



## Analysing Tourism Research in the Indian Himalayan Region to Identify Gaps and Propose Sustainable Development Strategies

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**Abstract:** Tourism constitutes a substantial driver of economic growth within the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR). Nevertheless, it also presents noteworthy challenges to the region's environment and society. This paper undertakes a systematic literature review, employing thematic analysis, to examine the body of research on tourism within the IHR. The primary aim is to find out existing research gaps and propose strategies to sustainable development in this context. The methodological approach adopted in this study entails a comprehensive and systematic review of the literature encompassing the period from 1977 to August 2023, incorporating a total of 1036 published works. The sources consulted included widely recognized academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Additionally, The Lens, an integrated database aggregator, was employed to ensure a thorough exploration of relevant literature. The findings of this paper underscore the need for increased research concern to the multifaceted impacts of tourism on the IHR, encompassing domains encompassing environmental sustainability, sociocultural preservation, economic dimensions, and beyond. Furthermore, it is advocated that tourism development strategies in the IHR ought to be supported by a participatory approach that actively engages all stakeholders. This collaborative approach should include local communities, government bodies, and the private sector to facilitate holistic and sustainable tourism development practices.

**Keywords:** indian himalayan region • tourism, sustainable development • research gaps • recommendations

### Introduction

The Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) is a sprawling and diverse geographical entity that spans across 13 Indian States and Union Territories, stretching over 2500 kilometres. With a population of nearly 50 million, it represents a dynamic region with unique challenges and opportunities (Aayog 2018a). Its strategic location, bordering seven countries, further amplifies its significance on both the national and international stages. It extends from Jammu and Kashmir in the northwest to Arunachal Pradesh in the east, spanning a width that varies from 150 kilometres in Arunachal Pradesh to 400 kilometres in Kashmir. It is home to the world's youngest and actively rising mountains, the Himalayas. This region bears witness to ongoing tectonic activity,

where the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates continue to collide, leading to the formation of towering peaks, deep valleys, and seismic activity (Lodhi et al 2016). The economic significance of the IHR lies in its abundant natural resources. Its mountains and rivers provide vital resources such as water, forests, and biodiversity, which sustain agriculture, tourism, and various industries. Additionally, the IHR serves as the source of several major river systems, including the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and the Indus, supplying water to millions of people downstream. The region's economic contributions extend to hydropower generation, agriculture, and tourism, which are central to the livelihoods of its inhabitants. is a melting pot of diverse cultures, traditions, and languages. The region has historically been a



meeting point for various ethnic groups and indigenous communities. Its cultural richness is reflected in the vibrant festivals, art, music, and spiritual practices that have thrived in these challenging terrains for centuries. The Himalayas have also played a crucial role in shaping the culture of India, with numerous religious and pilgrimage sites dotting the landscape. The IHR's unique political dynamics stem from its diverse demographic, with varying levels of autonomy and governance structures. Understanding these dynamics is essential for comprehending the complex political landscape of the region. Additionally, the IHR's strategic location, sharing borders with Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, underscores its international significance. It serves as a critical junction for trade, diplomacy, and security, making it a focal point for regional and global politics.

The tourism sector in the IHR has a vital historical backdrop, dating back to pilgrimage trips to religious sites and mountainous river sources. The British colonial era introduced the concept of 'Hill Stations,' such as Darjeeling, Nainital, Mussoorie, and Shimla, which have evolved into major tourist destinations in the present day (Aayog 2018a). Tourism has emerged as a significant source of livelihood for local communities in the Himalayas, holding the potential to drive future regional development. In terms of ecology, tourism acts as a potent incentive for ecological conservation by promoting the preservation of the region's natural beauty and biodiversity. Additionally, tourism fosters environmental awareness among visitors, making them more conscious of the fragile ecosystems in the region and often leading to greater support for conservation efforts. On the economic front, tourism serves as a significant source of income and employment for the local population, offering opportunities in hospitality, transportation, guide services, and handicrafts. This economic diversification helps reduce

poverty and elevate living standards in many remote Himalayan areas. Moreover, tourism generates revenue for infrastructure development, supporting the improvement of roads, communication networks, and other essential facilities. Beyond ecology and economy, tourism also promotes cultural exchange and understanding, bridging gaps between different societies and fostering social harmony and cooperation. However, the realisation of this potential hinges upon the responsible and sustainable management of tourism activities.

Tourism, while offering many advantages to the IHR, also has the potential to have negative consequences that could undermine the region's delicate ecosystem and socio-cultural fabric. Uncontrolled tourism can put a lot of strain on natural resources, leading to deforestation, habitat degradation, and water pollution. Unsustainable practices like haphazard infrastructure development and waste management can further exacerbate environmental degradation. Additionally, the influx of tourists can disrupt local communities, leading to issues like cultural commodification, increased cost of living, and social conflicts (Aayog 2018a). To mitigate these negative effects, sustainable tourism practices are essential. Sustainable tourism in the IHR entails a holistic approach that prioritises the well-being of the environment, society, and economy. It emphasises responsible tourism conduct, such as limiting visitor numbers, promoting eco-friendly transportation, and ensuring the equitable distribution of economic benefits among local communities. Sustainable tourism aligns with the region's long-term interests by safeguarding its unique natural and cultural heritage while contributing to economic development and poverty reduction. The study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the state of research within this context. It recognizes the critical role that knowledge plays in shaping project planning, policy decisions, practical implications, and



further research endeavours. Therefore, the study embarks on a comprehensive review of existing peer-reviewed literature. By synthesising this body of research, the study aims to unveil the current status of studies across various facets of tourism in the IHR, **Tourism in Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)**

conduct a thematic analysis of these works, identify knowledge gaps, and ultimately offer actionable suggestions for fostering sustainable development in this ecologically and culturally sensitive region.

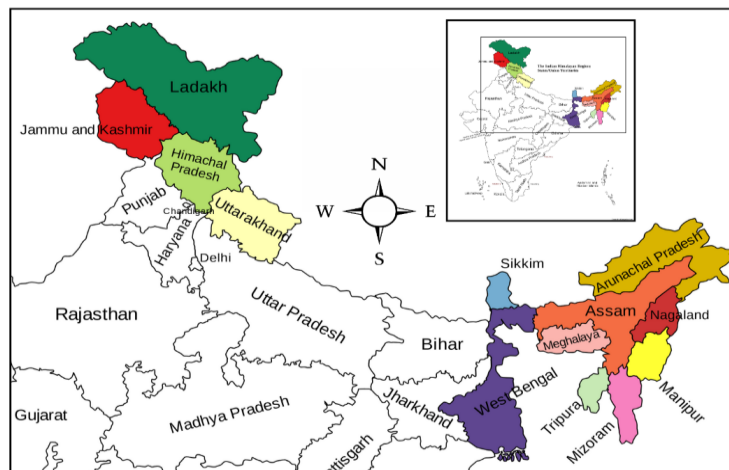


Fig 1. States/Union Territories under Indian Himalayan Region. Source; Created with map chart.net by authors. Map not to scale.

The IHR is spread across 13 Indian States/Union Territories stretching across 2500 km (Aayog 2018b). Figure 1 shows Indian States/Union Territories comes under himalayan region in the political map of India. Various types of tourism activities change names based on tourists' interests, destination types, and service providers' ideas. In addition to the traditional forms of tourism, the region is witnessing the emergence of new types of tourism that cater to modern travellers' interests and preferences. Activities like eco-friendly trekking, community-based tourism, and volunteer tourism are gaining popularity. These experiences allow travellers to engage with local communities, support conservation efforts, and leave a positive impact on the environment, aligning with the growing global awareness of sustainable and responsible travel practices (Aayog 2018). Many states have initiated ecotourism and responsible tourism programs to minimise the environmental footprint of tourism activities and promote community-based tourism. They are working on conserving delicate ecosystems, protecting

wildlife habitats, and preserving cultural heritage. Additionally, efforts are being made to involve local communities in the tourism industry to ensure they benefit from it and are motivated to protect their surroundings. However, challenges such as over-tourism, infrastructure development, waste management, and maintaining a delicate balance between economic growth and environmental conservation persist (Kuniyal et al 2003). While some areas have made significant strides in sustainable tourism practices, there is a need for consistent and coordinated efforts across the region to ensure the long-term viability of tourism while safeguarding the Himalayan ecosystem and local cultures. It is imperative that stakeholders, including governments, communities, and tourists themselves, actively engage in sustainable tourism practices to protect this precious and fragile part of the world.

### Research Methodology

The methodology employed in this study involves a systematic review of literature



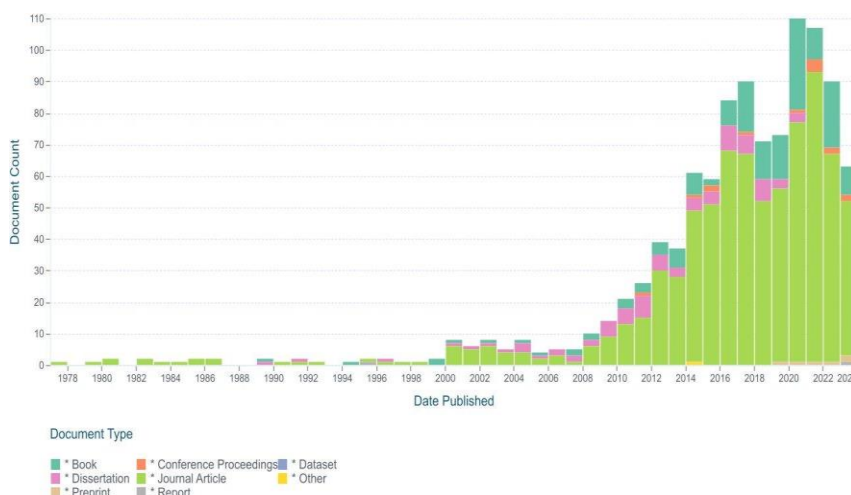
related to tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) spanning the period from 1977 to 2023 (significant absence of literature on this specific topic/area before 1977). The primary aim of this research is to comprehensively document the state of tourism research in the IHR and to identify gaps for potential future interventions. The methodology encompasses several distinct steps, which are detailed below. The initial phase of the study involved the collection of relevant literature. Various reputable databases and search engines were utilised to acquire a comprehensive range of scholarly materials. These sources included Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar, known for their extensive coverage of academic literature (Sánchez et al 2017). In addition to the above-mentioned databases, The Lens, an integrated database aggregator, was employed. The Lens aggregates bibliometric data from diverse sources, including PubMed and Crossref, consolidating them within a unified platform featuring deduplicated content and standardised search syntax (Penfold 2020; Moore 2022). This step aimed to ensure that no valuable publications were missed during the data collection process. To narrow down the search to specific topics and geographical regions, a set of keywords was used. Keywords such as "tourism," "travel," "tourist," "hotel," "hospitality," and "transportation" were combined with keywords related to the IHR, including "Indian Himalaya," "Indian Himalayan Region," "IHR" the names of individual states/union territories within the region and popular destinations in the region. This combination of keywords was used interchangeably in the search process.

## Results and Discussions

**Historical Trends of Publications:** Literature that met the inclusion criteria was considered for further analysis. Relevant publications were identified based on the presence of the specified keywords in the title, keywords, or abstract. This approach aimed to ensure that the selected literature was directly related to the study's

objectives and scope. The collected list of articles was subjected to a thorough validation process. Each article was reviewed individually to eliminate any materials that were unrelated to the study area, objectives, or themes. This step was crucial in maintaining the relevance and quality of the dataset. During the validation process, articles that did not align with the research focus, articles with less citations were filtered out. Only those publications that directly contributed to the understanding of tourism in the IHR were retained for further analysis. After completing the rigorous search, validation, and filtering processes, a total of 1,036 articles were deemed suitable for inclusion in the analysis. These articles represent the subset of literature that met the criteria for relevance and significance in the context of the study. This study employed a robust and comprehensive methodology for the review of literature on tourism in the IHR. By leveraging multiple databases, carefully selected keywords, and a rigorous validation process, the research aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of existing knowledge in this field and to identify research gaps for future interventions.

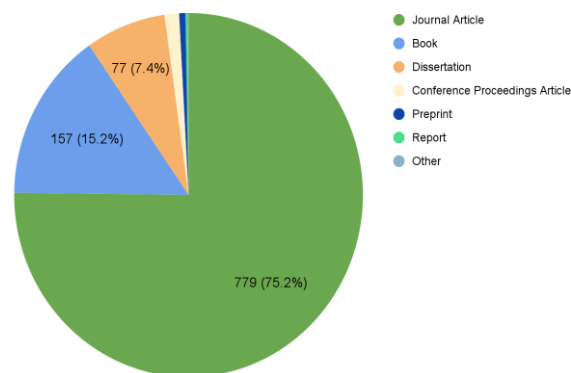
The historical trends of publications related to tourism in the Himalayan region from 1950 to 2023 reveal an interesting evolution in scholarly output (Figure 2). The early years of this period, spanning from 1950 to 1976, exhibit a significant absence of literature on this topic. This absence could be attributed to either a lack of research interest in the field or a dearth of publications available in the public domain during that time. A pivotal moment in the path of Himalayan tourism research occurred in 1977 when N K Sharma authored an article on Himachal Pradesh Tourism, which was published in the journal 'Tourism Recreation Research'.



**Figure 2.** Historical Trends of Publications in the IHR on Tourism. Source; authors compiled from research findings.

This marked the beginning of a noticeable shift, with an average minimum of two publications per year recorded until after. The most striking upsurge in scholarly works was observed in 2014 when approximately 70 publications emerged, followed by an even more substantial increase in 2020 with 120 publications. As of 2023, around 65 publications have already been published, indicating a continued upward trajectory in scholarly output. A visual representation of these trends reveals a significant and consistent rise in the number of publications over the years. Two distinct periods stand out as having the highest increases in the number of publications. The first spans from 2016 to 2017, while the second encompasses 2020 to 2021. These periods likely represent times of heightened research interest or funding in the field of Himalayan tourism. Throughout this extended period, journal articles remained the predominant type of publication, underscoring the importance of academic journals as the primary medium for disseminating research findings in the domain of Himalayan tourism. These historical trends not only reflect the evolving academic landscape but also highlight the growing significance of the Himalayan region as a subject of scholarly exploration within the field of tourism.

### Publication Types:



**Fig 3.** Publication Types. Source; authors compiled from research findings.

The analysis of publication types related to tourism in the IHR from 1977 to 2023, as depicted in the pie diagram (Fig 3), reveals intriguing insights into the dissemination of scholarly works. Among the 1,036 scholarly works analysed, journal articles emerged as the predominant type of publication, comprising a substantial 75.2 percent of the total, which equates to 779 individual articles. This prominence underscores the significance of academic journals as the primary platform for sharing research findings in the field of Indian Himalayan tourism. In addition to journal articles, other types of publications also made contributions to the scholarly landscape. Books or book chapters accounted for 15.2 percent,



totaling 157 publications, further highlighting the role of comprehensive publications in shaping the discourse on Himalayan tourism. Dissertations constituted 7.4 percent of the total, with 77 works contributing valuable insights through in-depth research. Conference proceedings, comprising 1.35 percent (14 publications), and preprints, constituting 0.6 percent (6 publications), indicated the importance of sharing preliminary findings and presenting research outcomes at academic gatherings. Reports and other types of publications had a smaller presence, with 0.2 percent (2 publications) and 0.1 percent (1

publication), respectively, emphasising their relatively limited role in disseminating knowledge in this field. Overall, the dominance of journal articles as the primary medium for scholarly communication in Indian Himalayan tourism research suggests the importance of peer-reviewed, in-depth exploration of this topic. However, the diversity of publication types also indicates a multifaceted approach to understanding and advancing the field, with books, dissertations, and conference contributions playing complementary roles in shaping the body of knowledge related to tourism in the IHR.



**Fig 4.** Fields of Study, word cloud diagram. Source; authors compiled from research findings.

### Fields of Study

The word cloud representing major fields/disciplines/subject areas covered under scholarly works on tourism in the IHR from 1977 to 2023 provides valuable insights into the multidisciplinary nature of this research (Fig 4). With a total count of 759, "Tourism" naturally emerges as the central and overarching field of study, reflecting the primary focus of these scholarly works. "Geography" is the second most prominent field, with 462 scholarly works. This highlights the significance of understanding the geographical aspects of the IHR in the context of tourism, such as terrain, climate, and topography. In the realm of "Business" and "Marketing," comprising 336

and 167 works respectively, it becomes evident that a substantial portion of research within this domain explores the economic and promotional aspects of tourism in the region, indicating a keen interest in maximising the economic potential of tourism. "Ecotourism," "Environmental planning," "Sustainability," and "Sustainable tourism" collectively represent a strong emphasis on environmentally conscious and sustainable practices in the IHR's tourism industry. These fields, along with "Economic growth" and "Sustainable development," underline the commitment to balancing economic growth with environmental preservation and social well-



being. Disciplines like "Archaeology" and "Political science" (with 119 and 115 works respectively) indicate that researchers delve into historical and political aspects when analysing tourism in the IHR. This demonstrates the importance of understanding the region's heritage and the influence of governance on tourism development. Other noteworthy fields of study include "Computer science," "Law," and "Engineering," highlighting the integration of technology, legal frameworks, and infrastructure development in

the tourism sector. "Cultural tourism," "Cultural heritage," and "History" showcase the significance of preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of the IHR within the tourism context. "Local community," "Rural tourism," and "Livelihood" emphasise the socio-economic impact of tourism on the local population, indicating a concern for community well-being and livelihood sustainability. In summary, the multidisciplinary nature of research on tourism in the IHR is apparent from the diverse fields represented in the word cloud.

### Top Publishers



**Fig 5. Top Publishers, heat map. Source; authors compiled from research findings.**

Analysing the top publishers in the field of tourism research in the IHR from 1977 to 2023 provides valuable insights into the scholarly landscape (Figure 5). The dataset includes a diverse range of publishers, each contributing significantly to the dissemination of knowledge in this field. One prominent publisher that stands out is "Springer International Publishing," which encompasses various subsidiary publishing entities such as Springer Science + Business Media, Springer Science and Business Media LLC, Springer Nature Singapore, Springer Singapore, Springer Japan, and Springer International Publishing. Collectively, they have published a substantial total of 135 scholarly works on tourism in the IHR. This suggests the extensive reach and

influence of the Springer publishing family in this research domain. "Elsevier" is another major player in this arena, with 76 publications to its name. The Elsevier family also includes "Elsevier EV," contributing to its strong presence in the field. Elsevier's extensive portfolio and global recognition make it a significant contributor to the body of literature on Himalayan tourism. "Informa UK Limited" is a notable publisher with 55 publications. This publisher, which includes Taylor and Francis Ltd., has been actively involved in disseminating research related to tourism in the Indian Himalayas. The substantial number of publications indicates the publisher's commitment to advancing knowledge in this area. "SAGE Publications" is yet another



influential player in the field, with 30 publications. SAGE's contributions underscore the importance of their research output in shaping discussions and insights in Himalayan tourism. Additionally, "IGI Global" and "Emerald" have published 39 and 24 scholarly works, respectively, indicating their significant contributions to the literature. Emerald, in particular, encompasses "Emerald Publishing Limited" and "Emerald Netherlands," emphasising its role in disseminating research findings. While these publishers lead the way in terms of the number of publications, it's important to acknowledge the diversity of

publishers represented in the dataset. Publishers like "Apple Academic Press," "Routledge," and "Cognizant, LLC" have also made valuable contributions, each with their own unique focus and perspective. In summary, the top publishers in the field of tourism research in the IHR have played a crucial role in shaping the scholarly landscape. Their collective efforts have resulted in a rich and diverse body of knowledge, spanning various disciplines and research interests, and have contributed significantly to our understanding of tourism in this unique and ecologically sensitive region.

**Table 1.** Thematic Analysis and Gap in Research on Tourism in the IHR

<b>Theme/area</b>	<b>Research Focus/Findings [relation to tourism destination or service]</b>	<b>Research Gaps [relation to tourism destination or service, with respect to sustainable development]</b>
4.5 Environmental and Biodiversity Conservation	Impacts of environmental policy on people, human-wildlife conflict. Anthropogenic activities and environment. Planning, Promotion, involvement in ecotourism. Landslides, floods, disasters and its impacts. Wildlife/ecology conservation through tourism. Environmental sustainability, impact assessment.	Urban biodiversity conservation. Indigenous knowledge and conservation. Sustainable infrastructure development. Long-term monitoring and assessment. Tourist behaviour and preferences towards sustainability.
4.6 Cultural Heritage and Community Engagement	Community participation; initiatives, response, actions, decision making power, empowerment and barriers. Local people's perception, attitude and views. Social anthropology of tourist destinations. Eco-cultural, culinary, traditional and heritage tourism. CBT. Religious, spiritual, responsible, tribal, endogenous tourism.	Cultural impact assessment. Community-based conservation and promotion. Domains of cultural exchange. Heritage preservation education and training. Youth engagement. Community-based governance. Stakeholders collaboration. Volunteering. Case studies on successful community participation.
4.7 Infrastructure and Accessibility	Urban tourism infrastructure legislation, planning, evaluation and sustainability. Role of infrastructure and transportation in tourism development. Disaster, carbon footprint and tourism infrastructure. Water supply and quality. Accessible or inclusive tourism planning, participation and promotion.	Technology and tourism accessibility. Community involvement in infrastructure planning and development. Case studies on ecotourism Infrastructure. Tourism activities and destinations for specially abled people. Sustainable tourism infrastructure designs. Universal design for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.
4.8 Tourism Regulations and Policy	Sustainable development strategies and policies. Ecotourism planning policies, promotional strategies. CBT policies. Government role in tourism policy, framework, regulation, rules making. Government policy; evaluation, its impact in the community [positive/negative]. Post Pandemic policies, rules, frameworks.	Local governance. Safety and security regulations. Revenue policies and models. Gender-inclusive or new gender tourism policies. Cultural heritage preservation policies or regulations. Crisis management models or frameworks.
4.9 Local	Sustainable or alternative livelihood options,	Cultural tourism products. One District One





Livelihoods and Socioeconomic Impact	strategies, impacts. Community empowerment through tourism. Women participation and empowerment in tourism entrepreneurship. Ecotourism and employment/income. Rural and social entrepreneurship. Poverty alleviation and pro poor tourism.	Product (ODOP). Ecotourism entrepreneurs. Sustainable marketing. Direct and indirect income from rural tourism. Case studies on tourism benefited reverse migration. Gender equity in tourism employment and payment. Community governance. Community-Based tourism enterprises.
4.10 Overdevelopment and Carrying Capacity	Ecological footprints. Carrying capacity and destination development. Impacts of urban tourism destinations. Environmental degradation by tourism. Growth and impacts of mass tourism. Terror attack in tourism destinations.	Carrying capacity assessment models. Effects of overdevelopment. Sustainable transportation and mobility. Political tensions, instability and tourism. Footprint standards and reduction frameworks. Government initiative to plan, monitor and control carrying capacity.
4.11 Wellness, Health Issues, Waste Management and Sanitation	COVID-19/epidemic and tourism. Wellness tourism. Waste generation, storage, disposal/management, impact in hilly destinations. Sanitation culture and facilities for tourists and the public.	Recycling and tourism. Sanitation in the destination. Frameworks/cases. Digitalisation in waste collection and management. Case studies of successful waste management in tourist destinations/properties. Plogging. Wellness of tourism service providing communities/villages. Tourism waste management index of tourist destinations.
4.12 Tourism and Technology	Use/role of ICT in tourism development. GIS and tourism. Digital marketing in rural tourism. Social media and networking sites for tourism promotion and data analysis. Virtual and smart tourism.	Digitalisation of booking, payment, and feedback etc. in rural tourism. Software or mobile applications. Online searching and booking behaviour of tourism services. Various niches in digital marketing or promotion like vlogging etc. Digital presence of destinations. Use of ICT to promote and ensure sustainability in tourism activities or service.
4.13 Training, Education, and Awareness	Vocational education in tourism. Impacts of tourism education; opportunities, employability, income, community empowerment. Skill gap in tourism industry. Tourism development through education. Public learning in response to tourism development. Students' perception on tourism entrepreneurship.	Tourism entrepreneurship education/training. Need and impact of short term tourism skill course. Upskilling in the tourism industry [rural/urban]. Partnership and collaboration between tourism industry and academia. Sustainable tourism training and capacity building. Ethical tourism frameworks and workshops. Impacts of tourism conferences/seminars/workshops etc.

Source; authors compiled from research findings.

Table 1 provides an overview of the themes, subthemes, notable authors or studies, research focus or findings, and existing research gaps on sustainable development. The table serves as a synthesis of collective insights from existing literature, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the research landscape in the context of tourism in the IHR. As we delve into these gaps, we aim to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse, facilitating the formulation of strategies and policies that align

tourism development with sustainability goals in this unique and ecologically sensitive region. The process of identifying gaps in research is not intended to critique existing work but rather to pinpoint areas where meaningful contributions can be made.

### Suggestions and Recommendations

The study proposes following strategies and actionable recommendations for policymakers, stakeholders and researchers to address these



gaps and foster sustainable tourism in the IHR.

*a. Interdisciplinary Research Collaboration:* Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers, government agencies, local communities, and NGOs to conduct in-depth studies and develop comprehensive solutions. This collaboration can lead to a more holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the IHR.

*b. Policy Framework Enhancement:* Policymakers should focus on developing and implementing comprehensive policies and regulations that consider sustainability in all its dimensions. This should include measures to protect urban biodiversity, promote indigenous knowledge, and ensure the sustainability of infrastructure development.

*c. Long-term Monitoring and Assessment:* Establish a robust system for continuous monitoring and assessment of tourism impacts on the environment, culture, and society. Long-term studies can provide valuable insights into trends and help in timely interventions.

*d. Community Engagement and Empowerment:* Encourage community-based tourism enterprises and governance structures. Empower local communities to actively participate in decision-making processes and benefit from tourism-related activities.

*e. Tourism Education and Training:* Invest in tourism education and training programs, including short-term skill courses and upskilling initiatives, to enhance the capacity of individuals in the industry and foster entrepreneurship.

*f. Digitalization and Sustainable Practices:* Promote the use of digital technologies in waste management, sanitation, booking systems, and marketing to enhance efficiency and sustainability. Develop and share best practices in digitalization within rural tourism.

*g. Gender-Inclusive Policies:* Develop gender-inclusive tourism policies that promote equity in employment, payment, and participation. Encourage women's entrepreneurship and leadership roles in the tourism sector.

*h. Stakeholder Collaboration:* Foster collaboration between the tourism

industry, academia, and local communities. Create platforms for sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices, ultimately contributing to sustainable tourism development.

*i. Ethical Tourism Promotion:* Organise workshops and conferences focused on ethical tourism frameworks. Promote responsible tourism practices and emphasise the importance of minimising negative impacts on the environment and local cultures.

*j. Government Initiatives for Carrying Capacity:* Governments should take the lead in planning, monitoring, and controlling carrying capacity in popular tourist destinations. Implement effective strategies to manage overcrowding and environmental degradation.

*k. Waste Management and Sanitation:* Develop waste management indices for tourist destinations and encourage recycling practices. Promote sanitation in tourist areas to ensure the well-being of both visitors and local communities.

*l. Innovative Digital Marketing:* Explore innovative digital marketing techniques, such as vlogging and immersive experiences, to attract tourists while promoting sustainable practices and unique cultural experiences.

*m. Capacity Building Workshops:* Organise capacity-building workshops and training sessions for tourism service providers, with a focus on wellness and sustainable tourism practices.

*n. Tourism Conference Impact:* Evaluate the impacts of tourism conferences, seminars, and workshops on knowledge sharing and policy development. Ensure that these events result in actionable outcomes for sustainable tourism. By implementing these strategies and recommendations, we can work towards the sustainable development of tourism in the IHR, balancing the economic benefits with the preservation of its natural beauty, cultural heritage, and social well-being.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this research paper has conducted a comprehensive examination of the existing literature, presented its findings, and



assessed the current state of tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR). Employing a thematic analysis of 1036 published works and leveraging Lens data aggregators for analysis, this paper has shed light on the crucial role tourism plays in driving economic growth within the region, while also highlighting its detrimental impact on the environment. The paper has put forth a range of strategies aimed at promoting sustainable tourism in the IHR. These strategies encompass the development of a region-specific tourism strategy, investments in sustainable infrastructure, heightened environmental awareness among tourists and locals, efficient waste management, innovative digital marketing techniques, capacity-building initiatives for tourism service providers, and the evaluation of the impact of tourism-related conferences, seminars, and workshops on knowledge dissemination and policy formulation. By addressing these multifaceted dimensions of tourism in the IHR, this research paper seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on sustainable development and responsible tourism practices in this ecologically and culturally rich region. It is our hope that the insights and recommendations presented herein will serve as a catalyst for positive change, fostering a harmonious coexistence of economic growth and environmental preservation in the Indian Himalayan Region.

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