

Development of Tourism in Himachal Pradesh: An Empirical Study of Kullu Manali

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Abstract

Himachal Pradesh is an Indian state, known famously for its edifice mountains and scenic towns. Its natural beauty attracts a lot of tourists every year. Due to this reason one of the most proliferating industries in the state of Himachal Pradesh is Tourism. The tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh has two aspects. On one hand it is positively impacting the socio economic and political spheres and on the other hand it is generating new dimensions for employment. It wouldn't be wrong to say that the Tourism industry of Himachal Pradesh has a special place in the economy of the state. The influx of various tourists around the year put an emphasis on the development of various amenities and public utility services like surfaced roads, airports, civil amenities and communication network. From the tourist point of view, Kullu-Manali is one of the prime places offering all these amenities. The major aim of this study is to know the facilities being provided to the tourists and to conduct an SWOT analysis, keeping the aspect of growth and development in mind.

Keywords: Tourism, Development, Growth, Mountains, Himachal Pradesh

Introduction: The activity of tourism involves a mixture of two factors : Material and Psychological. Material factors encompass the availability of accommodation, transport and entertainment. The Psychological factors encompass a wide variety of attitudes and expectations. These attitudes and expectations vary from pure escapism to a fulfilment of a dream, or rest, educational and other interests. All these are assessed and evaluated by the tourist.

Since Inception of Human civilization, the urge to move about constituted an important human activity. The desire to cherish the unknown, explore new places, seek changes of environment and get enthralled in the process is known to us from the earliest times. In earlier times, humans used to roam in tribes in search of food, safe shelter and feasible environment. These searches led them to various conquests & discover new areas. Such adventures are apparently seen in histories of various nations, espies and mythologies.

The process of travelling never stopped. In fact this process of travelling & searching continued and in different ages corresponded to different states in the development of technology and changes in the lifestyle and mode of travelling. Over the years, new world were discovered, new areas were brought under human occupation, new nations emerged and the technology also changed a great deal. All these changes were in tandem with the increased human desire to travel to new and unexplored places. The word "tourism" is derived from a Latin word "tornos", which means a tool for describing a circle or a turners wheel. It is from this word "tornos" the word tour has come, which defines the essence of Tourism.

Tourism in Indian Context:

In Indian sub-continent, tourism is one of the largest service providers. It contributes 6.8% in the national GDP and 7.6% of the employment in India. According to data, total Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTA) in India were about 7 million and the revenue it generated is about 650 billion dollars. The bulk of these tourists are from USA and UK. The top five destination states that received the inbound of these tourists were Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. The Ministry of tourism is the nodal body which design and formulate national policies and various programmes of development and promotion for tourism.

Tourism in Himachal:

Himachal Pradesh, nestled in the world's mightiest mountain range, is blessed with some of the most spectacular and beautiful landscapes. For travellers, it is a paradise loaded with mighty snow peaks, deep gorges, gigantic rivers, breath taking lakes and flower filled meadows. It has high mountains and valleys and the linking winding roads and high passes make it an ultimate paradise. Major mountains and ranges nestled in Himachal Pradesh are Shivalik Range, Pir-Panjal, ChoorChandhi and Kinner kailas. We can say that Himachal Pradesh is located in the laps of Himalayas. Various other states in the vicinity of Himachal Pradesh are: Jammu & Kashmir in the North, Uttarakhand in the south east, Haryana in the south and Punjab in the west. The state of Himachal Pradesh has 12 districts and have a population of 65 lakhs. The total area of the state is 55673 sq. kms. Evidently, tourism in India occupies an important place in its economy and is also emerging as a major earning sector in the state economy. The government of Himachal Pradesh has pushed the tourism industry because there are not proper variables for other production industries. Tourism also includes the development of various public amenities and services like roads, transport services like airports, better roads and communication network, civil amenities etc. Polluting industries offer a bad sight to the tourists and these have already been banned, along national highways, tourists' places, by the state government. Majority of the industries projects in the vicinity of roads are eco-friendly.

An upcoming trend is Buddhist and Tribal tourism. Several world known monasteries associated with Buddhist and Tribal cultures are located in the prime tourist locations. One of the chief agencies concerned with the role of preservation of India's rich and varied past and maintenance of old monuments is the Archaeological Survey of India.

Tourism in Kullu District:

Kullu valley is situated on the either side of the river beas. The valley covers an area of 80 kms in length and 2 kms in breadth, at its broadest. The major attraction is its finely woven colourful handmade shawls and round vibrant kullu caps. Kullu was given the recognition of a separate district in the year 1963. The kullu district has 3 tehsils which are :kullu, Banjar and Nermand. It has a total of 172 villages and majorly all of it are inhabited. Hindus constitutes the major population of the state followed by Sikh and Christian religions. Predominant class among Hindus, living in kullu, is Rajputs and Brahmins.

Places to visit in kullu-manali:

Bijli Mahadev Shrine, Raghunathji Temple, Vaishno Devi Temple, Camping Sight: Katrain , Naggar , Kasol , Manikaran, Malana ,Bajaura, Larji ,Banjar, Manali, Nehru Kund, Solang Valley, Kothi , Rahala Water Falls, Rohtang Pass , Arjun Gufa (Cave) ,Jagatsukh.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The influx of people from various regions leaves an impact on the socio-cultural life of host communities. Studies done up till now focus only upon the individual areas rather than a generalized sample. The tourists undoubtedly inadvertently or intentionally leave their imprints on the physical and cultural landscape as well as the social and cultural aspects of the state.

Charles(2001) discusses the impact of development and tourism on drug trafficking is examined in depth, with a focus on Himachal Pradesh, particularly Manali. He claims that tourism has inevitably become a significant source of income for the local population. He goes on to say that locals either lease their land to outsiders or build their own hotels due to a lack of management skills. People's exposure to the comforts that money can buy has led them to engage in illegal activities. One profitable strategy that a few locals have taken is catering to tourist demand for narcotics of their choosing. He further stated that in distant places, locals have begun to cultivate cannabis, which is purchased by middlemen and sold to the general public.

Hardin (2005) Through a comprehensive review of literature on motivation and demands of sports tourism, the authors examined the value of sports tourism and presented a wealth of information to the readers. He went on to say that sports tourism is a great way to learn more about this new industry of tourism.

Doohgun Hwang (2012) investigated and linked community-based action as a positive influence of tourism development to a community's potential to protect itself from external threats by negotiating the quality of tourist development. He stated that tourist development is a collaborative effort. between outside developers and local inhabitants, resulting in a long-term conversation for the evolution of the city. Five communities have formed collaborations with people from outside the community. Residents initially resisted tourism developers, which resulted to the following series of events. town meeting, formal resident organisation, petitions, public demonstration, and legal action. A framework for collective action was developed by evaluating collective action tales in the five research communities. The foundation of sustainable rural tourist development is built to understand the relation between tourism impacts, environment& community identity.

Research Gap

From the review of various authors. It can be concluded that the objective of developing tourism should be to bring positive impact to the host community. Tourism to a place brings about substantial change in public utilities like pavements, lighting, water & sewage system while also strengthening other infrastructure like public transport and accommodations. To study the impact, it can be sub categorized in three categories: economic, social and environmental.

Need of Study

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh is a rapidly growing sector. Its impact on one hand is bringing a positive socio-economic and political development and on the other hand is offering new employment opportunities. Kullu Manali being one of the most beautiful places in Himachal Pradesh can be seen as an

epitome of tourist destinations. The peak season of tourist influx sees many problems ranging from unavailability of rooms to the congestion of roads. So the study of growth and development of tourism especially in kullu Manali becomes essential.

Scope of the study

The whole state of Himachal Pradesh is faced, especially during the peak season, with the problems like (1) limited public transport (2) expensive hotels. Also due to the inability to carry out a detailed research of the whole state, this study has been restricted to the region of Kullu Manali only.

Objective of the study

1. To analyse various commodities and facilities available to the tourists in Kullu Manali.
2. SWOT analysis of the development of tourism in Kullu Manali.

Research Methodology

The procedure for sampling selection, data gathering methods, and data analysis have all been addressed in this paper. The purpose of the study was to assess the growth and development of tourism in Kullu and Manali in light of the objectives established for the data gathered from diverse tourists. The Tourists include both domestic and international visitors. The study's data is gathered from only one source i.e., secondary data.

- 1) Secondary data: To study the various aspects of growth in tourism, economic situation, secondary data has also been collected. Majorly the secondary data is collected from the following sources.
 - 1) Local books & journals
 - 2) Himachal Pradesh tourist department
 - 3) Research reports
 - 4) Newspapers

Result and Discussion

The data acquired through questionnaires has been evaluated and interpreted in the present research in light of the study's aims. The purpose of this study is to assess travellers' perceptions of tourism in Himachal Pradesh, particularly in Kullu and Manali.

Himachal Pradesh is particularly wealthy in terms of tourism, with all of the required resources for promoting tourism activities. Kullu and Manali have always been popular tourist destinations. Both domestic and international tourists visit. The Kullu and Manali valleys offer a diverse range of tourism opportunities for different types of visitors.

It is apparent that the tourist industry benefits from the extensive range and scope of networks for tourist attractions in many forms.

Strengths

- 1) One of the few areas on the planet with five distinct seasons, with the ability to attract tourists all year.
- 2) Social and political stability
- 3) The state is known for being quiet and welcoming.
- 4) A pleasant climate.
- 5) Pollution-free surroundings
- 6) Provides a unique mix of eco-tourism, pilgrimage, adventure, culture, heritage, and recreational wildness etc.
- 7) A decent infrastructure.
- 8) A rich history and tradition with something for everyone It is known for its Buddhist monasteries, ancient ruins, churches, and cemeteries dating back thousands of years.

Weaknesses

- 1) Negligible has no air or rail connections.
- 2) Inadequate foreign tourist traffic.
- 3) Tourists do not arrive uniformly throughout the year, putting a pressure on public infrastructure during peak season.
- 4) A scarcity of trained tourist guides at popular tourist destinations and historical tourist attractions.
- 5) Overcrowding at well-known tourist spots.
- 6) There has been no recent development of a significant tourist destination.
- 7) Inadequate parking at popular tourist destinations.
- 8) Inadequate marketing of the state within the country and poor marketing of the state abroad.

Opportunities

- 1) There is a lot of opportunity for activity-based tourism including whitewater rafting, paragliding, trekking, mountaineering, water sports, mountain biking, and car rallies.
- 2) A solid foundation for heritage tourism that will appeal to people of all ages and religious faiths.
- 3) To provide a perfect venue for nature enthusiasts in order to promote eco-tourism.
- 4) Make heritage and pilgrimage tourism work together.
- 5) Development of the state's wetlands to attract environment lovers, particularly bird watchers.

6) Promote the state as an Open University and a learning centre for mythology, anthropology, and ornithology, among other disciplines.

7) Promote it as a suitable location for film production.

Threats

1) Extreme stress resulting in collapse of civic amenities at a popular tourist location throughout the season.

2) Uncontrolled growth and construction endangering the environment, particularly in popular tourist locations.

3) An alarming increase of concrete structures, which is disrupting the surrounding ecosystem.

4) Unscrupulous tourism commercialization may damage social and cultural values.

5) Tough competition among the top tourist states and aggressive tourism promotion by other states.

Conclusion:

1. Young, educated, and married individuals from various regions of the country and the world prefer to visit Kullu-Manali for pleasure and climatic changes. This is a popular honeymoon destination for married couples.

2. Tourists confront challenges such as a lack of adequate lodging, expensive tariffs, and lodging locations throughout their stay in the state.

3. Both domestic and international tourists have complained about high transportation costs and incorrect vehicle departure and arrival times as the state's key transportation issues.

4. When it comes to shopping, foreigners have complained that they are charged a higher price than local shoppers. There is also a scarcity of branded goods.

Suggestions:

1. The government should identify new tourism locations and prepare a proper and comprehensive strategy to develop these destinations, including all infrastructure and superstructure facilities for visitors. The plan should also focus on improving accessibility as well as marketing tactics for tourists.

2. Because the budget is a critical aspect in the strengthening and enhancement of the tourist structure in the country. As a result, it has been proposed that, in order to compete with the tourism-oriented state in the region. On the contrary, the government should enhance the tourism budget of the tourism department in order to boost tourism. Tourist flow and national and international promotion of the state

3. The majority of tourists in the study complained about the roads. Roads in some locations are in poor condition.

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