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## Investigating the Impacts of Homestay Tourism on a Local Community: Homestay Operators' Perspectives in Anantnag District

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## Introduction

A homestay is a type of tourism that entails reserving lodging outside of one's own neighborhood. It gives visitors the chance to experience a unique way of life, get a true sense of the local culture, and perhaps pick up a new language (Dash, 2022). The host villages provide furnished lodgings together with individualized, cozy hospitality that represents the way of life in the area (P. Jeelani et al., 2024). The utilities and living quarters are shared by visitors, giving them a very cozy experience. These lodgings frequently come with meals, necessities, and access to nearby festivals. Depending on the interests of the individual and the host's requirements, homestay packages can be greatly customized (Rivers, 1998). In addition to housing, homestays provide a range of activities that provide visitors a distinctive cultural experience. Depending on the area, the activities change from home to home. For instance, a homestay in Thailand can give visitors the chance to talk to monks, explore the outdoors, and learn how to weave silk or cotton, or work on the farm. While in India, homestays in Kerala provide tranquil houseboat adventures across backwaters, jeep or camel safaris in Rajasthan, and treks in hill stations, visitors to Japan can learn the craft of doll-making. A significantly richer experience than traditional tourist activities is provided by certain host families who also give visitors tours of their cities or villages while offering local history and insights (Seth, 2019). Homestays are a vacation destination in and of itself, not just a method to spend a few days experiencing a new locale. Homestay tourism is popular all around the world, and visitors to these locations can inspire the host town to grow its tourism sector (Agarwal & Mehra, 2019). This idea brings together people from many backgrounds and provides an excellent framework for sustainable development in both society and the tourism industry.

The word "homestay" itself refers to the practice of paying for lodging while staying in someone else's home as a guest and frequently getting additional amenities from the host family or community (Jamal & Getz, 1999). Homestays give visitors the chance to get away from crowded, busy cities and experience a tranquil, natural setting with tidy, comfortable, and reasonably priced lodgings and real local food. These encounters give visitors a special chance to engage with the community, learn about its traditions, beliefs, and culture, and discover unexplored areas, promoting rural development and creating new sources of revenue (Gangotia, 2013). India is a well-known homestay tourism destination because of its rich culture, heritage, and landscape. There, environmental preservation and culture are inextricably linked to the tourism industry. Due to rising demand, homestay businesses have increased in value, rewarding local people financially for protecting their environment and indigenous culture. The significance of enhancing good benefits and reducing negative ones is emphasized by tourism as a crucial component of development (Gnanapala & Sandaruwani, 2016). Homestay tourism, which includes activities like trekking, cultural tourism, agro-tourism, health tourism, and ecotourism, has the potential to significantly reduce rural poverty and stop migration. It is a great way to generate income, earn foreign currency, improve tax revenue, foster economic growth, and create job possibilities. The development of tourism may inspire nearby communities to market and trade their items, such as crafts and agricultural products, helping the local economy (Pizam, 1978). Additionally, it may inspire individuals to pursue further education and work prospects. Future generations may develop a feeling of ethnic and cultural identity as a result of this communal growth. To help locals make the most of the homestay industry, it is crucial to offer hospitality training and fundamental local tour guiding instruction (Laurie et al., 2012). Education on fundamental hygiene, security, safety, and environmental preservation methods is also essential. The growth of tourism can improve inhabitants' quality of life and livelihood, but it can also have a negative impact on a region's traditional culture and legacy.

Many academics link the expansion of tourism to environmental deterioration and deforestation. Traffic congestion and pollution are problems brought on by urbanization in popular tourist destinations (Anwar et al., 2021). Increased criminality, women trafficking, alcohol consumption, resource exploitation, impairment to the local way of life, and disruption of religious rituals are further negative effects. Tourism should strive to conserve local culture and use it as a business model to draw tourists in order to counteract these problems by creating jobs for the local population, utilizing local resources, and boosting the local economy (Parray et al., 2023). In order to advance and develop rural areas in terms of environmental preservation, socio-cultural preservation, and economic growth, homestay tourism can be a potent strategy. To make sure that the environment is not harmed in the process, special attention must be made to sustainable tourist development, including enough training and counseling for local communities. Homestays have the potential to bring tourists and host communities together in a win-win situation while also advancing the region as a whole (Kumar et al., 2023).

### **Sustainability and Sustainable Tourism**

Sustainability in tourism refers to the practice of engaging in travel activities that have a minimal impact on the environment while supporting local cultures and economies. Sustainable tourism aims to meet the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It involves managing all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems (UNWTO, 2005).

Homestay tourism aligns closely with the principles of sustainable tourism. It promotes environmental sustainability by encouraging low-impact accommodations and activities that are harmonious with the local environment. This form of tourism minimizes the carbon footprint of travel by utilizing existing structures and resources, thus reducing the need for new constructions that could disrupt local ecosystems.

Economically, homestay tourism supports sustainable development by directly benefiting local communities. Revenues generated from homestays typically stay within the local economy, promoting the growth of local businesses, creating employment opportunities, and increasing the income levels of residents. This economic boost helps in alleviating poverty and reducing economic disparities in rural areas (Gnanapala & Sandaruwani, 2016).

Socioculturally, homestays offer a platform for cultural exchange and preservation. They allow tourists to immerse themselves in the local way of life, understand cultural traditions, and participate in community activities. This interaction fosters mutual respect and understanding, which are crucial for the preservation of cultural heritage. Moreover, homestays help in retaining younger generations in rural areas by providing economic opportunities, thus preventing urban migration and ensuring the continuity of local traditions (Gangotia, 2013).

### **Purpose Statement**

The study's purpose is to investigate how the host community in the Anantnag district perceives the economic, sociocultural, and environmental implications of homestays and to determine if there are any noticeable differences in how the neighborhood perceives the economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts of homestays.

### **Geographical Description of the Anantnag District**

Anantnag District is a region of great historical value and natural beauty that is located in the picturesque terrain of Jammu and Kashmir, India. This district, which is frequently referred to

as the "Land of Springs," is located in the southern portion of the Kashmir Valley and is renowned for its stunning landscapes, an abundance of waterways, and a rich cultural history that dates back many centuries. Homestays in the Anantnag District provide an unrivaled chance to fully immerse oneself in the region's rich cultural tapestry while being surrounded by the unspoiled natural beauty. Visitors can enjoy the friendliness and kindness of the residents of this area by staying with local families. Visitors can participate in real cultural exchanges, enjoy local food, and experience daily living as a local. Additionally, Anantnag District's varied landscape guarantees that homestays offer a variety of experiences. There is a homestay to suit every preference, whether you prefer the peace and quiet of meadows and springs or the excitement of visiting snow-capped peaks and historic ruins.

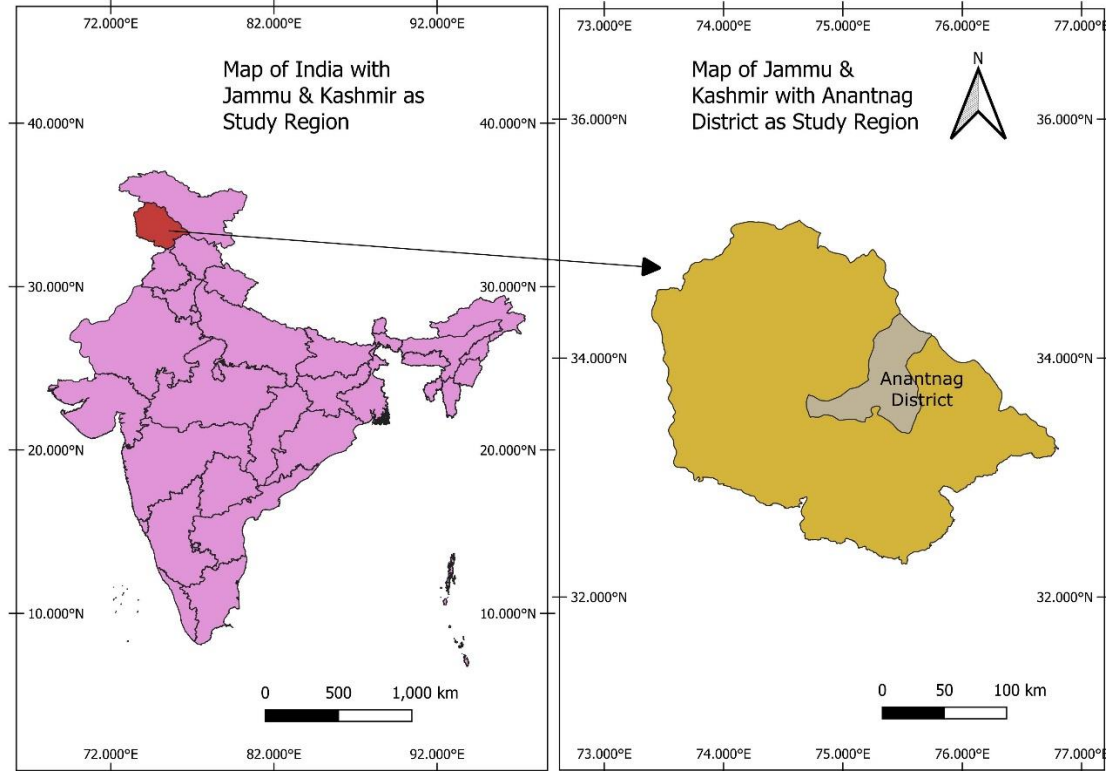
### **Review of literature**

Through an examination of the contestations for dominance and the ramifications of subaltern dispositions within the Indian State, Ahmad (2022) delves into the power dynamics at play in rural tourist sites such as Pahalgam. Anand et al., (2012) discuss the specific difficulties Ladakh encounters when attempting to strike a balance between development and the preservation of nature. They highlight sustainable community-based tourism initiatives implemented by organizations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature to safeguard local wildlife. Anwar et al., (2021) investigate the transformational potential of traditional dwellings in Neelum Valley for preserving the natural and cultural legacy of the area through sustainable homestay tourism. Research conducted by Bhalla et al., (2016) examines the influence of villagers' participation in homestay programs on their perspectives toward ecotourism in wildlife sanctuaries. The authors emphasize the importance of development and collaboration in their findings. The research by Bhat et al., (2020) sheds light on the factors influencing locals' support for tourism in the politically charged region of Kashmir. These factors include economic benefits, social and environmental costs, political trust, and the overall health of the local economy. In this study, Bhat and Majumdar (2021) investigate the elements that influence the support of Kashmiri locals for the growth of tourism, providing valuable insights for future planning. Similarly, Bhat and Mishra (2021) discover that citizens' opinions of the economic, social, and environmental benefits of tourism are highly influenced by demographic features. Despite obstacles such as inadequate infrastructure and political instability, Bhat (2023) sees the potential for economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir through entrepreneurialism in the pilgrimage tourism industry. The research conducted by Chaudhary and Islam (2022) and Dash (2022) focuses on the expectations and satisfaction levels of tourists who stay in homestays in the Kashmir Valley and coastal belt, respectively. These findings highlight the need to improve tourism experiences. Sanyal et al., (2023) provide an overview of homestay tourism in the Indian Himalayas from social, economic, and environmental perspectives. They also recommend measures to increase safety, sustainability, and advantages for locals. Jasrotia and Kour (2022) and Kumar et al., (2023) explore sustainable hospitality practices and the challenges and opportunities encountered by family businesses providing homestay services in India. Malik and Bhat (2015) offer a sustainable tourism management approach for Kashmir, whereas Lone et al., (2023) evaluate tourist hotspots in Baramulla, Kashmir, stressing the various stages of development in these locations. A study conducted by Parray et al., (2023) investigates the concept of sustainability in Kashmir Valley tourist destinations through the empowerment of women. Using Ryshop as a case study for promoting environmental conservation and economic livability, Sarkar (2022) emphasizes India's commitment to the development of sustainable tourism. Seth (2019) presents a detailed analysis of Jammu and Kashmir's contribution to India's tourism industry, with an emphasis on the region's distinctive geographic features and natural resources. Finally, Thakur et al., (2023) emphasize

the economic benefits of homestays in the Indian Himalayan Region, including the promotion of indigenous art, architecture, and traditions.

## Methods

**Figure 1. Selection of Study Area**



Anantnag district is a district of Jammu and Kashmir in the Kashmir region. It is one of ten districts which make up the Kashmir Valley. The district headquarters is Anantnag city. It is the third most populous district of Jammu and Kashmir (out of 22), after Jammu and Srinagar.

## Research Design

For the purpose of this study, a self-administered questionnaire was developed whose reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha. The questionnaire was used for information gathering. The survey instrument is made to record the demographic information of homestay operators as well as to gather their opinions on the consequences of these accommodations on the local economy, sociocultural landscape, and environment.

## Questionnaire Design

The self-administered questionnaire consisted of 27 questions, which were divided into 4 parts, as Demographics, Economic Impact, Socio-Cultural Impact and Environmental Impact. Demographic Questions included 6 Questions such as Age, Gender, Education etc, followed by 10 statements of Economic Impact, 7 statements of Socio-Cultural Impact and 3 statements of Environmental Impact. These statements were based upon 5 Likert Scale with one being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

### Sample Size Calculation

The sample size is calculated using Cochran's Sample Size Formula.

$$n = \frac{N \cdot Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{(N-1) \cdot E^2 + Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}$$

Given a population size of 259, a confidence level of 95%, a margin of error of 5% (0.05), and an estimated proportion of 0.5, the calculated sample size for the study is approximately 155. To ensure adequate representation and simplicity, the sample size was rounded to the nearest ten, resulting in a final sample size of 160 participants for the study.

### Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling was employed to select the participants for the study. The list of registered homestays was obtained from the Jammu and Kashmir (JK) Tourism Department.

### Statistical Techniques Used

To analyze the data collected through self-administered Questionnaire, a variety of statistical approaches are used to evaluate the data, including simple percentage analysis, arithmetic mean calculations, standard deviation measures, the Student's t-test, and regression analysis.

**Table 1. Reliability Analysis**

<b>Case Processing Summary</b>		
		N
Cases	Valid	160
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0
	Total	160
<b>Reliability Statistics</b>		
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items
0.849		27

The reliability analysis conducted on the dataset of 160 valid cases revealed a high level of internal consistency among the 27 items being measured. With no cases excluded, the analysis encompassed all available data points. The computed Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.849, indicating a robust internal consistency and suggesting that the items are reliably measuring the same underlying construct.

**Findings and outcomes****Table 2. Profile of the respondents' demographics (N=160)**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	120	75.0	75.0	75.0
	Female	40	25.0	25.0	100.0
Age	20-25	44	27.5	27.5	27.5
	26-35	44	27.5	27.5	55.0
	36-45	32	20.0	20.0	75.0
	45-55	30	18.8	18.8	93.8
	56-65	10	6.3	6.3	100.0
Education	>65	22	13.8	13.8	13.8
	SSLC & Below	44	27.5	27.5	41.3
	PUC	64	40.0	40.0	81.3
	Graduate	20	12.5	12.5	93.8
	Postgraduate	10	6.3	6.3	100.0
Region	Urban	66	41.3	41.3	41.3
	Rural	94	58.8	58.8	100.0
Nature of Venture	Start-Up	77	48.1	48.1	48.1
	Acquired	43	26.9	26.9	75.0
	Inherited	40	25.0	25.0	100.0
No. of Years in Business	1-3 yrs.	33	20.6	20.6	20.6
	4-6 yrs.	55	34.4	34.4	55.0
	7-9 yrs.	32	20.0	20.0	75.0
	< 9 yrs.	40	25.0	25.0	100.0

The table comprises demographic and business-related information of a sample population. Regarding gender distribution, 75% of the respondents are male, while 25% are female. The age group is fairly spread out, with 27.5% falling within the 20-25 and 26-35 age brackets each, 20% in the 36-45 age range, 18.8% between 45-55, and a smaller segment of 6.3% aged 56-65. Education levels vary, with 27.5% having completed SSLC and below, 40% possessing PUC qualifications, 12.5% being graduates, and 6.3% holding post-graduate degrees.

When it comes to regional distribution, 41.3% of respondents reside in urban areas, whereas 58.8% are from rural regions. The nature of ventures among respondents shows that 48.1% are involved in start-ups, 26.9% have acquired their businesses, and 25% have inherited their enterprises. In terms of business experience, 20.6% have been in business for 1-3 years, 34.4% for 4-6 years, 20% for 7-9 years, and 25% for more than 9 years.

**Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Environmental Impacts of Homestays**

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Economic Impact</b>	160	3.619	0.821
Homestays encourage regional businesses and generate employment opportunities.	160	3.375	1.302
Homestays have increased operators' earnings.	160	3.331	1.553
The advancement of communities has been aided by the higher earnings.	160	3.938	1.326
Homestays play a role in reducing income disparities within society.	160	3.025	1.812
The presence of homestays has spurred economic activities, including those in the hotel, taxi, and entertainment sectors.	160	3.663	1.554
The struggle against poverty has benefited greatly from homestays.	160	3.425	1.572
Homestays have increased the locals' purchasing power.	160	3.688	1.472
The establishment of homestays has fostered the growth of local and village industries.	160	3.806	1.460
Public facilities have seen improvement due to the influence of homestays	160	3.681	1.599
Homestays encourage the preservation of traditional cultures.	160	4.263	1.037
<b>Socio - Cultural Impact</b>	160	3.712	1.098
Staying in homestays provides an opportunity to immerse oneself in the culture of the host community.	160	3.638	1.434
The running of homestays has helped in the repair of Kashmir's historical landmarks.	160	3.869	1.441
Homestays have caused social problems in villages to decline.	160	3.656	1.614
By providing economic chances, homestays prevent young people from moving to cities and maintain them in their communities.	160	3.713	1.669
The standard of living in communities has improved due to the presence of homestays.	160	3.400	1.676
Hosts in homestays have seen an improvement in their communication skills.	160	3.994	1.412
<b>Environmental Impact</b>	160	4.077	1.183
Homestays do not pose significant waste management challenges.	160	4.169	1.411
Concerns about traffic congestion and noise pollution related to homestays are minimal.	160	4.094	1.243
Maintaining local cleanliness is generally not a major issue associated with homestays.	160	3.969	1.548



## Economic Impact

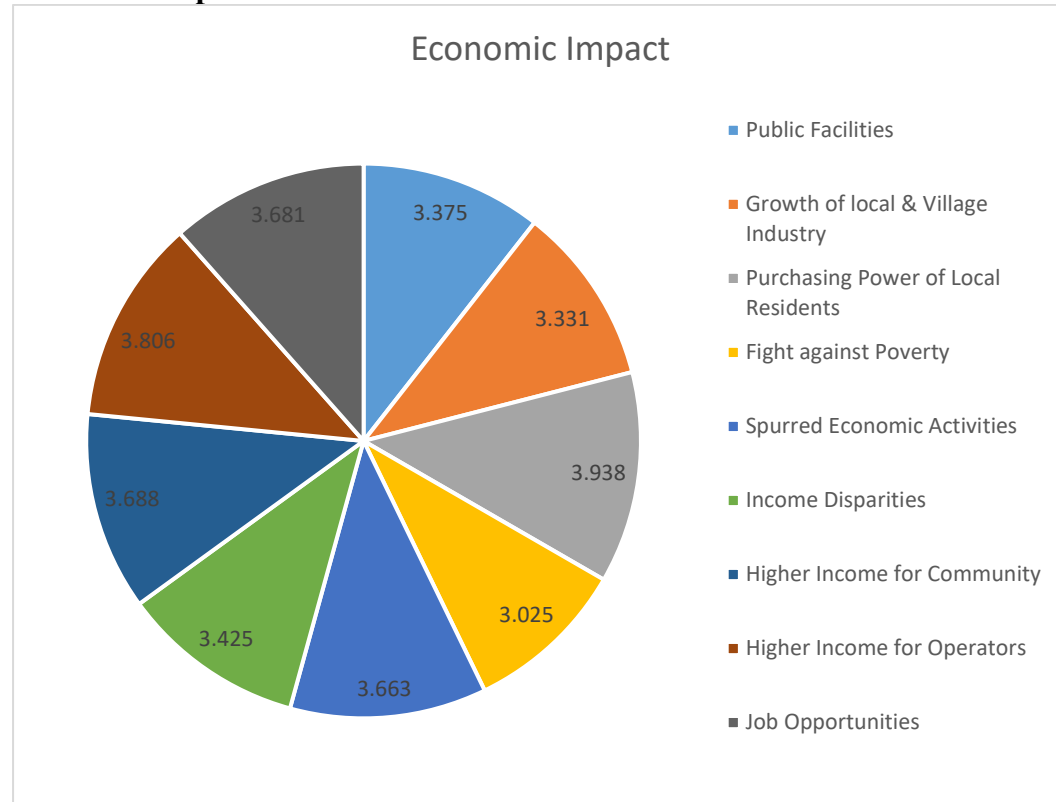


Fig 2. Economic Impact of Homestays

The economic impact of homestays is significant, with a mean score of 3.619 and a standard deviation of 0.821. Homestays have notably encouraged regional businesses and generated employment opportunities (mean = 3.375), and increased operators' earnings (mean = 3.331). Higher earnings have further advanced community development (mean = 3.938). Homestays also contribute to reducing income disparities within society (mean = 3.025) and spur economic activities in various sectors like hotels, taxis, and entertainment (mean = 3.663). They play a crucial role in combating poverty (mean = 3.425) and increasing locals' purchasing power (mean = 3.688). Additionally, the establishment of homestays has fostered the growth of local and village industries (mean = 3.806) and improved public facilities (mean = 3.681). This indicates that homestays are vital in stimulating local economies, enhancing income levels, and supporting infrastructure development.

### Socio-Cultural Impact

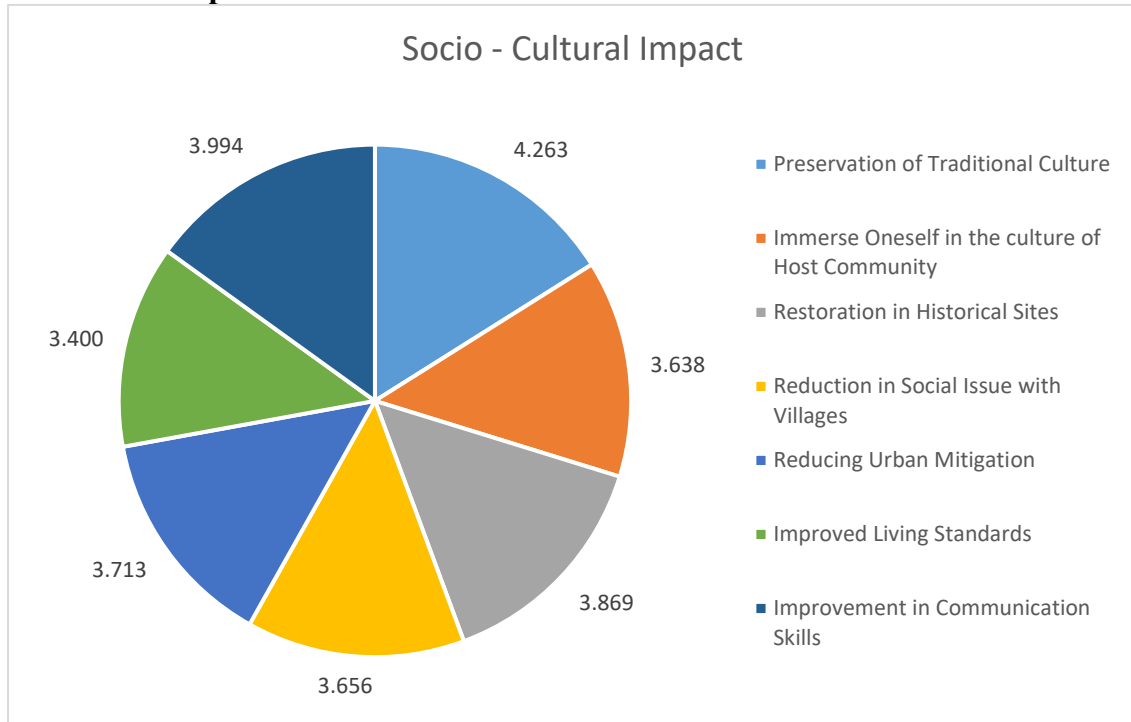


Fig 3. Socio-cultural Impact of Homestays

The socio-cultural impact of homestays, with a mean score of 3.712 and a standard deviation of 1.098, highlights their role in cultural immersion and preservation. Staying in homestays allows guests to immerse themselves in the host community's culture (mean = 3.638). They have contributed to the repair of historical landmarks in Kashmir (mean = 3.869) and have helped reduce social problems in villages (mean = 3.656). Homestays provide economic opportunities that prevent young people from migrating to cities, thus retaining them in their communities (mean = 3.713). The standard of living in communities has improved due to homestays (mean = 3.400), and hosts have seen enhanced communication skills (mean = 3.994). This signifies that homestays play a crucial role in cultural preservation, community stability, and the overall enhancement of social welfare and personal development.

**Environmental Impact**

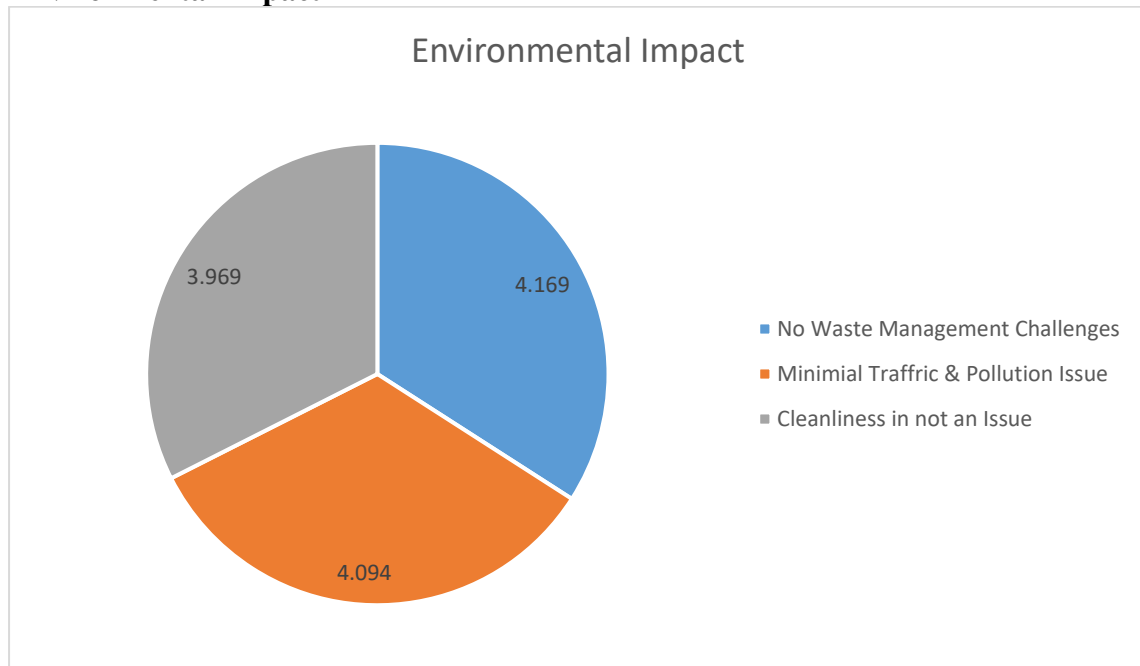


Fig 4. Environmental Impact of Homestays

The environmental impact of homestays is highly positive, with a mean score of 4.077 and a standard deviation of 1.183. Homestays do not pose significant waste management challenges (mean = 4.169), and concerns about traffic congestion and noise pollution are minimal (mean = 4.094). Maintaining local cleanliness is generally not a major issue associated with homestays (mean = 3.969). This indicates that homestays are environmentally sustainable, causing minimal disruption to waste management, traffic, and noise levels, thereby promoting a clean and sustainable living environment.

**Table 4. T test for unrelated samples**

Impact	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Economic Impact	160	3.6194	0.82	55.775	0.00
Socio-Cultural Impact	160	3.7118	1.098	42.749	0.00
Economic Impact	160	3.6194	0.8208	55.775	0.00
Socio-cultural Impact	160	4.0772	1.183	43.58	0.00
Environment Impact	160	4.0772	1.183	43.58	0.00
Socio-Cultural Impact	160	3.7718	1.098	42.749	0.00

The analysis of the impacts of homestays reveals significant insights into their economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts. The economic impact shows a mean of 3.6194 with a standard deviation of 0.82, and a highly significant t-value of 55.775 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This

indicates a strong and positive economic influence of homestays on local communities. The socio-cultural impact is also notable, with a mean score of 3.7118 and a standard deviation of 1.098, accompanied by a significant t-value of 42.749 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This demonstrates the substantial role of homestays in enhancing socio-cultural aspects of communities, such as cultural preservation and social stability.

The environmental impact of homestays is particularly positive, with a mean score of 4.0772 and a standard deviation of 1.183. The t-value for this impact is 43.58, which is highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that homestays contribute positively to environmental sustainability by causing minimal disruptions and maintaining local cleanliness. The repeated measures for socio-cultural impact (mean = 3.7718, SD = 1.098) further affirm the strong positive influence of homestays in this domain, with a significant t-value of 42.749 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Overall, these statistics signify that homestays play a crucial role in fostering economic growth, socio-cultural enhancement, and environmental sustainability within the communities they operate.

### Regression Analysis

**Table 5. Regression Analysis**

Model Summary <sup>d</sup>						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.898 <sup>a</sup>	0.806	0.804	0.39703	
2		.977 <sup>b</sup>	0.955	0.955	0.19117	
3		1.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000	1.000	0.00275	
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	103.276	1	103.276	655.179	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	24.906	158	0.158		
	Total	128.182	159			
2	Regression	122.445	2	61.222	1675.284	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	5.737	157	0.037		
	Total	128.182	159			
3	Regression	128.181	3	42.727	5649.264	.000 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	0.001	156	0.000		
	Total	128.182	159			
a. Dependent Variable: Impact on Local Community						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Socio - Cultural Impact						
c. Predictors: (Constant), Socio - Cultural Impact, Environmental Impact						
d. Predictors: (Constant), Socio - Cultural Impact, Environmental Impact, Economic Impact						

The model summary and ANOVA results provide an in-depth understanding of the predictors affecting the impact of homestays on local communities. The first model, which includes only the socio-cultural impact as a predictor, shows a high R-value of 0.898, indicating a strong correlation. The R Square value of 0.806 means that approximately 80.6% of the variance in the impact on local communities is explained by the socio-cultural impact. The

adjusted R Square is 0.804, with a standard error of the estimate at 0.39703. The ANOVA results for this model show a significant F-value of 655.179 ( $p < 0.001$ ), confirming the model's robustness.

In the second model, both socio-cultural and environmental impacts are considered as predictors. This model exhibits an even higher R-value of 0.977 and an R Square of 0.955, suggesting that 95.5% of the variance is explained by these two predictors. The adjusted R Square remains at 0.955, with a reduced standard error of 0.19117. The ANOVA results show an F-value of 1675.284 ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a significant improvement over the first model.

The third model incorporates socio-cultural, environmental, and economic impacts as predictors, achieving a perfect R-value of 1.000. Both the R Square and adjusted R Square are 1.000, meaning that this model explains 100% of the variance in the impact on local communities. The standard error of the estimate is remarkably low at 0.00275. The ANOVA results for this model reveal an extremely high F-value of 5649.264 ( $p < 0.001$ ), underscoring the model's exceptional explanatory power.

These findings signify that the combined socio-cultural, environmental, and economic impacts of homestays comprehensively account for the variations in their effect on local communities. Each subsequent model shows significant improvements, with the final model perfectly explaining the dependent variable.

**Table 6. Excluded Variables**

Excluded Variables <sup>a</sup>							
Model		Beta In	T	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics	
							Tolerance
1	Economic Impact	.404 <sup>b</sup>	10.741	0.000	0.651	0.505	
	Environmental Impact	.496 <sup>b</sup>	22.902	0.000	0.877	0.607	
2	Economic Impact	.304 <sup>c</sup>	870.886	0.000	1.000	0.484	
a. Dependent Variable: Impact on Local Community							
b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Socio - Cultural Impact							
c. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Socio - Cultural Impact, Environmental Impact							

The analysis of excluded variables provides additional insights into the predictors influencing the impact of homestays on local communities. In the first model, where socio-cultural impact is the primary predictor, the economic impact and environmental impact were excluded variables. However, their inclusion shows significant potential contributions, with beta values of 0.404 and 0.496, respectively. The t-values for these impacts are 10.741 ( $p < 0.001$ ) for economic impact and 22.902 ( $p < 0.001$ ) for environmental impact, indicating their strong individual influence. The partial correlation values of 0.651 for economic impact and 0.877 for environmental impact suggest a significant relationship with the dependent variable. Collinearity statistics indicate tolerances of 0.505 for economic impact and 0.607 for environmental impact, showing moderate collinearity.

In the second model, which includes socio-cultural and environmental impacts, the economic impact is again an excluded variable. Despite this, it still exhibits a substantial beta value of 0.304 and an extraordinarily high t-value of 870.886 ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a strong potential impact on the local community. The partial correlation for economic impact is 1.000,

suggesting a perfect linear relationship when included. The tolerance value for economic impact in this model is 0.484, indicating some collinearity but not enough to cause concern. These results signify that while the initial models exclude economic and environmental impacts, their inclusion would significantly enhance the model's explanatory power. The economic impact and environmental impact variables have strong individual effects and correlations with the impact on local communities, suggesting that all three dimensions—socio-cultural, environmental, and economic—are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of homestays' impact.

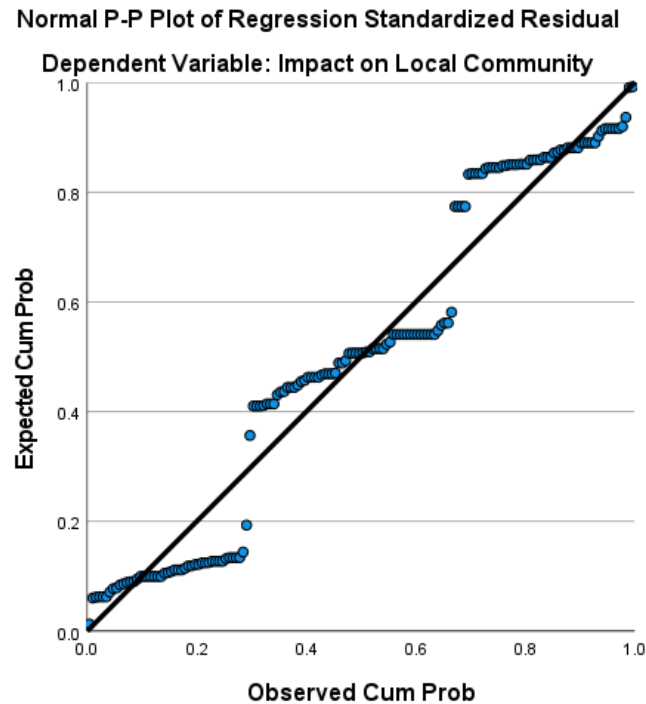


Fig. 5 Normal P-P Plot of Regression Analysis

## Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts of homestay tourism on the local community in Anantnag District, Kashmir Valley, from the perspective of homestay operators. The findings reveal significant insights into the multifaceted benefits and challenges of homestay tourism.

Economically, homestays have notably boosted local businesses, created employment opportunities, and increased operators' earnings. These economic benefits have led to community advancement, poverty reduction, and the stimulation of related sectors such as hotels, taxis, and entertainment. The increased purchasing power of locals and the growth of local industries further underscore the substantial role of homestays in local economic development. The regression analysis confirms the strong positive relationship between economic impacts and overall community benefits, demonstrating that homestays are vital in stimulating local economies and enhancing income levels.

Socioculturally, homestays have been instrumental in preserving traditional cultures and offering immersive cultural experiences to visitors. They have contributed to the repair of historical landmarks and helped reduce social problems in villages. By providing economic opportunities, homestays prevent young people from migrating to cities, thus retaining them in their communities and maintaining social stability. The improvement in hosts' communication skills and the overall enhancement of the standard of living highlight the positive socio-cultural dynamics fostered by homestays.

Environmentally, while there are challenges such as waste management and traffic congestion, these are perceived as minimal. The study found that maintaining local cleanliness is generally not a major issue associated with homestays. This suggests that, with proper sustainable practices, the negative environmental effects can be mitigated. The positive environmental impact is crucial for promoting a clean and sustainable living environment, aligning with the principles of sustainable tourism.

The broader implications of this research underscore the critical role of homestay tourism in connecting small local communities to larger tourism contexts. Homestays offer a sustainable tourism model that balances economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. This research highlights the importance of fostering sustainable tourism practices that benefit local communities, enhance cultural exchange, and promote environmental conservation.

Homestay tourism represents a powerful tool for rural development, providing a win-win situation for both tourists and host communities. It supports local economies, preserves cultural heritage, and promotes environmental sustainability. The insights from this study are vital for policymakers, tourism planners, and community leaders to develop strategies that maximize the positive impacts of homestays while mitigating potential challenges.

The Anantnag District, with its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty, serves as an exemplary model for the potential of homestay tourism to contribute to sustainable development. This work is important and needed as it provides a comprehensive understanding of how homestays can drive sustainable growth, foster community resilience, and create meaningful connections between tourists and local communities. By highlighting the critical intersections of economic, sociocultural, and environmental dimensions, this research offers valuable contributions to the broader discourse on sustainable tourism and rural development.

### **Recommendations**

Collaboration with local authorities is crucial for promoting sustainable homestay tourism in Anantnag. Improved public facilities, better transit systems, more efficient waste disposal procedures, and more robust environmental preservation programmes should all be the goals of this collaboration. In order to minimize the negative environmental effects of rising tourism, it is essential to simultaneously develop eco-friendly practices such as waste reduction strategies, sustainable transportation options, and environmental education for both hosts and guests.

It's also essential to encourage stakeholders to work together and participate actively. This may be done by forming regional tourist committees or associations that collaborate to discuss and settle different problems. Encouraging hosts and visitors to act responsibly should be a primary priority, along with raising awareness of the significance of protecting and enjoying the local environment and culture. To safeguard the local community's interests and maintain standards of quality, clear policies and procedures pertaining to homestay tourism must be implemented. It is also possible to improve the hospitality, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism practices of homestay operators and hosts by providing training and capacity-building programs.

Making the required improvements requires putting in place a continuous mechanism for evaluating the social, cultural, and environmental effects of homestay tourism. Culturally aware and responsible travelers might be drawn to the area with a well-thought-out marketing plan that emphasizes the distinctive natural and cultural features of the region. To fully comprehend the changing dynamics of homestay tourism and its impacts on the community, ongoing study is also crucial. In conclusion, it is imperative to build a feedback mechanism

that enables the local population to voice their problems and suggestions for ongoing enhancements to the homestay tourism experience.

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