

TOURISM POTENTIAL IN HIMACHAL PRADESH: AN OVERVIEW

Kamlesh Attri*

ABSTRACT

The Himachal Pradesh is not only the land of God and Goddess, snowy mountains, lush hills, springs and streams, but also activities of adventure, such as hiking, skating, golf and fishing. The State of Himachal Pradesh offers enormous opportunities for investment in both the tourism and non-tourism industries. The state's landscape, topography, cold weather, snow-capped mountain ranges and birds provide the industry with extreme opportunities. The tourism and travel industry makes a major contribution to the national GDP of 7.2%. The Government of Himachal Pradesh has formed the Tourism Development Board (HPTDC), which is following the patterns of other boards in the world and able to handle the various networks.

Keywords: GDP, HPTDC, Eco-Tourism, Tourism Information Center, Foreign Exchange Earnings.

Introduction

In the lap of the Great Himalayan lies Himachal Pradesh. The Jammu and Kashmir is located in northern side; Uttarakhand is in the eastern; Haryana in south and Punjab in the west of the state. Himachal Pradesh faces Tibet as well. It is enriched with scenic beauty by Himachal Pradesh. Key natural resources are rivers, rocks, forestry and mines. It has cool and clear lakes, hills, rivers, springs, temples that became a popular pilgrimage site. Dhauladhar's scenic splendours include this valley. There is a huge opportunity for water in the five rivers Satluj, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Yamuna. His ancient name Dev Bhumi is still apt today in the holy land of God and Goddess. Because of many temples, this land is holy for almost all the dominant religions in India. Himachal Pradesh is not only a place of goddess and devotedness; it is also a land of skiing, cycling, golfing, swimming, boating, hand-gliding, and lush woods, spring-fields, and sun-lovers. Himachal Pradesh has enormous investment potential for both tourism and non-tourism industries. It has extreme potential for tourism, as well as a landscape of the province, its topography, cold atmosphere, snowy mountains and birds. Some openings in the state that include tourism include resorts, hotels, roadside facilities, seasonal production, ropeways, helipads and air taxis. Out of which 88 thousand were foreigners, the gross arrivals of tourists in the state were 4,77 million in 1999. Almost 2% of the state's domestic product is now provided by tourism.

The reorganization of the state of Punjab brought Himachal Pradesh into enormous potential tourist areas like Karsog valley, Tirthan valley, Manali, Dharamshala, Kangra fort, Palampur, Shimla, Kasauli, Chail and Dalhousie. As a result, the state is nowhere near as much as it can promote tourism. The tourism arrivals in Himachal Pradesh show that the promise of the state has not been completely exploited. The effectiveness of tourism in the state is caused by several challenges. It has to be addressed and effectively for the tourism industry. Himachal Pradesh is faced with many difficult issues such as financial restraints and short tourism periods as well as high building and manufacturing costs and poor means of communication. Himachal Pradesh Himachal Pradesh has 20 important tourist centers, which are now easily accessible through improved or newly built roads. The declaration of a new tourism strategy in 2000 is a major milestone for the development of tourism in the province. This policy focuses mostly on the involvement of private businessmen in the growth of different forms of tourism in the Province. The Government has also granted private entrepreneurs some subsidies and incentives to promote and boost tourism. The number of visitors to the country is increasing rapidly in tourism with a substantial increase.

* Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Shyam Lal College (Eve), University of Delhi, Delhi, India.

Critical Review of Literature

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh has arisen as a future industry. Himachal is a small hill state in North India. The state is blessed with abundant natural beauty, calm, relaxing surroundings, interesting traditions, exhibitions and festivals, divine pilgrimages and amazing adventure thrills. Yet not much literature is available in Himachal Pradesh on pilgrimage and adventure potential tourism, but some writers have explained in the minds of potential tourists the importance of promoting and picture a tourist destination. The tourism sector is the world's second-biggest after-oil industry, as advocated by the groups Anand (1976), Bhatia (1979), Srivastava (1983), Mathieson and Geoffrey (1985), Negi (1987). It is a thriving industry that leads to transfer of capital from the various established nations to emerging nations. This group of academicians advocated and proved that the tourism and hospitality sector has an incredible prospective that ensures that many other similar sectors thrive simultaneously and is also an instrument for economic growth. Some study projects have also shown that India possesses great potential for the growth of tourist space: Dutta (1980), and Singh (1985), have also advocated the growth of tourism sector. Further Tayal & Motwani (1986) and Kumar (1995) has also discussed about the potential for the growth of tourism sector. They forecast nation's huge tourism potential to draw more and more visitors next year. The use of marketing principles for the tourism industry was stressed by Mishra and Panwar (1993). They concentrate primarily on the promotion of cultural tourism; our history and our heritage need to be cared for. It also proposed that an acceptable approach should be developed to sustain the existing wide business basis for the tourist industry. It is also discussed and pointed out by the various authors Kaul (1985), Gupta (1987) that in primordial villages of the nation had rooms and club rooms and this fact is strongly supported by Sharma (1991) and Gupta (1994) that this is acted as evacuations for tourists and as epicentres of societal lifecycle. To make Himachal Pradesh a preferred place for tourism, Chauhan and Kumar (1995) focus on adventure sports, roads and ecotourism activities. Mathur (1992) has claimed to have a rich past, beautiful nature and fervour. He stressed the importance of adventure and exploratory tourism to encourage domestic young people to develop tourism in India. It is strongly advocated by the author that adventure tourism should be included in the curriculum of school and colleges of the state to propagate in education system in India. Soni (1990) pointed out that religion plays a vital role in the promotion of tourism industry in Nepal and the valley has ability to promote tourism in particular pilgrimage and tourism adventure. The tourism development in Western China has been attracted to tourists by distinctive groups of religions and their unique landscape Jackson and James (1997).

The various studies have shown the need to begin at the grass-root level by raising awareness of tourism to mitigate environmental degradation. They thought that mass tourism is disruptive to nature tourism first as large people are to any country. They have also shown that such eco-conservation policies must be implemented to make eco-tourism eternal and friendly Naqshband (1980), Bisht (1996), Battisi (1997) and Bansal, and Gupta (1998). Negi (2002), Chauhan (2006), and Sara (2008) indicated that eco-tourism is a novel solution as it offers localized community-building tools, highlights the proper use of scarce resources and focuses the growth of a community to fulfil the societal, monetary and ethnic needs of its societies. They sensed that exploration and ecological travel could allow India to attain the main goalmouth of making it a favoured tourist spot. Thakur (2013) supports the rage for adventure tourism as the younger generation and Dharamshala is a famous adventure with its added appeal to its geographical beauty, faith and culture. Dhar (2014) noted that tourism is a leisure sport, with the Kashmir valley one of the best adventurers and novel areas that can offer economic growth and job opportunities in the country. Khan (2015) shows that tourism in adventure has great potential and it can improve the industry through the provision of tourists with an extra commodity.

Development of Tourism and Hospitality Sector and Role of HPTDC

The state Government has formed the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation to promote economically, culturally and ecologically sustainable tourism in that state. HPTDC was recognized in 1972 to encourage travel and tourism in the Himachal region and has been an internationally recognized enterprise. The Company will remain pioneers of the State in developing and opening virgin tourism destinations and providing the private sector with fair competition. The potential of Himachal Pradesh to be a major tourist resort is established. It is said that tourism will probably grow whether a country, region or area has attractions and offers some hospitality to potential tourists. The government has declared it a rapidly growing sector. The construction of basic infrastructure services was aimed at attracting visitors from all levels. To encourage the tourism industry of the state this institution was set up. The company has been the catalyst, trend driver and leading mover for promoting tourism in the state ever since its foundation. The tourism industry makes an important contribution to the State GDP of 7.2 per cent (Economic Survey of HP,

2015-16). The state has geographical and cultural diversity, a safe climate, mountains covered with snow, rivers with pleasant snow, ancient landmarks and friendly, welcoming people. Himachal Pradesh is also considered God's dwelling place for all the devotees. Known by people from all over the world as the land of temples. The Himachal Pradesh landscape is riddled with numerous shrines from Hindu temples to Jain temples to mosques.

Growth of Tourism and Hospitality Sector: Government Role

In the face of climate and geography, Himachal Pradesh is rich in flora and fauna, majestic and stunning mountain ranges. India's outdoor adventure playground is Himachal Pradesh. The rush of adventure lovers will grow rapidly once they go into Himachal Pradesh, the heavenly residence of God. The government's visions make it an important body for the promotion and growth of tourism through the Tourism Development Board. The government has notified a Council of Tourism Development which can cross-cut management of various linkages and which follow the patterns of other Boards worldwide. These are all signs of clear realization that tourism must become sustainable in the government and among policymakers. However, the fact that the concept of ecological tourism is supported by the industry at least is not a necessity, nor is this an indicator of the fact that there are a substantial number of people already involved, who are not professionals in the hospitality or tourism industry, and who treat the environment which sustains it. The tourism sector is also likely to expand further after the government of India, the Ministry of Commerce and the Industry have announced a concessional industrial package. This bundle focuses on ecotourism, hotels, resorts, spa, entertainment and entertainment ventures and entertainment. In the list of thrust sectors entitled to discounts, Parks and Ropeways must be included. For an introductory term of five years, new initiatives in these regions have the right to a 100% income tax exemption. The qualification for another five years is then available at 30%. New ventures have the right to invest in resources at 15% of their contributions in plants and equipment with a Rs 30 lakh ceiling. The Rs. 4,000 crores package announced for Himachal in August 2005 by the Central Government includes several projects in the tourism sector and is likely to lead to further expansion.

Conclusion

The conclusion is that Himachal Pradesh is blessed with natural landmarks, places of worship and other tourist attractions. Buddhist tourism has a heavy influence also in places such as Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti. As an industry, tourism receives political attention because it contributes 2% of the domestic output directly to the economy. The tourist inflow is increasing annually, and the Government has come up with its roadmap for 2022, calling for the improvement of the existing infrastructure to keep up with this rate of tourism traffic. The present study also shows that the travel and tourism sector is one of the major and wildest developing sectors in the State. It offers a good impetus for global economic growth with over 210 million worldwide employees (WTTC, 2009). The Tourism industry is a vital component of indigenous, regional and countrywide economies in some developed or developing countries and contributes significantly to job production, GDP growth and external revenues.

References

1. Anand, M. M., 1976. *Tourism and Hotel Industry in India*. New Delhi: Prentice – Hall of India Private Ltd.
2. Bala, U., 1990. *Tourism in India: Policy and prospective*. New Delhi: Arushi Publication.
3. Bansal, S. P. & Gupta S., 1998. *Impact of Tourism on Hilly Environment: Problems and Prospectus, Tourism toward 21st Century*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publication.
4. Batra, G. S. & Kumar N., 1993. Emerging Dimensions of Tourism Development in Punjab. *International journal of Management and Tourism*, Vol. 1(4), pp.411-418.
5. Battisti, G., Favretto, A., 1997. Sporting and outdoor activities in the development of tourism in Slovenia: The case of the Triglav National Park. *Tourism Recreation Research* 22(2), pp. 29-35
6. Bhatia, A. K., 1979. *Tourism Development Principles and Practices*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, Pvt. Ltd.
7. Bisht, H. 1996. *Eco-conservation for Eco-tourism: A Case Study of GangotriGaumukhi Area*. New Delhi: Himalayan Publication.
8. Chauhan, P. 2006. Eco-Centric - The Thrust is now on Adventure and Eco-Tourism. *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, Dec. 23.
9. Chauhan, P., 2006. Eco-Centric- The Thrust is now on Adventure and Eco-Tourism, *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, Dec. 23.
10. Dutta S., 1980. Yet to make up to it's Potential. *Eastern Region*, vol. 33(2), pp.1-5.
11. Gupta, D. R., 1994. Tourism in Himachal Pradesh. *International journal of Management and Tourism*, vol. 3(1-2), pp.28-46.

12. Gupta, U. K., 1987. *Tourism Potential in Northern, Western, Central, Southern and Eastern India as well as Islands*. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing house.
- Hunter, C. 1997. Sustainable tourism as an adaptive paradigm. *Annals of Tourism Research* 24 (4), 850-67.
13. Kaul, R. N., 1985. *Dynamics of Tourism-A Trilogy*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
14. Jackson, R. H. & James, D. A., 1997. Religion and Tourism in Western China, *Tourism Recreating Research*, Vol. 22(1) pp. 3-10.
15. Kumar, M. 1995. *Tourism in Himachal Pradesh, Retrospect and Prospect, and Tourism Management: A Global Prospective*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publication.
16. Kumar, M., 1995. Tourism in Himachal Pradesh, Retrospect and Prospect, Tourism Management, a Global Prospective. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publication.
17. Mathieson, A. & Wall G., 1985. *Tourism: Economic, Physical and Social Impact*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
18. Mathur, M., 1992. Tourism in India-Need for a Managerial Approach, *Indian journal of Tourism and Management*, April-June, pp. 197-202.
19. McMinn, S. 1997. The challenge of sustainable tourism. *The Environmentalist*, 17 (2), 135-141.
20. Miller, G 2003. Consumerism in sustainable tourism: a survey of UK consumers, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism Vol 11 (1)*, 17-39.
21. Misra, S. K., 1993. Marketing Cultural Tourism: The Indian Experiences. *International journal of Management and Tourism*, Vol. 1(3), pp. 329-335.
22. Naqshaband, G., 1980. Integration of Tourism and Environment. *Eastern Economic*, Vol. 75(24), pp.15-17.
23. Negi, J., 1987. *Tourism Development and Resource Conservations*. New Delhi: Metropolitan Books company.
24. Panwar, J. S., 1993. Strategic Marketing to Develop Tourism in India. *International Journal of Management and Tourism*, Vol. 1(4), pp. 446-457.
25. Sara, D. & Leisch F., 2008. Selective Marketing for Environmentally Sustainable Tourism. *Tourism Management*, vol. 29, pp.672-680.
26. Sharma, K. K., 1991. *Tourism in India: Central State Administration*. Jaipur: Classic Publishing House.
27. Singh, T. V. & Kaur J., 1985. *In Search of Holistic Tourism for the Himalayas in Integrated Mountain Development*. New Delhi: Himalayan Books.
28. Soni, B., 1990. *Development Tourism in South Asia (A case study of Tourism in Nepal, Tourism in 21 century)*, New Delhi: Anmol Publisher.
29. Srivastave, K. K., 1983. Tourism in India. *Yojana*, Vol. 27(10), pp. 16-18.
30. Tayal, N. D. & Matwani M., 1986. *Tourism Development and Mountaineering in Himalayas*. New Delhi: Neeraj Publisher.
31. Thakur A.S., 2013. *Emerging Adventure Tourism Destination: A Case Study of Dharmashala*, Global Reaserch Analysis, ISSN No. 2277-8160, Vol.2, Issue 9
32. Dhar H., 2014. *Potentials and Problems of Adventure Tourism: A Case Study of Kashmir Valley*, Abhinav International monthly refereed journal of research in Management & technology ISSN No. 2320-0073 Vol.3, issue 9
33. Khan A.M. 2015. *Adventure Tourism in India*, International journal of multidisciplinary research and development, ISSN No. 2249-4182 vol.2, issue 4

Web Sites/Web Links

1. <https://www.tourmyindia.com/states/himachal/adventure.html>
2. <https://www.indianholiday.com/tourist-attraction/himachal-pradesh/adventure-sports-in-himachal/>
3. <http://viralstories.in/14-adventure-sports-enjoy-himachal-pradesh-adrenaline-junkie/>
4. <http://hptdc.nic.in/advent.htm>
5. <http://www.india.com/travel/explore/adventure-recreational-activities-himachal-pradesh/>
6. <https://www.tourmyindia.com/states/himachal/temple.html>

