio-cultural and environmental factors of motivation for participation in rural tourism development.

**Research questions:**

1. What are the positive and negative effects of rural tourism on income of households in the study area?
2. What are the potential economic factors of motivation for sustaining people’s participation in prospective tourism development?
3. What are the potential socio-cultural factors of motivation for sustaining people’s participation in prospective tourism development?
4. What are the potential environmental factors for motivating the concerned host tribal villagers for participation in rural tourism development?

**Methodology:**

**Universe:** The population of the study comprised of all households of Nongrum village.

**Sample-** In order to eliminate potential bias in a small population, census method was used in which all the 120 households of Nongrum village were selected and one respondent from each household was randomly selected. Therefore, census method for selection of households, and simple random sampling technique for selection of respondents from each household were used in the study.

**Tool:** Interview schedule containing structured questions and observation were used in the study.

**Statistical technique-** Percentage method was used to analyse the data.

**Limitation of the study:** The study was limited only to the 120 households of Mawphlang village according to 2011 census. Analysis on demography was limited only to age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and household income. Study on impact of past tourism initiative on livelihood of households in the study area was limited only to economic aspect of tourism impact.

**Tabulation, analysis and interpretation of findings:**

**Profile of household respondents**

**Table 1.1 Age group of respondents:**

Sl. No.	Age group	No. of male respondents	No. of female respondents	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	30-35	8	10	7%	8%	15%
2	35-40	12	14	10%	12%	22%
3	40-45	8	10	7%	8%	15%
4	45-50	10	12	8%	10%	18%
5	50-55	12	6	10%	5%	15%
6	55-60	10	8	8%	7%	15%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.1, we can see that 15% of the respondents belonged to the age group 30-35 years old, 22% belonged to the age group 35-40 years old, 15% belonged to the age group of 40-45 years old, 18% to the age group of 45-50, 15% to the age group of 50-55 and another 15% belonged to the age group of 55-60 years old.

**Table 1.2 Educational qualifications of respondents:**

Sl. No.	Educational qualification	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	I-IV	2	1	2%	1%	3%
2	V-VIII	14	12	12%	10%	22%
3	IX-XII	28	32	23%	27%	50%
4	Graduation and above	16	15	13%	12%	25%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.2, it is clear that with regards to educational qualification of respondents, only 3% belonged to standard I-IV, 22% belonged to standard V-VIII, the highest number of respondents belonged to standard IX-XII which accounted to 50% and another 25% of respondents were either graduates and above.

**Table 1.3 Occupation of household respondents:**

Sl. No.	Present occupation	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	Cultivator	6	4	5%	3%	8%
2	Student	8	10	7%	8%	15%
3	House wife/house husband	0	5	0%	5%	5%
4	Self-employed	24	23	20%	19%	39%
5	Teaching	2	1	2%	1%	3%
6	Shopkeeper	12	10	10%	8%	18%
7	Govt employee	4	3	3%	3%	6%
8	Others	4	4	3%	3%	6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.3, we can see that 8% of respondents were cultivators, 15% were students, 5% female respondents were housewives, 39% of the respondents were self-employed, 3% were teachers, 18% were shopkeepers, 6% worked in government offices and another 6% of the respondents were involved in other types of occupations.

**Table 1.4 Household incomes per annum of households of the respondents:**

Sl. No.	Range of Household income (in Rupees)	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	Rs.70000-Rs.80000	16	18	13%	15%	28%
2	Rs.80000-Rs.90000	13	12	11%	10%	21%
3	Rs.90000-Rs.100000	15	19	13%	16%	29%
4	Above Rs.100000	16	11	13%	9%	22%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.4, it is clear that 28% of the respondents said that that household income ranges between Rs.70000-Rs.80000, 21% said that their household income ranges between Rs.80000-Rs.90000, 29% said that their household income ranges between Rs.90000-Rs.100000 and another 22% of the respondents said that their household income is above Rs. 100000.

#### Analysis of findings for Objective No. 1

**Table 1.5 Economic impact of tourism development on host community**

Sl. No.	What were the plausible economic effects of tourism growth concerning your village?	Multiple optional responses
1	Growth in number of retail shop owners to earn their livelihood	
2	Growth in production and sale of local handicraft products Growth in production and sale of local handicraft products	
3	Increase in number of local residents involved in low end tourism related jobs to earn their livelihood	
4	Growth in number of local food stall owners to earn their livelihood	
5	En-cashed local efforts of preserving local culture and tradition	
6	En-cashed local efforts of preserving natural landscapes and biodiversity	
7	Growth in production and sale of local handicraft products	
8	Growth in baking and sale of local traditional cuisines	
9	Increased tourist inflow led to competition for price of goods between local people and tourists	
10	All of the above	

Respondents' responses									
Response code	Number of				Percentage				
	Male Response	Male No response	Female response	Female no response	Male response	Male no response	Female response	Female no response	Overall percentage
2	2	58	5	55	2%	48%	4%	46%	100%
7	3	57	2	58	3%	47%	2%	48%	100%
9	4	56	5	55	3%	47%	4%	46%	100%
10	8	52	5	55	7%	43%	4%	46%	100%
1 & 3	9	51	6	54	8%	42%	5%	45%	100%
5 & 6	5	55	7	53	4%	46%	6%	44%	100%
4 & 8	8	52	6	54	7%	43%	5%	45%	100%
1, 3,4,5,6,8	21	39	24	36	17%	33%	20%	30%	100%

From table 1.5, we can see that 17% male respondents and 20% female respondents i.e. 37% gave multiple responses which implies that in their opinion, the plausible effects of tourism concerning their village included of *growth in number of retail shop owners to earn their livelihood, increase in number of local residents involved in low end tourism related jobs to earn their livelihood, growth in number of local food stall owners to earn their livelihood, en-cashed local efforts of preserving local culture and tradition, en-cashed local efforts of preserving natural landscapes and biodiversity and growth in baking and sale of local traditional cuisines*. 7% male respondents and 5% female respondents, i.e. 12 % respondents gave two responses, including *growth in number of local food stall owners to earn their livelihood and growth in baking and sale of local traditional cuisines*. 4% male respondents and 6% females i.e. 10% respondents said that the plausible effects of tourism were *en-cashed local efforts of preserving local culture and tradition and en-cashed local efforts of preserving natural landscapes and biodiversity*. 8% male and 5% female i.e. 13% respondents gave two responses which included of *growth in number of retail shop owners to earn their livelihood and increase in number of local residents involved in low end tourism related jobs to earn their livelihood*. 7% male and 4% female i.e. 11% respondents said that the plausible effects of rural tourism included of all the options (1-9) given in the table above. 3% male and 4% female i.e. 7% respondents gave a negative response that the plausible effect of rural tourism concerning their village was *increased tourist inflow led to competition for price of goods between local people and tourists*. 3% male and 2% female i.e. 5% respondents gave *growth in production and sale of local handicraft products* as the plausible effect. 2% male and 4% female i.e. 6% respondents said that the plausible effect of tourism concerning their village was the *growth in production and sale of local handicraft products* Growth in production and sale of local handicraft products.

### Analysis of objective No. 2

**Table 1.6 Potential economic factors of motivation for sustaining people's participation in prospective tourism development**

Sl. No.	<i>What do you think are the potential economic factors of motivation for sustaining people's participation in prospective tourism development in your village?</i>	<i>Multiple optional responses</i>							
1	If tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for strengthening local retailing shops								
2	If tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for strengthening local tea stalls								
3	If tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for recognizing more production and sale of local traditional cuisines								
4	If tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for strengthening production and sale of local handicraft products								
5	If tourism development en-cashes local efforts of local efforts of preserving natural landscapes and biodiversity								
6	If tourism development recognizes and en-cashes local efforts of preserving local tradition and culture								
7	If tourism development hold promises and incorporate ideas for better infrastructural facilities without jeopardizing the environment								
8	If tourism development hold promises for more high-end and low-end jobs for local people								
9	If tourism development does not lead to competition in price of goods and services between local people and tourists								
10	All of the above								
<b>Respondents' responses</b>									
Response code	Number of				Percentage				Overall percentage
	Male Response	Male No response	Female response	Female no response	Male response	Male no response	Female response	Female no response	
1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9	<b>8</b>	52	<b>10</b>	50	<b>7%</b>	43%	<b>8%</b>	42%	100%
10	<b>52</b>	8	<b>50</b>	10	<b>43%</b>	7%	<b>42%</b>	8%	100%

From table 1.6, it is clear that 43% male and 42% female i.e. 85% of the total respondents responded by choosing all parameters (response code 10) in the table which implies that there are multiple factors with regards to economic factors of motivation for participation in prospective tourism development in their village which include of promises that (1) if prospective tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for strengthening local retailing shops, (2) if tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for strengthening local tea stalls, (3) if tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for recognizing more production and sale of local traditional cuisines, (4) if tourism development plan incorporate local ideas for strengthening production and sale of local handicraft products, (5) if tourism development en-cashes local efforts of local efforts of preserving natural landscapes and biodiversity, (6) if tourism development recognizes and en-cashes

local efforts of preserving local tradition and culture, (7) tourism development hold promises and incorporate ideas for better infrastructural facilities without jeopardizing the environment, (8) if tourism development hold promises for more high-end and low-end jobs for local people, and (9) if tourism development does not lead to competition in price of goods and services between local people and tourists . In the meantime, 7% male and 8% female i.e. 15% of the total respondents chose response codes 1,2,3,4,5,6,8 and 9 by ignoring response code 7 and 10 in table 1.6 above.

**Table 1.7 Potential socio-cultural factors of motivation for sustaining people’s participation in prospective tourism development?**

Sl. No.	What do you think are the potential socio-cultural factors of motivation for sustaining people’s participation in prospective tourism development?	Multiple optional responses							
1	If prospective tourism development recognizes and helps creating a platform to raise our tradition and culture								
2	If prospective tourism development recognizes and maintain the legendary sacredness of our sacred grove								
3	If prospective tourism development helps restoring originality of local cultural souvenirs and helps promoting their production and sale								
4	If prospective tourism development helps building social equality and social cohesion in the community								
5	If prospective tourism development allows local citizens’ control over decision-making, planning, employment and benefit-sharing								
6	If prospective tourism development helps bring local prosperity and helps changing the standard of living of the community in general								
7	If prospective tourism development holds promise for up-bringing social institutions								
8	If prospective tourism development helps creating work opportunities and reducing crime rates in the community								
9	All of the above								
<b>Respondents’ responses</b>									
Response code	Number of				Percentage				
	Male Response	Male No response	Female response	Female no response	Male response	Male no response	Female response	Female no response	Overall percentage
1,2,3,4,5,6,	-	60	2	58	-	50%	2%	48%	100%
1,2,3,4,5,6,7	-	60	1	59	-	50%	1%	49%	100%
10	<b>60</b>	-	<b>57</b>	3	<b>50%</b>	-	<b>47%</b>	3%	100%

From table 1.7, it is clear that 50% male and 47% female i.e. 97% of the respondents chose *all of the above* (response code 10) which implies that there are multiple socio-cultural factors of motivation for participation in prospective tourism development and those are (1) prospective tourism development recognizes and helps creating a platform to raise our tradition and culture, (2) if prospective tourism development recognizes and

maintain the legendary sacredness of our sacred grove, (3) prospective tourism development helps restoring originality of local cultural souvenirs and helps promoting their production and sale, (4) if prospective tourism development helps building social equality and social cohesion in the community, (5) if prospective tourism development allows local citizens' control over decision-making, planning, employment and benefit-sharing, (6) if prospective tourism development helps bring local prosperity and helps changing the standard of living of the community in general, (7) if prospective tourism development holds promise for up-bringing social institutions, and (8) if prospective tourism development helps creating work opportunities and reducing crime rates in the community. It is also important to note that 1% female respondent chose response codes 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7 ignoring response code 8 and 9, and again 2% female respondents chose only response code 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 ignoring response code 7,8 and 9.

**Table 1.8 Potential environmental factors for motivating the concerned host tribal villagers for participation in rural tourism development**

Sl. No.	What do you think are the potential environmental factors for motivating the concerned host tribal villagers for participation in rural tourism development?	Multiple optional responses							
1	If prospective tourism development plan incorporates strict policies to protect, preserve and promote our sacred grove and other surrounding forest areas								
2	If prospective tourism development plan incorporate ideas for convenient solid waste management strategies								
3	If prospective tourism development plan adopts measures for inclusion of environmental awareness for visitors in promotion or marketing channels								
4	If prospective tourism development plan incorporate ideas for beautification through flower and shrub plantation in our village								
5	If prospective tourism development hold promises for periodical eco-friendly niche tourism events at the interest of both local residents and eco-tourists								
6	All of the above								
Respondents' responses									
Response code	Number of				Percentage				Overall percentage
	Male Response	Male No response	Female response	Female no response	Male response	Male no response	Female response	Female no response	
6	60	-	60	-	50%	-	50%	-	100%

From table 1.8, it is clear that 100% of the respondents chose response code 6 which is *all of the above*. It implies that there are multiple environmental factors of motivation for people's participation in prospective rural tourism development and those are (1) if prospective tourism development plan incorporates strict policies to protect, preserve and promote our sacred grove and other surrounding forest areas, (2) if prospective tourism development plan incorporate ideas for convenient solid waste management strategies, (3) if prospective tourism development plan adopts measures for inclusion of environmental awareness for visitors in promotion or marketing channels, (4) if prospective tourism development plan incorporate ideas for beautification through flower and shrub plantation in our village, and (5) if prospective tourism development hold promises for periodical eco-friendly niche tourism events at the interest of both local residents and eco-tourists.

**Finding through observation:** The residents of Nongrum village have a sense of deep pride in their culture and customs. They hold a strong belief in the presence of a local deity known as *Labasa* (Leopard) which protects the forest and the flora and fauna therein. There is one strict lethal rule in connotation with religious belief in which any one, who kill any animal or plug any living plant or even a single leave from a standing plant of the forest, would be subjected to punishment by the *Labasa* who is actually invisible but exists and guards the forest. However, a tree can be cut down for cremation or other religious purposes. Till today religious rituals are still performed in the grove to keep strengthening the divine triangular connection among the deity, ecology and mankind. The residents of Nongrum village revealed that at present, local people use to collect rotten woods from the forest for use as firewood but those woods should not be made to burn inside the kitchen but only outside of a house. The entire forest area is a thick green canopy and by looking from a distance it seems like one can sleep and play on top of the canopy. The entry to the grove looks like a green tunnel and on entering the green tunnel, one can really experience a sense of tranquillity under the shades of the trees and the chirping sound of birds. There are monoliths still standing in the midst of the grove which is a spot for performing religious rituals in connection with the sacredness of the grove. There are hundreds of different species of plants both flowering and non-flowering which could be seen. There are also many rotten woods lying on the ground which are left untouched and unmoved. According to the local residents, there had been many cases in the past that visitors suffered from rare hateful physical disorders due to shameful misconduct inside the grove.

**Conclusion:** The finding of the study indicated that there was a favourable economic impact of previous rural tourism initiative on the host community. This is in conformity with the findings of Settina and Richmond (1978); Davis et al (1988); Tosun (2002); Ashe (2005); Aref and Redzuan (2009). With regards to the potential factors of motivation for community participation in prospective tourism development initiatives, the findings of the study revealed the fact that motivation is a matter of understanding community's economic and socio-cultural needs, people's awareness of the consequence of their participation and full empowerment of host community in decision-making, planning, implementation and benefit sharing which is in conformity with Maslow's theory of needs (1943), Vroom's expectancy theory (1964) and Davidson's wheel of participation (1998). It is also important to note that, on the basis of the finding in the study, the success of rural tourism development initiative should take into account the environmental orientation and environmental behaviour of the local folks, especially in tribal areas where most rural communes identify themselves with nature.

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