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"Challenges & Opportunities of Tourism Industry – In Special reference of Uttarakhand State"

Dr. Gaurav Goel
Asst. Professor, Department of Commerce and Management, Swami Vivekananda College of Education, Roorkee. Uttarakhand)

Abstract: ***Tourism Industry is the service provider, foreign exchange earner and employment generator industry in Uttarakhand Tourism plays a vital role in socio-economic development in Uttarakhand. It has become an important human activity of great significance. Although tourists feel quite satisfied with Uttarakhand visit but still a gap exists between their expectations and truth. One of the reasons for this gap has been identified as non-availability of railway transportation, tourism area packages, improper facilities, poor conditions of ordinary buses, high fare rate of private traveler buses and share taxies plying between plain to hilly areas, damage of roads, traffic congestion, non-availability of adequate information on official website. The present study is focused to understanding problems related to the region's requirement and discontinuity of tourists from one destination to another destination for make this state a popular spot for tourists.***
Keywords: Foreign Exchange, Human Activity, Employment Generator

I. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism is most desirable human activity with deserve the praise and encouragement of all people from around the world and all governments. It is an industry concerned with attracting people to a place, transporting them there, housing, feeding and entertaining them upon arrival and returning them to their homes.

Uttarakhand was formed on 9th November 2000 as the 27th state of India, also known as "Dev-Bhoomi" was carved out of Uttar Pradesh. Uttarakhand has a total area of 53,483 Sq. km. of which around 86% area in mountainous and 70% is covered under forests. Besides its natural beauty, uttarakhand is surrounded with high snow hills, natural beautiful valleys, major pilgrims centers, jungle safaris, adventure sports, holy rivers and yoga & meditation resorts for the tourists of the globe. Tourism is already a major driver of economic growth and livelihood promotion in Uttarakhand.

"Tourism and transportation has long been recognized as an engine of growth for long term economic growth and development. This industry is considered as a great source of foreign exchange earner for many developing countries, who considered natural resources as their major assets" (Thullen, 1996).

It has been said rightly by (Batra and Chalwa, 1995) in their study that "travelling stimulates an increased interests in tourism. The decision of a holiday maker to go for a particular destination is basically influenced by its comparative advantage in terms of attractiveness over the competing destination. In the recent years tourists have become more demanding and discriminating."

Pakka Mustoneu and Autti Honkanen (2007) examined perceived tourism behavior and desire to travel. The study is based on post modern theories which states that instead of demographics, social division are based on identity and lifestyle.

S.P. Bansal and Prashant Kumar Gautam (2007) investigate the issue of travelling choice of tourists. The study highlights the leisure ladder model and follow centric personality characteristic of the tourist at the time of choice of different destinations. The study reached to the conclusion that it is the tourist behavior, which is responsible for the destruction choice.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study has been conducted on Uttarakhand tourism industry. The basic features of Uttarakhand tourism fit for development of tourism condition as a strong option. The study is based primarily on secondary data such as previous studies, journals books, reports, magazines, and several online data sources. The study aimed to determine opportunities and challenges of tourism industry in Uttarakhand.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To give importance the major opportunities available for tourism in Uttarakhand.
2) To identify the challenges faced in the development of tourism in Uttarakhand.
3) To give valuable recommendations so as to make the tourism more profitable.

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A. Problems raised in Uttarakhand Tourism

1) Problems faced from the side of guides

a) They misguide the tourists and take undue advantages of their unfamiliarity to the place.

b) They adhere to wrong activities which may create a wrong impression of the state around the world.

c) They try to change many hidden activities from tourists to extract the maximum out of them for some petty gains.

2) Problems faced by visitors

a) They enjoyed many unwanted activities which destroy the piousness of the place, like peeing of side spots spitting, discharging the peels or wrappers at prohibited areas etc.

b) They destroy the attraction by their actions and activities

3) Other problems related with the industry

a) Language is a major problem faced by it. People coming from all over the world face language in the state.

b) Frauds and misguide to the tourist pretending to be a professional guide.

c) 2000 villagers are situated in the far distance from the road side.

d) Even today, 5000 villages in hill areas are not connected by roads.

e) More than 200 villages are situated at the mouth of landslide sites. .

f) Since 65% area is covered by forest very limited area in left for development.

g) As over 90% of Uttarakhand's terrain consists of hills, railway services are very limited in the state and are largely confined to the plains. In Uttarakhand, the total length of railway tacks are about 345 km.

B. Opportunities provided by Uttarakhand Tourism

1) *Tourism policy, 2001:* To create a world class tourist destination which is safe, sustainable and inclusive leaving a mark of peace. The land of natural beauty blessed with glaciers, majestic snow clad mountains, high mountain peaks and valley of flowers, skiing slopes and dense forests, this abode of gods includes many places of pilgrimage, the most sacred and revered Hindu temples, Char Dham Such as - Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri.

2) *Self Employment Scheme:* The veer Chandra Singh Garhwali tourism, self employment scheme, the only one of its kind in the country, has been started in the state from 1st June, 2002 to co-join tourism and livelihood. The central Government has appraised the success of this scheme. Under this scheme, the state government provide advance loans to educated unemployed person and subsidies for various tourism related activitie. Under this scheme, private entrepreneurs can get a loan from commercial banks and a state subsidy of 20% to a maximum of Rs. 2 lakhs on investment upto Rs. 10 lakhs. Around more than 1000 people have set up their business under the scheme generate employment.

C. Challenges faced by Uttarakhand Tourism

1) Disaster prone areas –More than destinations where development are on disaster prone risk zone.

2) Unplanned infrastructure development around hill areas.

3) Unplanned tourism development is damaging the ecosystem of the state.

4) VVIP management during char dham yatra.

5) Parking and traffic management at major hill stations.

6) Availability of potable drinking water at all destinations.

7) Solid waste management at destinations.

8) Availability of clean and proper public convenience facility.

9) Lack of sufficient quality accommodation across all categories.

10) Inadequate train and air connectivity.

11) Lack of proper regulation and safety standards for development of tourism products like adventure tourism, health and medical tourism in the state.

12) Tourism in Uttarakhand is seasonal in nature.

13) Lack of trained guides at most of tourism destinations.

14) Limited co-ordinations among government agencies.

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D. Valuable Recommendations to Make the Uttarakhand Tourism More Viable

After the declaration of separation from Uttar Pradesh the state government of Uttarakhand has started many fruitful programs for develop the tourism industry. These must be some recommendations which can be applied by Uttarakhand tourism department and achieve a greater height.

1) There is a need of preparation of tourism planning and development for the domestic tourists as well as foreign tourists.
2) The guides of tourism industries should be given training on leadership and given education related with various types of tourism.
3) Loan subsidy and other incentives should be provided to the local people for upgrading their existing facilities.
4) Uttarakhand tourism industry should be connected with other state tourism stakeholders of country as well as abroad.
5) Tourism industry operate practice in both community and privately should be differentiated and treated accordingly by the government during their facilities.
6) There is a scope to develop health tourism in Uttarakhand. Ayurvedic message and yoga center should be situated in the resorts can become quite popular among domestic and foreign tourists.
7) Pilgrimage tourism is fast gaining popularity among the tourists, who want to enjoy their vacation in the hill stations.
8) People are more enthusiastic to experience the thrill of adventure sports.
9) Special events like handicrafts fair or exhibitions and sports events can be organized by Uttarakhand tourism development Board.
10) Uttarakhand will have the potential to develop as a conference and convention centre which can become business trips for the executives.
11) A special incentives package will be made available for encouraging new tourism projects.

IV. CONCLUSION

Uttarakhand being a hilly region the changes of maximum use of land for economic development. There is something for every one in Uttarakhand. Here, one can witness a multitude of endangered wildlife, explore severe environment and seek inner peace in holy temples or visits pictures to see unique rituals. So, tourism is an important source of income for the state. Leisure tourism, Religious tourism, Adventure tourism and Wildlife tourism from a major part of the state economy. Progressive development in tourism sector can increase a big change in the state economic structure for revenue and generate employment for the local people. Uttarakhand tourism is one of the leading tourist destinations on the world map.

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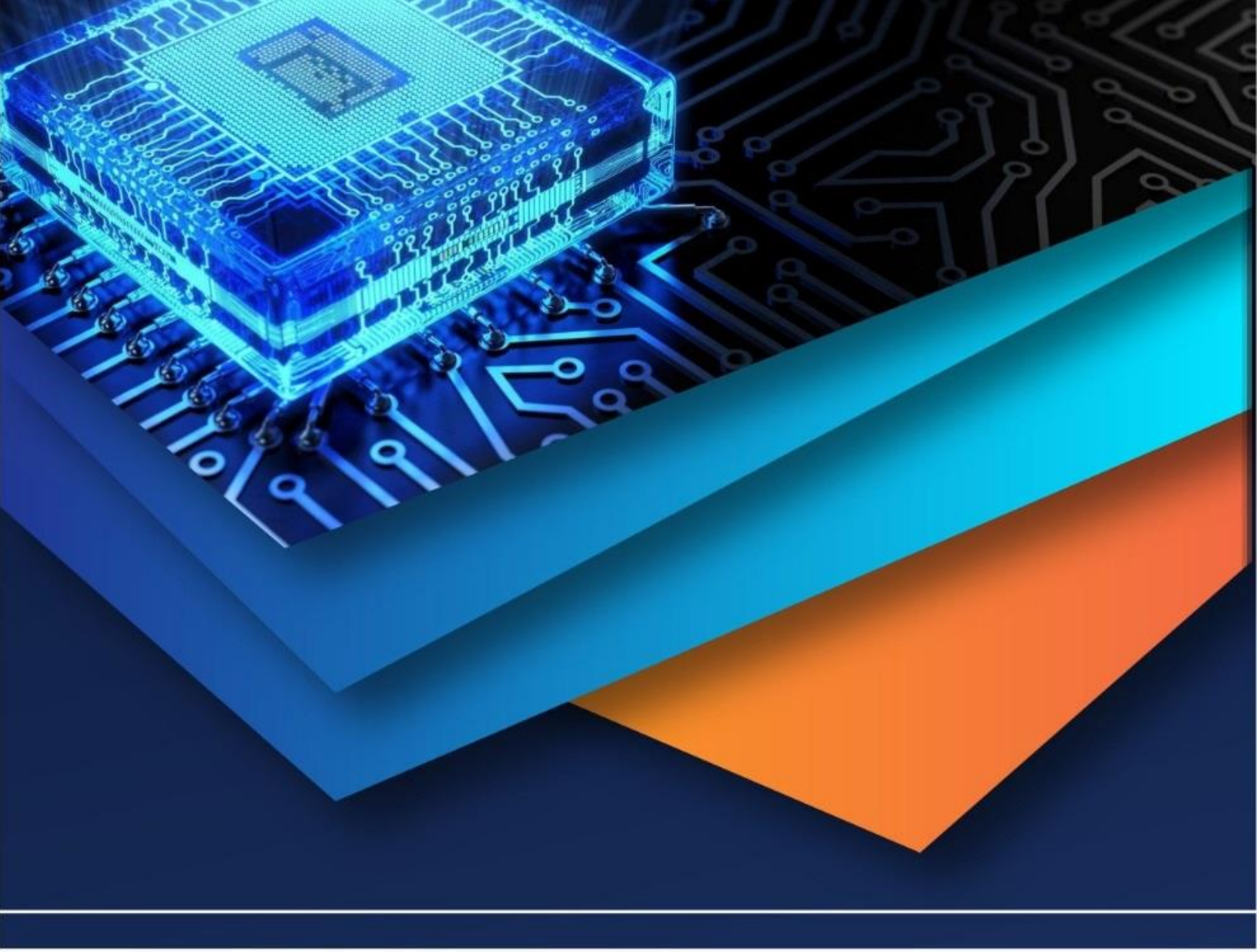

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