

## **Impact of Tourism on Ecology of Uttarakhand Himalayan Region**

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**Dr Ram Prakash**

Assistant professor

School of Humanities

Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India

### **Abstract**

*Tourism is an essential and nearly all pleasing human being action admirable the praise and support of all group and all Government.”*

This speech framed at the XXI United Nations General Assembly in 1967, recognizes the significance of the tourism corporation. It is play an essential part in service generation and financial development of the world. It is one of the biggest and fastest rising economic sectors in the glob economy and has significant ecological, cultural, community and financial impacts, both positive and negative. It is known as the world's largest and fastest growing industry.

Uttarakhand is a beautiful state in the Northern Himalayan region in India. Due to its high biodiversity and geographical area as well as flora & fauna it has been provided enough religious tourist potential and rich cultural heritage. This paper focuses on tourism and its impact on the economy and ecology of the Uttarakhand Himalayan region.

**Keywords-** *Ecology, Economic, Hill station, Pilgrimage, Tourism.*

### **Introduction**

India is the world's largest democracy and covers a total land area of some 3,287,263 square kilometers, with a total coastline of 7,000km. The Indian economy has seen high rates of growth in recent years. However, in spite of this, there remains a significant problem of urban and rural poverty. Thus the Government of India (GOI) has identified Tourism as a major engine for generating employment and sustainable livelihoods. Uttarakhand Himalayan region is one of the most beautiful hill states in the Indian sub-continental. It is known for god, goddess, sacred places and pilgrimage (dhams). The presences of four dhams are the attraction of pilgrims many centuries. It has also rich biodiversity of flora and fauna. Similarly, Hill station and wildlife (Sanctuaries and National parks) are in this region like Nainital, Mussoorie, Ranikhet, Almora, Chamba, Uttarkashi & Jim Corbett, Rajaji, Ramnagar, Nanda Devi biosphere and many more are the hearts of tourist attraction. The various sacred rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Saryu, Koshi and their tributaries occur from the glaciers of the huge Himalaya and provide a diverse intelligence of tourism practices in this region. Early time to modern time, man as an explorer is known for many centuries. Initially, they were moved for food, agriculture, shelter but with time, their journey turned into numerous innovative things like journey as an exploration, journey as a relaxation, and travel for entertainment, to enjoy natural attractiveness, as a pilgrimage, to obtain information on past aspects and archaeological sites. Indian culture is one of the oldest and richest in the world. India has an enormous range of cultural assets which for many centuries

have drawn travelers to the subcontinent. The country is a major international tourist destination, a position it is reinforcing through a series of marketing initiatives including the current and highly successful 'Incredible India' campaign. The tourism industry has emerged as the biggest source of revenue exchange and employment in India and worldwide. The state's economy has been principally dominated by the tertiary sector, as well as tourism, which adds more than 51% of the entire GSDP from 2004-05 to 2013-14. Tourism in Uttarakhand is already a key driver of economic development and source of revenue promotion. Its contribution to the State Gross Domestic Product (SGDP) is around 4.4% and its contribution to employment is 2% as per estimates made by UNWTO.

## Study area

Uttarakhand, governmentally given named as Uttaranchal formed as 27th State of Indian Union on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November, 2000. Uttarakhand is principally a hilly and terai area comprise of two demarcations of Garhwal and Kumaon having harmony in their environmental, social, economic and ethno-cultural features. Although the state has been called as Uttaranchal at the occasion of its formation, widely the region is called Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand covers an area of 53,483 sq km which is 1.63% of the geological area of the country. As per the 2011 census, Uttarakhand has a population of 10.09 million accounting to 0.83% of India's population. The rural and urban population of the state constitutes 69.77% and 30.23% respectively.

## The record of tourism in Himalayas

Tourism has long existed in the Himalayas in a broad sense: as a pilgrimage to Hindu sanctuaries that are situated elevated in the peaks. By the advent of the British in the 19th century, summer resorts, so-called hill stations were recognized.

Tourism in the Himalayas, viewed from a past point of view, can be separated into three different stages: spiritual pilgrimage sites, 19th-century British hill stations and 20th-century modern mass tourism.

## Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage to the Himalayas has long played a significant role in many diverse religions: the worship of sacred rivers and environmental Gods and Goddesses have influenced the Aryan culture which became the core values of Hinduism. An important spiritual meaning for Hindus in the entire Himalayan region is "sacral place". These guides to a distinct, Hindu vision of the Himalayan view: not a gathering of attractive landscapes, however a depiction of the divine. It is predictable that the pilgrimage to sanctuaries in the Himalayas began between the fourth and second centuries BCE. The first write facts for a pilgrimage to the Himalayas are the epic Mahabharata from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, which talk about the sources of Hardwar and Ganga (Badrinath and Kedarnath) as pilgrimage sites. The remarkably main pilgrimage sites were and still are the origin of the rivers Ganges and Yamuna, and further importantly, the Mansarovar Lake in southern Tibet and Mount Kailash, home to Shiva.

## Hill Station established by British

The next phase of tourism began during the 19th century, as the British exposed the Himalayas as an amusement area. Following numerous military visits to the British in the early 19th century, the impact of living in the Himalayan mounts was revealed, with many sanctuaries

recognized to accommodate services to members of the army. The primary hill station was Simla, which was established in 1819. It was acknowledged as the Government and Military Summer head office for India in 1838 (which was halted until the British withdrew from India in 1947), attain importance. Shimla has maintained its significance till the current day, which is the capital of Himachal Pradesh. Further hill stations were Mussoorie (established in 1827), Darjeeling (1835) and Nainital (1839). By 1869, various new hill stations were established: Dalhousie, Dharamshala and Ranikhet. Sometime later, at the end of 1830, hill stations develop into further inviting Indian citizens, as a result of the information that they had an opportunity to stay their during pre-monsoon summers. This season offers to live in a more pleasing area with gorgeous scenery. The transform began in 1947, when India turn into independent and the figure of British tourists drop off completely. After a few years of crisis, the figure of tourists started growing once more: the Indian town middle class had exposed hill stations as an attractive holiday sites.

## **Modern tourism of the 20th century**

Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay started modern tourism in the Himalayan region in the 1950s after climbing Mt. Everest and made the area well-liked in other parts of the globe, until then more or less unnoticed the area. In the earliest years, lack of transport communications in hill stations and Garhwal region limited tourism. Nevertheless soon after the Indo-Chinese boundary war in 1962, a large number of roads were build in the Indian sector of the Himalayas - by 1970, 10 000 km of roads. While his use was mainly a military one, he unlocked up the area to modern mass transport.

## **Tourism in Uttarakhand**

The Uttarakhand Himalaya offers a wide range of modern tourism potential. The activities include rang from visiting the sole cultural desirability, hiking, skiing, more courageous types of tourism. In the past time, contemporary (western) style sports have been recognized in the Himalayan region, including rafting, kayaking, rock climbing, mountain biking, bungee jumping, paragliding etc. Tourism in Uttarakhand is experienced in diverse ways. The Himalayas comprise pilgrimage tourism, natural tourism, adventure tourism (mountaineering, river-rafting, trekking) and wildlife tourism.

## **Tourism sites**

The state of Uttarakhand is mainly recognized for its hill stations, pilgrim and adventure sites.

## **Hill Stations**

Abbott Mount, Almora Auli, Bhimtal Bhowali, Chakrata, Chamba, Champawat, Chaukori, Chopta Dhanaulti, Dharchula, Didihat, Dwarahat, Gangolihat, Gwaldam, Harsil, Jeolikot, Kanatal, Kausani, Khirsu Lansdowne, Lohaghat, Mukteshwar, Munsiyari, Mussoorie, Nainital, Naukuchiatal, Pangot, Patal Bhuvaneshwar, Pauri, Pithoragarh, Ramgarh, Ranikhet, Sattal, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarkashi.

## **Wild Life (Sanctuaries and National Parks)**

Binsar, Jim Corbett, Rajaji, and Ramnagar.

## **Adventure (Trekking/Paragliding)**

Auli, Barkot, Bedni Ali Bugyal, Bhojbasa, Chandrashila, Chopta, Dayara, Bugyal, Deoria Tal, Dodital, Gandhi Sarovar, Gangnani, Ghangaria, Ghuttu, Govindghat, Hanuman Chatti, Har Ki Doon, Hemkund Sahib, Kalpeshwar, Kedar Tal, Kedarnath, Madmaheshwar, Milam Glacier, Mori Munsiyari, Pindari Glacier, Roopkund, Rudranath, Sunderdhunga Glacier, Tungnath.

## **Pilgrimage**

Adi Kailash, Almora, Augustmuni, Badrinath, Devprayag, Dwarahat, Gangnani, Gangolihat, Gangotri, Gaurikund, Ghangaria, Guptkashi, Hanuman Chatti, Haridwar, Hemkund Sahib, Jageshwar, Janki Chatti, Joshimath, Kalpeshwar, Karnaprayag, Kedarnath, Madmaheshwar, Nanakmatta, Patal, Bhuvaneshwar, Rudranath, Rudraprayag, Tungnath, Ukhimath, Yamunotri.

## **Type of tourism**

### **Pilgrimage tourism**

The existence of four Dhams is the attractiveness of tourists in this region not just starting the Indian sub-continent although also from international visits these dhams each span. Pilgrimage to the Himalaya has performance a very significant part for an age. The places of religious-like Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, and Gangotri are the importance of religion as well as they are famous for natural attractiveness.

### **Natural tourism**

Natural tourism has emerged in this region later the formation of hill stations like Mussoorie, Nainital, Almora, and Ranikhet in late 1830. These hill stations are most famous in this region to attract tourists to a different country. Mussoorie (established in 1827), Nainital (1839), Almora, Pithoragarh and Ranikhet (1889) develop into the main hubs of attraction. Contemporary mass tourism initiated in the 1960s and the figure of tourists trips the hill stations improved by the enormous figures.

### **Adventurer tourism**

Uttarakhand Himalayan region has great opportunities to attract the tourist through Adventure tourism like winter sports skiing, river rafting, trekking in various natural places.

### **Wildlife tourism**

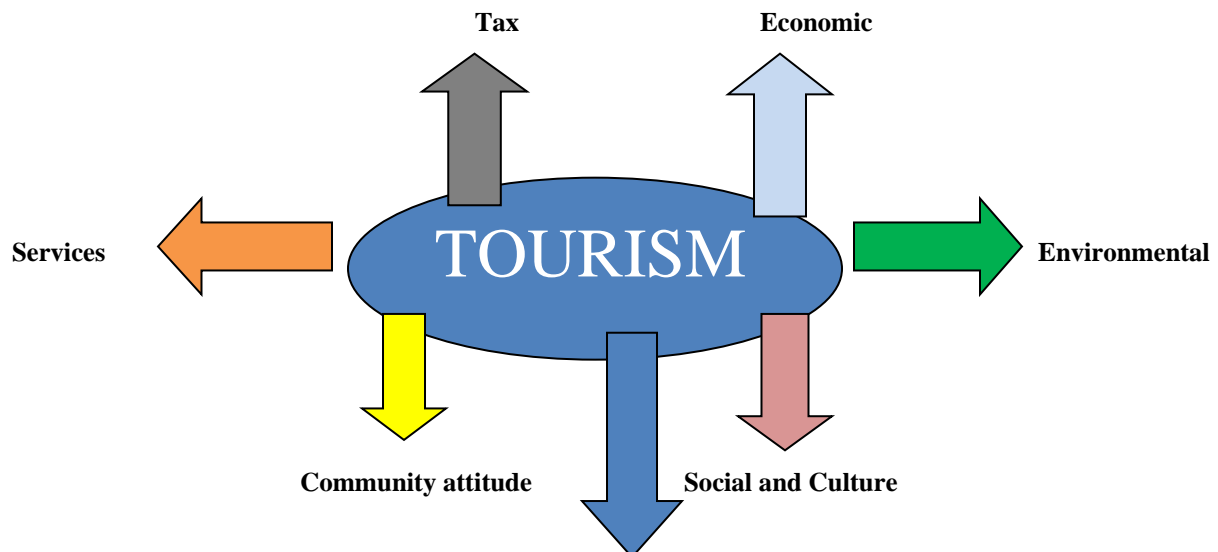
Uttarakhand Himalayan region is known for its National park, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve. It is also famous for natural beauty like rivers, sacred places, and forests. It is covered by a 67% geographical area of forests. Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve is acknowledged as a world heritage site. Corbett National Park is recognized for preserving tigers and famous for 'tiger project'.

**Visit of tourist in Uttarakhand**

| Year | Domestic Tourist Visits (Million) | Foreign Tourist Visits (Million) | Total Tourist Visits (Million) |
|------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 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                         |
| 2015 | 27.46                             | 0.091                            | 27.551                         |
| 2016 | 29.75                             | 0.092                            | 29.842                         |

(Source-UTDB,Uttarakhand)

**IMPACT OF TOURISM**



## Crowding and Congestion

(Source-Kreag2001)

### The economic impact of tourism

The tourism industry has emerged as the biggest source of employment and revenue generation worldwide. According to a latest report through the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), India's tour and tourism zone position 7th in the world in terms of its total involvement to the country's GDP.

According to the data, the tour and tourism zone produced 14.1 trillion (USD208.9 billion) in 2016, which is the 7th biggest in the world in conditions of absolute size; this amount is equal to 9.6% of India's GDP.

Further, this zone produced 40.3 million jobs in 2016, which position India 2<sup>nd</sup> in the world in terms of total service produced. This sector accounts for 9.3% of the country's total jobs.

Tourism is a main resource of earnings, as Rangan (2000) recorded that Garhwal earns between 10–15% of its income from its revenues and is levied on pilgrims every year. In India, tourism is the 2<sup>nd</sup> principal resource of overseas exchange behind the gems and jewelry business (TED N / A). The capital spend by tourists has a different impact on the local economy. Tourism is a major source of foreign exchange and employment in this region, but it is a socio-economic impact on this region. Tourism has both positive and negative impacts.

### Negative impact

1. Agriculture decline
2. Traditional medical practices decline
3. Commercialization of art
4. Change in demography due to migration
5. Decline of local culture and traditional

### Positive impact

#### 1. Employment

##### i. Organized sector

- a) Government Agencies
- b) Nigam's
- c) Hotels
- d) Tour operators( Travel agencies, registered cab operators)

##### ii. Unorganized sector

- a) Local vendors (tea, puja materials, etc.)
- b) Private taxis.
- c) Guide.
- d) Spiritual workers.
- e) Self-employed

2. Encouragement of the new thought of the National Park, Wildlife Sanctuaries

3. Acceptance of new ideas of a different country

### Impact of tourism on ecology

Tourism, it mainly affects the ecology of Uttarakhand Himalayan region due to the mass tourism in this region. This region is already under huge pressure due to the rising demands made by local populations on ecological resources. Local population depends on natural resources on this region for their basic livelihood, for example, heating and cooking, timber for construction, and the grazing and pastures requirements for their cattle, so rapidly decline of forest resources in this region. The quantum of ecological disturbance is rising day by day due to a regular increase in the number of people present in this area. Forest policy in this region is the issue of debate in modern times. In the colonial period, Forest destroyed by Britishers for their navy purpose, shipping, and boating, revenue, construction of railway tracks and commercialization forest products, etc. Impacts of tourism on ecology as follows-

- Trail degradation
- Deforestation
- The problem of waste disposal
- The decline of natural vegetation
- Soil fluctuation and incline failures due to the huge construction along slopes

## Conclusion

The tourism industry is playing the most significant role in economic development growth and employment of Uttarakhand. This region has many holy places like Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Gopeswar, and Koteswar. Similarly, Hill station and wildlife (Sanctuaries and National parks) are in this region like Nainital, Mussoorie, Ranikhet, Almora, Chamba, Uttarkashi & Jim Corbett, Rajaji, Ramnagar, Nanda Devi biosphere are famous national and international level. Tourists are attracting in these places from a different country and play a very important role in the socio-economic development of India as well as Uttarakhand. But it has both positive and negative impacts on the Uttarakhand Himalayan region.

Heavy floods and landslides in June 2013 made the region the most terrible tragedy in existing memory. Authoritative estimation of tolls for the dead and missing were of more than 6,000 people ([www.economicstimes.indiatimes.com](http://www.economicstimes.indiatimes.com)), although civil opinion put the figures at more than 10,000 individuals ([www.ndtv.com](http://www.ndtv.com)). The dead admitted pilgrims and tourists from diverse region of India. Thousands of livestock, horses and ponies were also killed. The financial loss for the tourism service alone is about Rs. 120 billion for 2013 to 14 (PHD Research Bureau 2013).

Uttarakhand Government should implement the indigenous sustainable development program. Enhancing the forest cover with subsistence improvement should be the main concern. Citizens are more probable to increase forest cover if they assure touchable benefits. New regulation should be approved to give possession of villagers to their neighboring forests. Community established institutions such as Van Panchayats and Mahila Mangal Dal (MMDs) can increase and supervise village forests (village vans). Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) and Green India operation money should be spend through these associations. The state government also needs to adopt a proactive path to the execution of the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

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