



TOURISM IN UTTARAKHAND: AN INTROSPECTION

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I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism plays an important role in employment generation and economic growth of the country. It is accepted as the potent engine for inclusive social economic progress at universal level through its forward and backward linkages and ability to create employment in the economy. Tourism sector has a very high employment potential with approximately 90 jobs creation per Rs. 10lakhs of investment. There is high scope for profuse employment generation and related activities in the form of accommodation projects, food oriented projects, amusement parks and water sports etc. Tourism sector is one of the largest employment generators in India and inclusive growth of the less-advantaged sections of the society and poverty eradication. The main objective of the tourism policy in India is to position tourism as a major engine of economic growth and harness it's direct and multiplier effect on employment and poverty eradication in a sustainable manner by active participation of all segments of the society Tourism plays an important role in employment generation and economic growth of the country. It is accepted as the potent engine for inclusive social economic progress at universal level through its forward and backward linkages and ability to create employment in the economy.

The present paper discusses the present status of tourism in the state of Uttarakhand and the opinion of the local population towards tourism in the state.

II. OBJECTIVE

To study and analyse the status of Tourism in Uttarakhand

III.METHODOLOGY

To assess the Status of tourism, a field based systematic survey was carried out on the basis of questionnaire in some selected tourism destinations. Questionnaires were prepared aiming at different targets groups. Respondents were asked to rate each of the question using a five– point Likert scale.

Information has been collected on the basis of questionnaire and interview method from tourist, local people, tourist officials and workers engaged in tourism industry. On simple percentage methods the results has been calculated. Besides, secondary data was also used to get the desired results. The total sample size of the present study was 1000 local residents at different location points, and a total of 500 tourists at different location points. The location points refer to the different destinations/places located within the study area. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample the population.



IV. THE STUDY AREA

Uttarakhand—the “Land of God” or **DevBhoomi**, is one of the most beautiful and enchanting states of northern India. Blessed with breathtaking natural beauty, rivers and many mountains, this state has been the heaven for people seeking solace in spirituality and a paradise for adventure lovers. Nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, Uttarakhand can rely upon tourism which can bring upon environmental, societal, economic sustainability if managed and operated sustainably. This will add to the GDP as well as to GEP which is the talk of the town.

Uttarakhand is located between 30°03’N to 30 °05’N and 79°19’E 79°31’E having a total geographic area of 51,125 km², of which 93% is mountainous and 64% is covered by forest. The population is about 6.0 million with a population density of 94.4 per sq. km. The northern part of the state is composed of the Greater Himalayan ranges, covered by the high Himalayan peaks and glaciers, while the lower foothills are somewhat densely forested. Uttarakhand has everything to offer to every kind of tourist, whether one interested in pilgrimage, spirituality, adventure sports, camping etc. The tourist places that are known among the visitors are Dehradun, Nainital, Almora, Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Haridwar, Auli, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamnotri, Gangotri, PanchBadri, PanchKedar. Apart from these places Uttarakhand also houses many great lakes, one of the most famous and talked about is the RoopKund, which has even attracted the National geographic channel. Local pasture lands, popularly known as Bugyals are also one of the major attractions. One of the famous Bugyals of Uttarakhand is the BedniBugyal.

Uttarakhand shares its borders with Tibet in the north, Nepal in the east, and the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in the west and south respectively. The region is traditionally referred to as *Uttarakhand* in Hindu scriptures and old literature, a term which is derived from the Sanskrit for Northern Country or Section. The capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun which is also a rail-head and the largest city in the region. Uttarakhand has one of the best 7star deluxe resorts, The Ananda in the Himalayas, which again find a full episode in National geographic channel. It attracts tourist from round the world.

The economy of the State has been largely dominated by the services sector including Tourism which contribute sover 51% to the total GSDP from 2004-05 to 2013-14. Tourism is already a major driver in the economic growth and livelihood promotion in Uttarakhand. Its contribution to State Gross Domestic Product (SGDP) is about 4.4 % and its share in employment is 2 % according to estimates worked out by UNWTO.^{3\}

Table 1. Tourist Arrivals in Uttarakhand

Year	Domestic Tourist Arrivals (Millions)	Foreign Tourist Arrivals (Millions)	Total (Millions)
2000	11.08	0.057	11.137
2001	10.55	0.055	10.605
2002	11.65	0.056	11.706
2003	12.93	0.064	12.994
2004	13.83	0.075	13.905
2005	16.28	0.093	16.373

2006	19.36	0.096	19.456
2007	22.15	0.106	22.256
2008	23.06	0.112	23.172
2009	23.15	0.118	23.268
2010	30.97	0.136	31.106
2011	26.67	0.143	26.813
2012	28.29	0.125	28.415
2013	19.94	0.097	20.037
2014	21.99	0.102	22.092

The story doesn't end here. The real uttarakhand lies in the rural setting. In the above mentioned tourism forms one important part which is missing is the Role of Community in tourism. Most of the tourism activities are controlled, managed, and organized by entrepreneurs who are not local. If tourism has to contribute to the GDP or GEP of the state, Community based tourism should be promoted. It can prove to be the instrument which will provide sustainability on all the three aspects viz, Environmental, Societal and Economic, which will pave the way for Uttarakhand to emerge as a strong economy.

The places(Location points) selected for the purpose of the present study were Ranikhet, Kausani, Chakuri, Binsar, Naukuchiatal, Bhimtal, Saattal, Parts of Pithoragarh, Patalbhuvneshwar, Kosi-Katarmal, Parts of Corbett, ChotiHaldwani, Ramnagar, Chakuthiya, Bageshwar, Lansdowne, Pauri and nearby areas, the Chardhams and enroute villages, Uttarkashi, Chakrata, Mussoorie and nearby areas, Tehri and nearby areas.

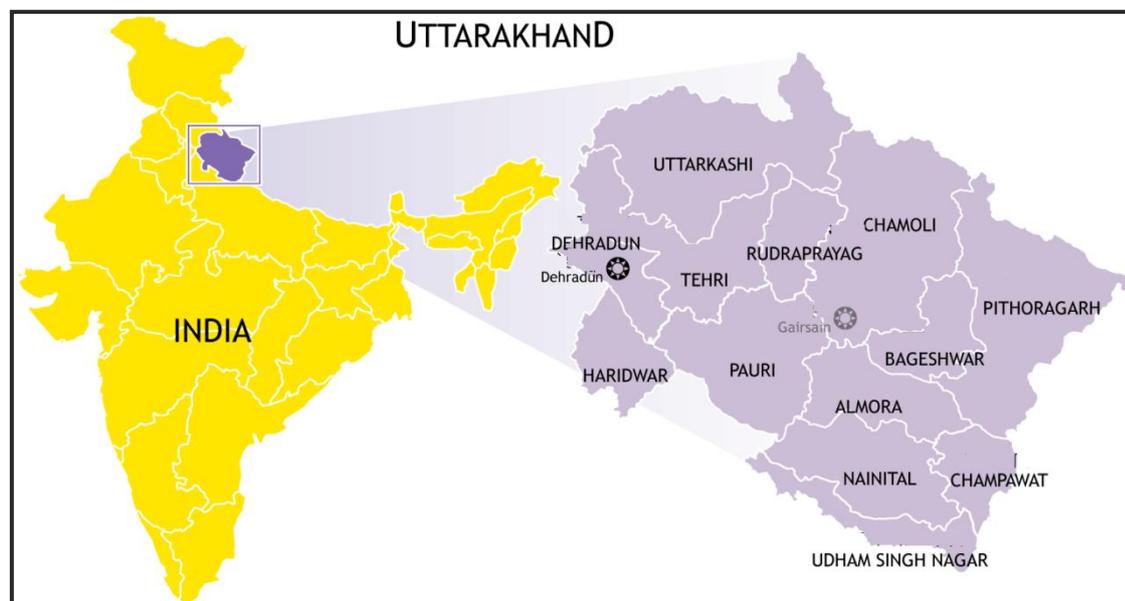


Figure1. Location map of the Study Area

Some of the important tourist destinations of Uttarakhand are:

- ✓ **Mussoorie and Environs:** The colonial “Queen of the Hills” is still on of the best hill stations in the state. During colonial time it was the favoured holiday location for the rulers. Around 12 - 14 km



from Mussoorie on NH 123 towards Barkot is located Kempty Falls which is a 40-foot perennial waterfall on the downside of the road cascading into a number of pools at the valley floor.

- ✓ **Dhanaulti and Environs:** Located 24 km from Mussoorie, Dhanaulti is an attractive and sleepy mountain village. Its main claim to fame is the attractive forested surroundings dominated by Himalayan Deodar Cedars.
- ✓ **Haridwar:** Haridwar Town is located around 200 km north east of Delhi and 54km south of Dehradun and is probably the most important gateway to Uttarakhand by rail and road. Haridwar is the gateway to the four pilgrimages of Uttarakhand.
- ✓ **Rishikesh / Muni Ki Reti:** Rishikesh is located 25 km north of Haridwar at the confluence of the Ganges and Chandrabhaga Rivers and at the foot hills of the Middle Himalayan Region. It is famous for adventure sports like water rafting, bungee jumping and nature and rejuvenation centres.
- ✓ **Rajaji National Park:** The National Park is an 830 square km pristine and beautiful natural forest environment located south of Dehradun
- ✓ **Nainital and the Lake District:** Nainital is the “centre” and focal point of the Kumaon Lake District, combining around 15 lakes of various sizes in an area of approximately 600 sqkm surrounding Nainital mainly east and south of the city.
- ✓ **Corbett National Park East:** is one of India’s most unique nature and wild life reserves with an area of 1288 square km
- ✓ **Mukteshwar:** Mukteswar is a quaint village getaway at 2290 m altitude views east towards the Ramgarh Valley and its many fruit orchards
- ✓ **Ramgarh:** At almost 1800 m altitude in the Gagar Mountain Range a picturesque quiet place dominated by some of the highest altitude apple orchards in the state.
- ✓ **Lansdowne:** is a famous Cantonment Town and the original home of the Gharwal Rifles, a legendary military force.
- ✓ **Gangotri:** the Town and Temples, Bhojbasa “Tourist Centre”, Gaumukh and the source of the Ganges, the Gangotri Glacier and Tapovan
- ✓ **Dayara Bugyal:** and the Barsu – Raithal village cluster. An upcoming ski and soft adventure and village tourism destination.
- ✓ **Tehri Lake:** the 50 – 60 km long reservoir created by stemming up the waters of Bhagirathi River, the surrounding rural village clusters in the hills and the dam at the south- eastern end of the lake. New Tehri Town is a modern hill township located over Tehri Lake on a mountain ridge at 1600 m altitude.
- ✓ **Binsar Wild Life Sanctuary:** This is a unique high altitude protected forest environment with an outstanding view to greater Himalayas
- ✓ **Almora:** This is a historic town with many tourism resources, a thriving service centre and District Capital with many permanently residing foreigners.



- ✓ **Ranikhet:** This is a famous hill station amid lush highlands and dense forests. Founded as a major Cantonment in the late 1860's.
 - ✓ **Kedarnath Town:** Its imposing Temple which is one of the twelve most sacred places dedicated to Shiva is attractively set in a small Valley surrounded by the Mandakini and Saraswati Rivers.
 - ✓ **Badrinath Town:** Its 8th century Temple are remotely situated on the brink of the Alaknanda River and is the end point of NH 58 from south. The last rural settlement before the Tibetan border is 3 km north of the town.
 - ✓ **The Valley of Flowers National Park:** This is a unique and pristine natural environment 10 km in length and 2 km wide located from 3658 to 3962 m altitudewith an extraordinary flora and fauna.
 - ✓ **Nanda Devi National Park:** This is a unique and spectacular mountain rangewith some of India's highest peaks and is a UNESCO World Heritage site
- The Major Themes in which destinations across Uttarakhand can be divided are the following:
- ✓ Adventure & Water sports
 - ✓ Pilgrimage & Festivals
 - ✓ Nature & Wildlife
 - ✓ Sightseeing
 - ✓ Health and Rejuvenation
 - ✓ Rural Tourism

Table 2. Major Forms of Tourism and destination in the study area

Forms of Tourism	Major Destinations
Adventure & Watersports	Rishikesh, Auli, Trekking at Hemkund Sahib, Jharipani, Maldevta, Tons Valley, Dhanaulti, Tehri
Pilgrimage & Festivals	Gangontri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Jageshwar, Baijnath, PiranKaliyar, Hemkund Sahib, Nanda Devi
Nature & Wildlife	Jim Corbett National Park, Rajaji National Park, Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary, Nanda Devi National Park, Askot Musk Deer Sanctuary, Neel Dhara PakshiVihar, Benog Wildlife Sanctuary, Govind Wildlife Sanctuary
Sightseeing	Mussourie, Nainital, Valley of Flowers, Almora, Kausani, Auli
Health &	Rishikesh, Haridwar, Champawat, Pithoragarh and Ramgarh,



Rejuvenation	Jageshwar, Almora, Nainital
Rural Tourism	Mana, Chokhta, Chakrata, Deora, Pallyu, Shaukiyathal, Bageshwar, Chamoli, Almora and Tehri

Source: www.uttarakhandtourism.gov.in

V. LOCAL POPULATION’S PERCEPTION ABOUT THE STATUS OF TOURISM IN THE STATE

5.1 DEMOGRAPHY

In this current study one very strange thing was observed. The female respondents were very eager to showcase their interest. The gender distribution of the respondents was 55:45, where 45 was the female respondents. It was observed that majority of the respondents in study area i.e., 45% fall in the category of 20-40 years, followed by 40-60 years (35%), below 20 years (20 %) .

5.2 PARAMETERS USED IN STUDY

The different parameters on which the questions were asked to the respondents are depicted in the table 1 along with the Mean values. Higher mean values indicate stronger level of agreement while lower mean values show stronger disagreement.

Table 3. Mean values of different parameters

S.No	Parameters	Mean Values Local Population	Mean Values Tourists
1	Impact Of Tourism On The Society	8.6214	4.2154
2	Uniqueness Of The Destination	8.4652	4.6520
3	Economic Impact Of Tourism	8.4120	4.7120
4	Present Status Of Tourism	2.0124	1.9847
5	Satisfaction Level On Various Parameters	2.3254	1.7852
6	Issue of Solid Waste Management	8.5897	4.8630
7	Tourism Infrastructure Development	2.6398	1.5430
8	Tourism Policy And Planning Of Uttarakhand	2.8795	1.8751
9	Tourism Product Marketing	1.8963	0.5324
10	Tourism Education And Training	2.9875	1.8452
11	Tourism Finance	1.7854	1.3215
12	Gender	2.5698	1.8795



13	Availability Of Renewable Energy Resources	1.9654	1.1023
14	Employment Opportunities	6.8795	1.0148
15	Government's Attitude Towards Tourism Development	2.9531	1.8796
16	CBT As A Viable Option For Sustainable Development	8.9235	4.9862

From the above table it can be concluded that both the local population and tourist see CBT as a better option for tourism development. Most of the parameters fall between the mean values less than 5 in case of local population and less than 2 in case of tourist

VI.CONCLUSIONS

Uttarakhand has been receiving a large number of pilgrims annually from time immemorial. The scenario has changed now. The locals have now understood the power of tourism as an option for economic, environmental and social development.

Uttarakhand's tourism growth can be attributed to enumerable number of factors. The potential in terms of natural beauty, historical and archaeological sites, games and sports activities, culinary and religious sites and other factors are the major factors. But, lack of infrastructural facilities, most importantly the condition of roads, way side eating joints, lack of proper public transport particularly in the Kumaon region are the major hindrances. It may also be noted here that the two portions of Uttarakhand i.e., Garhwal and Kumaon have different tourism potentials. Garhwal caters to pilgrimage, adventure where as Kumaon caters to leisure, rest and relaxation.

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