Transportation Economics in Tourism Sector: A Study of Uttarakhand (India)

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Introduction

Tourism industry of India is one of the major contributors to its GDP and its economy; it is one of the largest services industries as well. With better marketing strategy and better analysis the researcher can put forward a road map which should help the tourism industry altogether. Domestic tourist industry is a massive market for the Indian Economy by itself along with a moderate contribution by foreign tourists. According to Ministry of Tourism, India Tourism Statistics at a Glance 2012, no. of domestic tourist visits to all states/UTs was 1036 million with an annual growth of 19.9% and the no. of foreign tourist arrival in India was 6.58 million with an annual growth of 4.3%. In another report named ‘Sustainable Tourism for India-Criteria and Indicators’ by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, they have mentioned that every one million spent on Tourism or Manufacturing, tourism is expected to create 78 job opportunities versus 45 in manufacturing.

With all the important factors in mind our main focus is on the state of Uttarakhand, the 27th state of the Republic of India. Uttarakhand is also a part of Indian Himalayan Region (IHR). There are 12 state regions which fall under Indian Himalayan Regions. First, we will do a comparative analysis of some of the states viz. Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand on certain parameters.

Comparative Analysis:

| Source: Ministry of Tourism for the state of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand |
Objective:
To bring in the concept of Information centers in the state of Uttarakhand which will cater to the information needs of the tourists. Our main aim is to create an integrated system which will contain all the required and real time data which are required by the travelers during their visit to Uttarakhand. The integration will have a portal with a built-in information center. If possible, we will also integrate a centralized registration system for the tourists; mainly for those who would visit Uttarakhand for religious purposes and for other tourism activities for that matter.

A look at the Sustainable aspects of tourism of India and Uttarakhand:
The time has come when the need for sustainable tourism is of the utmost importance. India has a huge reserve of tourists and the expense by the tourists impact the economy to a great extent. Uttarakhand has a great opportunity to tap this reserve going forward. We need to find a way where the tourists can get all the requirements at the right time, at the right quantity, at the right quality, and at the right cost. With the sustainable tourism, we will basically look at the generation of employment to the local people; highly skilled, moderately skilled, and low skilled. Through this we will have to uplift the socio-economic factor of the rural population along with the women citizens of the state.

In their report, Sustainable Tourism criteria for India, Ministry of Tourism, the emphasis has been given to Inclusive growth of the tourism industry including minimizing the negative impacts and positive impacts to Environment, Local Communities, Heritage, etc.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNWTO (World Tourism Organization), which also figured in Sustainable Tourism criteria for India, Ministry of Tourism, brought out a publication entitled “Making Tourism More Sustainable –A Guide for Policy Makers”.

They enlisted the following aims of an agenda for sustainable tourism:
- Economic Viability
- Local Prosperity
- Employment Quality
- Social Equity
- Visitor Fulfillment
- Local Control
- Community Well-being
- Cultural Richness
- Physical Integrity
- Biological Diversity
- Resource Efficiency
- Environmental

There are various other factors such as Hygiene, Sanitation, Waste Management, Eco-Tourism, Pollution Control, Sustainable Infrastructure development, conserving the ecosystem, etc. which is widely discussed in the report of Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India, Criteria and Indicators, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

Uttarakhand and its challenges in Tourism:
Uttarakhand has a great potential in becoming one of the major tourism destinations in the country or should we put it; has a great potential in becoming the capital of hill stations and capital of religious tourism in the country. There are various other locations in the state where the tourism can greatly benefit the local communities, especially the rural population. Going forward, we will discuss each and every districts of Uttarakhand and the possibilities it provides for segmentation of the tourism industry in the state.

First and foremost would be good roads, good roads assist in developing an economy. Need to lay a framework to build roads throughout the destinations where there is highest influx of tourist. The roads should be built in such a way that it should be able to handle this huge logistics challenge. Cleanliness, information centers at adequate distance or information sign boards (may be digital)

Transportation: may be re-designed buses for use in the tourism sectors, examples are Delhi, raj

Cleanliness: use of dustbins. The dustbins should be used at every shop and on the road side at adequate distances. Notices on sign boards to keep the city or other face punishments (this has to be implemented strictly). Pan and other pan masala lovers should carry a bag so that they can spit into it, thereby keeping the city clean. An example implemented in Sikkim. All people coming into state should be made aware that we are serious about the environment and cleanliness. Use of dustbins is mandatory if they feel like throwing any waste, be it they are walking or driving. Tourists should be
responsible enough while they are traveling. Dustbins should be designed in such a way that it can handle one day’s waste, more dustbins in densely populated areas. A team should be established which will work at night to clean all the dustbins of the location. All dustbins should be accounted for and daily report should be given in the morning. Weekly or monthly inspection of the dustbins needs to be done. Tourists will like to throw their waste if the dustbin is clean (psychology).

**Environment:** Uttarakhand is blessed by nature, however; we have to put efforts to make it greener. Plantation of trees like pine trees on possible walk ways, sitting benches, and no vehicles zones (if possible).

**Cultural tourism, Textiles/traditional garments** have a huge potential, need to use tourism to let people know about its value one can possess.

**Information systems:** real time information is the need of the hour. Information across the sector within the sectors will be available 24*7. Travelers can decide the time of their travel.

**Electricity:** We will have to make sure that the tourism destinations either plain or hills, have to have constant supply of electricity to enhance the tourism acceptance of those sectors, especially those sectors which is not well established and looking for recognition.

**Gateway of Uttarakhand – Dehradun, Haridwar, and Udham Singh Nagar:**

Dehradun is the capital city of Uttarakhand. It is not just the capital but also the gateway to the state of Uttarakhand along with Haridwar. Whenever tourists enter Uttarakhand by train or by air from New Delhi, Dehradun is the first city that welcomes them. If by road, then they could either get the first-hand experience of the city of Haridwar or Dehradun, depending on the route they choose to take. So, we need to better position Dehradun and Haridwar such that it can cater the needs of the tourists. Basic concerns such as better roads, good hotels, quality restaurant or quality gateway restaurants, parking areas, cleanliness, better/digital road signs, security etc. Our main strategy is to put two major Information Centers, one in Dehradun and the other in Haridwar which will possibly have all the travel related information which the travelers may or may not need. Dehradun should be the epicenter of tourism affairs for the state of Uttarakhand and we need to identify various corridors which can make tourism in Uttarakhand attractive. To achieve this we need effective segmentation of the corridors and at the same time extensive marketing should be implemented. To support the concept of corridors and segmentation, we are studying all the possibilities in the 13 districts, Garhwal and Kumaon separately. As Dehradun is already discussed above, we are leaving it out for now and will be considered at the time of identifying the corridors.

**The Districts:**

Uttarakhand is divided into two regions: Garhwal region and Kumaon region. Garhwal division consists of Chamoli, Dehradun, Haridwar, Pauri Garhwal, Rudraprayag, Tehri Garhwal, and Uttarkashi.

Kumaon division consists of Almora, Bageshwar, Champawat, Nainital, Pithoragarh, and Udham Singh Nagar.

First we will analyze the districts of Garhwal and Kumaon and then we will try to find possible corridors among the districts.

**Chamoli:** Chamoli is another hotspot for tourism including pilgrimage, adventure, and trekking. Badrinath, Joshimath, Kedarnath, Tungnath, Hemkunt Sahib (Gobindghat), and some parts of Vedni Bugyal fall under pilgrimage category. Valley of Flowers, one of the favourite destinations for travelers and researchers falls under Chamoli. Auli also known as Auli Bugyal is one of the major ski destinations of India including various opportunities for trekking. It has Asia's longest cable car (Gondola) of 4 km. Chopata, Chamoli, and Gvaalldham are considered hill stations. Clearly, Chamoli has a wide variety of options right from pilgrimage to adventure sporting. It is one of the poor districts
in Uttarakhand and something must be going wrong in implementing the tourism policies or no policies at all.
So, National and International level advertising campaign is required so that tourists are aware of their choices that Chamoli can offer.

**Haridwar:**

Haridwar is one of the holy places in India. People gather in millions during Kumbh Mela and other religious festivals. Haridwar also hosts nature and adventure lovers by various national parks; one of the majors parks in the Rajaji National Park. One of the major Information Centers can be set up in Haridwar. The information center will also be able to register the incoming traffic of tourists, if not registered online. Need to draw out a plan such that Haridwar can cater to the needs and wants of the tourists visiting for different reasons. One other worry is the hygiene and cleanliness.

The government should draw out a strategy to clean the river Ganga and other tributaries including neighbourhoods and places which are visited by many. The animal corridors wherever they are situated should be protected so that the animals can be protected. Haridwar can earn the benefit of being the gateway of Uttarakhand. Need to include map of the Haridwar district.

**Pauri Garhwal:**

Pauri Garhwal is known as the “Land of Miracles”. It is a place for pilgrimage and as well for nature lovers. Pauri Garhwal is a place for historical and archaeological importance. Transportation is an important factor in Pauri and for its people. The places of importance can be advertised through the buses operated by Garhwal Motor Owner Union (GMOU) Ltd and Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) Ltd.

Pauri Garhwal is a great place for tourism and provides a great challenge for the tourism industry in Uttarakhand. It has a great benefit of being in the vicinity of the Gateway of Uttarakhand, i.e. Dehradun and Haridwar.

**Rudraprayag:**

Rudraprayag is famous for its pilgrimage destinations. Shri Kedarnath Temple, Madhyamaheswar, Ukhimath, etc. to name a few places are renowned among domestic and international tourist as well. We will have to create a cluster within Rudraprayag so that people have a clear idea on when, how, and where to visit the places. The place is also famous for the man-eating leopard which was eventually killed by Jim Corbett. Need to look at the transportation factor here as well.

**Tehri Garhwal:**

Tehri Garhwal is also the place combining adventure sports and pilgrimage. Various trekking opportunities such as Jaunpur, Dharasu, Mukhem, Balganga, Saklana, and Shivpuri. Bhilangana Lake, Dhanolti, Narendra Nagar, and Sem Mukhim have scenic beauty of its own. White water rafting in Kundiyala in Tehri is one of the places tourist can definitely visit.

When it comes to Pilgrimage, Tehri Garhwal has a place of its own. Major temples namely Budha Kedar, the Panch Prayag- Devprayag, Laxman Jhoola, Tapovan, Muni ki Reti, three Shakti Peethas Kunjapuri, Sukhanda Devi and Chandravadani welcomes the tourists.

**Uttarkashi:**

Uttarkashi is a mystical land of Uttarakhand and is also known as the Kashi of the north. It has the sources of both Ganga and Yamuna and is one of the sacred places for the Hindus. It is also one of the beautiful places on earth and yet unexplored. Uttarkashi is mainly visited for religious reasons rather than for other tourism related activities.

There are excellent trekking routes in Uttarkashi as well which is being visited by various enthusiasts.
Kumaon division consists of Almora, Bageshwar, Champawat, Nainital, Pithoragarh, and Udham Singh Nagar.

Almora:
Almora is considered as the Cultural Capital of Kumaon. Almora is another hill station of Uttarakhand and is solely developed by the Kumaon people of that region. It is not only known for its scenic hilly areas but also for wildlife and trekking routes and pilgrimage as well.

Jageshwar host one of the jyotir lingas among the 12 jyotir lingas in the country including some other temples which are centuries old. Binsar has a wildlife sanctuary which is visited by enthusiasts. Ranikhet, a cantonment area, is the hill station of Almora district and visited by many. The stretch of Almora-Pithoragarh also has various temples which the tourist can visit. There are various reports which suggested that more needs to be done for Almora district and its tourist places so that a balance can be maintained among its hill stations in the state. Chitai (Golu Devta) and Nanda Devi temple is also a must see. Dunagiri is also famous for its Shakti temple also known as Dunagiri Devi. A Deer Park in Almora is also an attraction. One more attraction is the Gobind Ballabh Pant museum which has artifacts related to the Kumaon culture.

Bageshwar:
When the Gomti River and the Sarju river merge that is where Bageshwar is situated. Bageshwar is known for the 13th century temples are also situated in Baijnath along the banks of Gomti in Garur Valley.

Bageshwar proudly host the Pindari Glacier, the trekker’s paradise, situated at an altitude of 3,353 meters and it is the most easily accessible glacier among the entire Himalayan glacier. There are various treks along the Pindari region. Bageshwar is also known for its festivals. There are various festivals that take place during the year, Uttaraini Festival, largest fair in the Kumaon region. Apart from it, there are various other rituals or festivals which are connected with their religious ides and customs namely Vishuvati alias Bikhauti, Harela, etc. to name a few. Another beautiful town of Bageshwar is the town of Bigul. One can visit this place to get the mesmerizing view of Himalayas along with the view of the sunset. The divinity of Dholinaag Temple can also be felt which is situated at the top of the Bigul village.

Champawat:
Champawat was once the capital of the Chand Dynasty, known for its natural attraction and temples. The ancient architecture of the Kumaon can be witnesses through the temples of Baleshwar and Nagnath temple. Lohaghat, which is known for historical importance, can be developed as another hill station of Uttarakhand. Advaita Ashram is one of the main attractions of Lohaghat. Abbot Mount, Gurudwara Ritha Sahib, Vanasur fort (Vanasur-Ka-Kila), Shyamla Taal, Galchaura, Suin (Pawa), and the Forti village are some of the attractions in and around Champawat and Lohaghat.

Adventure sport lovers go to Pancheshwar, famous for river rafting. Pati, 20 km from Lohaghat, is also a must visit place for its natural beauty. Champawat is also famous for the man-eater tiger known as Champawat tiger responsible for killing approximately 430 people in Nepal and Kumaon region combined.

Nainital:
Nainital, situated in the Kumaon foothills of the outer Himalayas, needs no introduction when it comes to tourism. It is one of the popular destinations in India and is also known as Lake District of India. The main economy of the district is tourism. So, sustainable tourism in Nainital is the need of the hour. We will try to analyze the sectors which can be improved further in Nainital so that tourist comes here again and again.

Apart from famous tourist spots such as Tiffin top, Naina Peak, Mall Road, Naina Devi Temple, etc. there are other less known places in Nainital. Less known means less number of people visit these
places than Nainital. Bhimtal, Sattal, Naukuchiatatal are some of the places which is visited by very less number of tourists. These places are very unique and can become better weekend gateways, far away from daily noises and worries. We will also analyze the intake capacity of the hill city of Nainital and other small towns like Bhimtal, Sattal, and Naukuchiatatal. The world famous Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve falls under Nainital district.

**Pithoragarh:**

Pithoragarh is one of the beautiful valleys of Uttarakhand. Pithoragarh has everything to offer when it comes to tourism viz. glaciers, Himalayan peaks, mountain peaks, valleys, waterfall, flora-fauna, ski ranges, lakes and various other tourist places. The list seems to be endless. Pithoragarh can become a gem for the state if it is marketed-advertised properly among the tourism sectors. Various tourist places like Pithoragarh Fort, Askot Musk Deer Sanctuary, Dharchula, Didihat, Patal Bhubaneshwar, Munsiyari, Adi-Kailash (Chhota Kailash), Kapileshwar Mahadev, Berinag, Chaukori, Chhiplakot, Daramaganga or Darma valley, Kuthi valley, Johar valley, Saur valley, etc. Truly the list is endless; however, Pithoragarh does not attract many tourist rather than enthusiasts. Pithoragarh is one of the populous districts of Uttarakhand and various modes of employment can be generated through the tourism industry and human resources should be available in abundance. Pithoragarh has the resources gifted by the nature and if serious efforts are made Pithoragarh can definitely rise up to the expectation.

**Udham Singh Nagar:**

Udham Sing Nagar is an industrial district of Uttarakhand. It is one of the populous districts of Uttarakhand. It is surrounded by the Kumaon Himalayan ranges and Nepal which provides a pristine view. Because of the fertile lands the agriculture is done at an industrial level.

Various tourism areas which are visited by many are Atariya Temple, Nanak Matta, Kashipur, Chaiti Devi Temple, and Pantnagar. Haripur dam in Gadarpur is famous for fishing and other dams such as Tumariya dam at Kashipur, Sharda Sagar dam in Khatima, Dhaura dam at Kichha, Baur dam in Bajpur are visited by Tourists. An annual boating competition is held in Haripur.

**A study of Sikkim:**

We are only analyzing Sikkim to show the fact that it being such a small state, shows how to excel in the field of tourism with the available resources at hand. We studied some of the research papers which showed the activities carried out by the state.

What Sikkim did right was that it focused on Tourism. Nowadays, Sikkim is known for its Tourism and is considered as the Organic state of the country. The report by Tanushree Chaudhuri put forward the importance of Cultural tourism for a state. The culture, tourism, and environment are inter-linked with each other and importance must be given to all of them to make tourism better. The author also cautioned to look out for the tourism destination life cycle; the boom and then the bust.


This paper basically deals with the role of transportation vis-à-vis increase in the inflow of tourists in the state of Sikkim. It emphasizes that the tourism is very important for social and economic development. Tourism generously contributes to the economy and helps in increase in GDP of the state. According to the research paper, the main mode of transportation is the road transportation, so, better infrastructure should be created with keeping in mind the impact on environment and outside taxis should be curtailed in order to reduce the impact on the environment. One of the important aspects discussed is the segmentation of highways into state highways, major district highways, and other district highways. This will tell us how far the road penetrates into any district and it turn will assist in planning better road infrastructure. With increase in the number of tourists it is very important that taxis for hire should increase and better public services should be provided. The paper also quoted
“Yang Shanshan et al, 2003 & Gui, 2009”, that tourism demand is a high level demand and tourism demand better transportation. The author noticed the negative impact on the environment by tourism and need for further research on this. Furthermore, the government should play an active role to improve the sector which in turn will assist the state’s economy and its people.

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**Let us discuss about prospective destinations and segmentation :**

**Pilgrimage:** Haridwar, Rishikesh, Char Dham Yatra (Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath), Panch Kedar Yatra (Kedarnath, Madhyamaheshwar, Tungnath, Kalpeshwar, Rudranath), Panch Prayag Yatra (Devprayag, Rudraprayag, Karnaprayag, Nanadprayag, Vishnuprayag)
Adi Kailash Yatra, Shri Hemkund Sahib, and Jageshwar.

**Adventures:** The adventure segment is divided into Treks and Rafting-Kayaking.

**Rafting-Kayaking:** Rafting in Rishikesh is one of the sought after rafting adventure in India. Kayaks on Alaknanda, and Rafting the Tons rapids.

**Wildlife:** There are various Wildlife reserves which are famous among tourists. They are listed as follows: Corbett National Park, Nanda Devi National Park, Rajaji National Park, Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, and Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary.

There is interesting activity under wildlife in Uttarakhand is Fishing: Pancheshwar, Lohaghat, Kopote, Dodital, Asi Ganga and Corbett (Western Ramganga - Garhwal Sector)

**Wellness:**
Uttarakhand is also known for its wellness activities. One of many is the Patanjali Yogpeeth in Haridwar. Ananda – In the Himalaya, Kalmatia Sangam, Vipasana Sadhna Kendra, Yog-Ganga Centre, The Satvik Resort, Sivananda Kutir, Bharat Heritage Services, The Haveli Hari Ganga, Ganga Beach Resort.

Apart from the listed there can be a fantastic opportunity in Medical Tourism in hills of Uttarakhand. We can create Medical Tourism with the help of ecotourism in the hills.

As we have identified the probable destinations for the state of Uttarakhand, we are further segregating the destinations into regions (Garhwal and Kumaon). Garhwal and Kumaon regions are governed by Garhwal Vikas Nigam Limited and Kumaon Vikas Nigam Limited respectively.

If we look closely the activities in each region, the Garhwal region has comparatively more activities than the Kumaon region. There are tremendous logistical and supply chain challenges in these hilly regions. The difficulties are higher during the winter season. So, our idea is to create an information center which will cater to the needs of the tourists and to the local people to some extent. The information center will be integrated with a portal so that tourists and as well the locals of Uttarakhand can have 24*7 access for any information that they need at any point of time. The researcher will try to make the information center more real-time so that data are current and does not mislead the users.
The researcher will also try to advertise the state of Uttarakhand and its tourism activities through the portal so that the people can better understand the current activities that are going on the activities which will be implemented in the future. This will be our next step of our study.

Summary: During our research, it has been found that the state of Uttarakhand has tremendous opportunities in tourism sector and lots can be done for the upliftment of both the Garhwal and Kumaon Regions. The planning to set up the information centers has to be done by discussing with the experts before implementing it. The initial stage of the portal with a limited idea is also shown here. To better under the needs and prospects of the tourism market, we will also apply the concept of marketing and advertising through the portal.

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