



**Research Article**

## Devbhumi: A study on relevant tourist statistics

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### Abstract

Accepting the virtual importance of tourism in Himachal Pradesh is precarious in identifying the tourist potentials in a product class and in building suitable tourism marketing management policies. The emphasis of this study was to collect and examine the relevant tourist related statistics from the State of Himachal Pradesh which would enable analyzing subtle trends of tourism and also to inspect the extent to which tourism qualities are prioritized during the selection. Data was collected in Himachal, Jalandhar and Lovely Professional University between the months of April and May. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data through convenient sampling. With lush green hills, snow-capped mountains and breathtakingly beautiful natural beauty, exotic climate, rich history and culture with numerous historical places and religious temples, Himachal Pradesh has tremendous tourism potential. However, lack of proper infrastructural facilities is the major drawback in venturing this potential. In addition to this absence of well organized and properly directed efforts in marketing is also a cause behind the inefficacy of the Himachal tourism industry to grow to its full potential. Though there are many studies on the tourism of Himachal, they are mostly focused on the marketing of tourism and its impact on the Himachal tourism and its environment. But since our aim is to increase the amount of tourists visiting Himachal and find a way to expand it, it's more crucial to view it from the tourist's point of view.

**Keywords:** Eco-tourism, lack of infrastructure, tourism development, challenges, opportunities, SWOT.

### 1. Introduction

According to research project conducted by the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation and Ministry of tourism, Government of India in the year March-April 2012 to increase the potential tourism in Himachal they have divided the state into four circuit and these circuit pass through different terrain which makes one feel as if one is trekking through ageas at different times. These circuits are:

- Dhauldhar Circuit (Dalhousie, Dharamshala, Palampur, etc.),
- Beas Circuit (Mandi, Kullu and Manali),
- Tribal Circuit (Sarahan, Sangla and Nako) and
- Sutlej Circuit (Shimla, Solan and Paonta Sahib).

As per this study the state government is also working closely with the Ministry of Tourism to develop new tourist circuits in the state. A new adventure and eco tourism circuit has been identified in Himachal Pradesh covering Kullu, Katrain and Manali. There are multiple tour options available for each of the circuits providing several choices to the tourists.

- Home stay scheme
- Har gaon ki kahani
- Inauguration of Shimla heritage museum

- Tourism promotion
- Adventure tourism

Established in 25 January 1971, Himachal Pradesh is a hill state in India which is spread to an area of 55,673 sq km at north-west region of the western Indian Himalayas. The state is adjoined by the Jammu and Kashmir on the north, Punjab on west and South-west, Haryana on south, Uttrakhand on south-east and Tibetan Plateau (China) on the east. Himachal Pradesh was popularly known as the Devbhumi – “Land of the Gods”. The name of Himachal Pradesh was derived from the Sanskrit word “Hima”, which means snow in Sanskrit terminology. It was named by Acharya Diwakar Datt Sharma, most prestigious Sanskrit scholar of the state at the time. Literally Himachal Pradesh means a “Region of snowy mountains”. Administratively, the state has been divided into 12 districts: Bilaspur, chamba, hamirpur, Kangra, Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahaul-spiti, Mandi, shimla, Sirmaur, Solan and Una. The vast majority of the region of the state is depleted by five noteworthy streams; i.e., Satluj, Beas, Chenab, Yamuna and Ravi.

	2013	2014
Number of Tourist visited in Himachal Pradesh		

Indian	14715586	15924701
Foreign	414249	389699
<b>Total</b>	<b>15129835</b>	<b>16314400</b>
No of Guest Houses/ Hotels registered with Tourism Department	2319	2358
No of Hotels owned by H.P.T.D.C	58	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>2377</b>	<b>2416</b>
No of bed capacity registered with tourism department	58904	63007
No of bed capacity in H.P.T.D.C	2332	2332
<b>Total</b>	<b>61236</b>	<b>65339</b>
No. of restaurants registered with tourism Department	630	527
Travel Agencies	1662	1772
Photographers	745	748
Tourist guides	934	981

Source: HIMACHAL IN FIGURES 2014-15 Economics & Statistics Department H.P.

There is increase in the total number of tourists visited, both foreign and Indian, in the year 2014. There is no increase in the government, Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, owned hotels and bed capacity, yet increase in the total availability of hotels and bed capacity in year 2014 shows the participation of the private sector in Himachal tourism has increased. There is also increase in travel agencies, tour guides and photographers but number of restaurants and cuisine outlets has decreased nearly 16 % from 2013 – 2014. Recently Two NIC Himachal Pradesh Projects, Schemes Monitoring Information System and Hot Dak Tracking System have been conferred with the Best E-Gov Project Awards for the PCQuest Best IT Implementations of the Year 2016. The awards were presented during the 13th CIO Leadership Forum organized by Cyber Media(India) Ltd. at Hyderabad during 11th to 13th March 2016.

#### Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are

1. To examine the role of government in tourism development
2. To analyze various opportunities and challenges of tourism development
3. To suggest recommendations for promotion and development of tourism
4. To draw conclusion and suggest the measures that will prove useful in Himachal Tourism

#### 2. Review of Literature

There are many authors who write volumes on the discipline of tourism. Few related studies are cited as follows:

Relph (1983), standardized landscapes and themed attractions. It is very important for marketers to promote differences or to highlight U.S.P. of a tourist product. Himachal Pradesh has been endowed with abundant natural beauty. The state has a lot of tourism potential.

Tyagi (1989), has conducted her study entitled, "Development and Potential of Tourism in Himachal Pradesh". She has tried to identify tourism potential of the state. Using Peter's Inventory Model, she has

described various tourist attractions such as cultural traditions, scenic beauty, entertainment and other attraction. She concluded that these attractions if properly managed and marketed, can boost tourism.

Rana (1991), Attempted to study the promotion of tourism in hill states, particularly in Himachal Pradesh. The Study examined the development of tourism in H.P., flow of foreign tourists to H.P. and profile of foreign tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh. The researcher found some problems relating to tourism such as, improper marketing and advertising network, absence of well-developed infrastructure, inefficient transportation, and poor civil aviation system in the state. He concluded that the existing state of affairs relating to tourism in the state cannot be considered up to mark. It was suggested that in order to maximize the multiple effect of tourism, a proper coordination among the various policies like industrial, commercial, environment, sports and cultural policies are necessary. Further it suggested many steps to promote tourism in the state, such as opening of Hindustan Tibet road, opening of special branch in the tourism department for the study of exact tourist potential of the state. The study emphasized on some of the measures which can be applied to control negative environmental impacts in tourism areas.

Mahajan (1992), has surveyed "Tourism in Kangra Valley: Development, Potential and Problems". He is of the view that Kangra Valley has vast potentialities for a successful implementation of an ambitious program for promoting tourism. Valley has the potential to become a vibrant holiday destination.

Kumar (1992), has conducted a study on "Tourism in Himachal Pradesh – A case study of Kullu and Manali." The main objective of his study is to identify the purpose of visit to the places surveyed, to study the existing facilities available for the tourists, to analyze the tourism potential in these tourist places.

Bansal and Gautam (2003), in their study described the role of heritage tourism in Himachal Pradesh. They stated that globally 37 per cent tourism was cultural motivated and growing at the rate of 15 per cent annually. They considered that Himachal Pradesh had large number of heritage sites with status of first heritage village of India. They also highlighted four types of heritage tourism products in Himachal Pradesh namely natural, manmade but not for tourists, manmade and built to attract visitors and lastly special events. The authors described that lack of resources, lack of expertise, lack of ready product, mutual lack of knowledge and minimal marketing were the main reasons affecting heritage tourism in Himachal Pradesh. They suggested the introduction of entrance fees from tourists visiting heritage centers and separate heritage management board to preserve and promote the heritage sites.

Alvin Chandy (2009), The tourist capacity of visiting the sacred temples of Himachal Pradesh is in abundance. In the event of effectively managing temples hygienic environment, it becomes essential to

regulate tourist inflow and manage the carrying capacity of temples to maintain the tourism. Tourism carrying capacity is defined as ‘the maximum number of people that may visit the tourist destination without causing destruction of the physical, economic and socio cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors’ satisfaction.

**3. Research Methodology**

In the beginning to get more familiar to the topic a thorough study was done on secondary information available about the tourism from various research papers, journals and literature. Research methodology is the systematic method/process dealing with identifying problem collecting of facts or data, analyzing these data and reaching at certain conclusion either in the form of solutions towards the problem concerned or certain generalization for some theoretical formulation. It also comprises of a number of alternative approaches and interrelated and frequently overlapping procedures and practices. Since there are many aspects of research methodology, the line of action is to be chosen from a variety of alternatives.

**3.1 Data Collection Method**

The study was conducted through the survey method. This study is completely based on knowledge obtained from primary information and secondary information. The primary data was obtained from tourists who have visited Himachal from Jalandhar and university students as they are the future tourist and part of its development, by means of questionnaire. These primary data are supported by secondary information obtained mainly through various journals, articles, news paper reports, books and internet sources.

**3.2 Research and Questionnaire Design**

This exploratory study is an attempt to analyze tourist’s and students responses regarding different factors of tourism. These include infrastructural factors, services and safety factors, necessities, cost related factors and natural and unique factors. This was done by analyzing the questionnaire filled by tourists who visited Himachal Pradesh in recently.

The questionnaire contains various questions about different factors mentioned above that may affect visitors stay. It contains a total of 18 questions among them some are open ended questions. The study is done in steps stated below:

Primary data

In addition to questionnaire primary data is collected from the shopkeepers, official staffs, tourism agencies and craftsmen from Himachal Pradesh.

Secondary data

Secondary data is collected from various journals, articles, newspaper reports and internet sources and various related literatures.

**3.3 Data Treatment and Sample Size**

Questionnaires were filled by 50 respondents. The initial information collected through questionnaires was entered into suitable tables to obtain statistical reports. From this information, suitable information

was extracted, analyzed and shown in the study as tables and graphs.

**4. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The data is being collected by the means of questionnaires from 50 respondents which is interpreted by the form of graphs and scale shown below:

1. Number of Indian and Foreign sample visitors of Himachal Pradesh

Visitor	Total	Percentage
Indian	32	64%
Foreigner	18	36 %
<b>Total :</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

2. Total number of Foreigner Visitors from outside the State

Country	Number of Visitors	Percentage
UAE	2	11%
USA	4	22%
Zambia	2	11%
UK	10	56%

3. Total number of Indian visitors from other states of India

States	Number of Visitors	Percentage
Delhi	10	31%
Rajasthan	2	6%
West Bengal	4	13%
Gujarat	2	6%
Chandigarh	9	28%
Punjab	5	16%
Total	32	100%

4. Have you ever visited Himachal Pradesh before'

Medium	Indian	Foreigners	Total
Yes	12	5	17
No	20	13	33
Total	32	18	50

5. Purpose of the visit

Purpose	Indian	Foreigners	Total
Bussiness / Officail	6	1	7
Holidays, leisure and Recreation	10	13	23
Pilgrimage	5	0	5
Social/ Religious Function	9	4	13
Health	0	0	0
Education	1	0	1
Other	1	0	1
Total	32	18	50

6. Most Preferred State in Himachal Pradesh

District	Indian	Foreigners	Total
Chamba	6	1	7
Bilaspur	5	0	5

Hamirpur	3	0	3
Kangra	17	10	27
Kinnaur	2	1	3
Kullu	20	13	33
Lahaul and Spiti	4	3	7
Mandi	5	5	10
Shimla	20	16	36
Shirmaur	4	2	6
Solan	5	3	8
Una	5	0	5
Total:	96	54	150

Quality of Roads	30	2	15	3
Security	31	1	17	1
Behavior of Local people	32	0	17	1
Upkeep of tourist sites	32	0	17	1
Accommodation Tariffs	31	1	17	1
Quality of Information	31	1	17	1

The table below summarizes the domestic and foreign tourist arrivals in each of the districts of Himachal in the past five years.

Domestic Tourist Traffic Arrival Trends - Himachal

District	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Bilaspur	786163	1093317	977502	994023	1241267
Chamba	962061	818477	954518	1145212	1090874
Hamirpur	554970	630108	983202	994023	753185
Kangra	1631232	1813686	2190302	729178	2230888
Kinnaur	384936	467186	445334	2098028	26497
Kullu	2395990	2659257	30822545	123178	3187437
Lahaul and Spiti	362660	470815	396662	2766709	85282
Mandi	1006418	1184335	798461	114726	936532
Shimla	2485564	2818270	3195332	874139	3193637
Sirmaur	748599	872597	948654	2992991	899226
Solan	673932	801234	867890	850825	913732
Una	819461	916336	1105646	1185943	1366145
Total:	12811986	14604888	15646048	14715586	15924701

Source: Tourist Arrival Statistics 2004-2014, Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Himachal Pradesh

7. Source of information of tourist destination

Source	Indian	Foreign	Total
Newspaper	10	5	15
Television	12	6	18
Radio	3	0	3
Banner/ Advertisement	7	7	14
Total	32	18	50

International/ Foreign Tourist Traffic Arrival Trends - Himachal

District	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Bilaspur	86	2191	974	172	156
Chamba	3253	104	134	663	970
Hamirpur	12	4	3	4	8
Kangra	91709	98992	115109	102595	102479
Kinnaur	18792	17860	14860	3282	2084
Kullu	133707	138488	143900	119341	104309
Lahaul and Spiti	59125	73040	47413	4897	5111
Mandi	10485	9813	9068	9663	9189
Shimla	127739	134167	158671	164006	156235
Sirmaur	2712	3142	3088	6476	3112
Solan	5780	6464	6818	141	5766
Una	268	283	246	205	280
Total:	453616	484518	500284	414249	389699

Source: Tourist Arrival Statistics 2004-2014, Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Himachal Pradesh

8. Which of these eating-places did you eat in

Place	Indian	Foreigners	Total
Restaurant	4	2	6
Dhaba	8	4	12
Fast Food Outlets	5	7	12
Cafeteria	3	2	5
Bar	2	2	4
Refreshment Stands	3	1	4
Friends & Relatives	4	0	4
Gurudwara / Temple / Monastery	3	0	3
Total	32	18	50

9. Satisfaction level of services by Sample Visitors in state of Himachal Pradesh

Purpose	Indian		Foreigners	
	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied
Availability of Tour Operators	25	7	16	2
Availability of Transportation	27	5	14	4
Availability of Tourist Guide	27	5	14	4
Availability of quality accommodation	29	3	15	3
Public convenience	29	3	16	2
Eating Places	31	1	15	3
Information Centers	31	1	17	1
Souvenir Shops	31	1	17	1
Other Shops	32	0	16	2
Entertainment Places	31	1	17	1

4.1 Swot Analysis

⇒ Strength:-

- Peaceful and hospitable state
- Rich history and heritage.
- Scenic beauty and salubrious climate
- Political and economic stability

⇒ Weakness :-

- Inadequacy of transport facilities
- Lack of adequate Infrastructural support
- Lack of well coordinated and properly directed efforts in marketing
- Overcrowding of popular tourist centers and lack of

proper information available to tourists.

⇒ Opportunity:-

- Increased number popularity of concept of holidaying among people.
- Adventure sports and trekking
- Gaining popularity of Eco tourism
- Unexplored regions in Himachal

⇒ Threat:-

- Driving in the hilly areas is difficult
- Landslides and heavy snowfall in some places
- Lack of coordinated strategy by government
- Various level of competition in the tourism industry.

#### 4.2 Challenges in Tourism:

The major challenges in Himachal tourism includes lack of business model plan for tourist because of that big companies and hotels hesitate for big investment, lack of knowledge in terms of tourism development model, tourism education, environmental disaster etc. Keeping all this points in minds lets discuss other major challenges of tourism:

- ⇒ Lack of Trained Manpower- Most of the trained manpower never prefers to work in Himachal because of poor MC norms, low pay packages, average life style.
- ⇒ Financial Support – Government need to come up with good funding plans in tourism and hospitality as well to develop strong tourism marketing.
- ⇒ Illiterate Population- A strong marketing plan via various communication channels for educating the rural area of Himachal
- ⇒ Communication Skills- Language and education is the basic hindrance in communication and creates negative impacts on tourists. Villagers will have to understand the tourist wants and needs. There should not be any communication gap between the guest and the host.

## 5. Findings and Suggestions

### 5.1 Findings

With the help of the data collected and analyzing that data I have found that-

- The sample visitors participated in the study there are both domestic and foreign tourists. Foreign tourists comprise of 36% of the

sample visitors while Domestic visitors comprise of 64%. As shown in the study domestic tourists contribute the significant proportion of the total number of tourists in the state.

- Among 18 foreign tourists participated in the study shows that visitors from UK comprise the largest proportion of foreign tourists with 56 percent share of the total foreign visitors. Next biggest share is of tourists from USA. Beside English speaking countries there are great share tourists from other non-English speaking countries such as Germany and UAE. Thus, providing tourist related information on the Himachal tourism website and at the tourist information centers in multiple languages may add to the convenience of the foreign tourists.
- When analyzed the data, it's shown that most of the domestic tourists are from Delhi followed by Chandigarh and Punjab. It shows that states nearby Himachal Pradesh has more domestic tourists than other countries, However there are some of domestic tourists from far states also like West Bangal. The reason may be because of the difficulty of transportation to Himachal Pradesh.
- The mode of transportation used by most of the Indian visitors from within the country used bus to travel. For foreign visitors, bus is the prominent mode of transportation.
- From the sample visitors 34% are repetitive visitors in Himachal Pradesh showing that a significant amount of visitors visit Himachal again and again. This amount can be increased by increasing tourist destinations, leisure and recreation activity in the state. And also providing a friendly and satisfactory hospitality also influence the repeated visitors in the State.
- 46% of tourists visit Himachal Pradesh for Holidays, leisure and recreation activity. While official or business trips to Himachal comprise of 14%, 26 percent of people visit Himachal for social and religious functions and events. Visit for education and health comprise of 2% and 0% respectively.

From this information, it shows there are many potential ways of improving Himachal tourism. This includes increasing the Education and Medical facilities in Himachal. Since Himachal is rich in unique herbal flora and fauna and natural beauty, different types of tourisms like Medical Tourism and Eco Tourisms can be developed and promoted to attract more tourist to the state.

- From preferred districts in Himachal Pradesh buy sample visitors it shows that only three districts (Shimla, Kullu and Kangra) corner over 20 percent of the total tourists coming to the state though the state has 12 districts.

Development and promotion of other potential districts as tourist hubs would aid in more equitable tourism growth in the state.

- Data collected for source of information reflect that, television and newspapers have been the most popular source of information for domestic visitors traveling to the state. Television, newspaper and banner comprise of 36%, 30% and 28% respectively. While radio comprise only 6 % share of whole sample visitors.

## 5.2 Suggestions

- Tourism is highly competitive industry as multitudes of tourism destination options are available to the traveler. Thus, more advertising and marketing strategies must be implemented. This includes advertising in print, television, magazines, etc.
- Development and maintenance of infrastructure could provide pleasant experience to tourists visiting the place. Basic infrastructural facilities have to be developed further.
- Roads need to be improved. Parking space must be provided. Low cost airlines and helicopter services also can be used to reach the inaccessible regions depending on the climatic conditions.
- Providing navigational aids on all tourist routes (e.g. signage and information on highways, etc.) could enhance the tourists experience in the state.
- There is a need for constant maintenance and widening of roads in the future to take care of the growing local as well as tourist population.
- Hotels must be able to cater to all segments of the society. It must market its camping facilities more and ensure that they are safe to use.
- It must open avenues for business opportunities, could be tourism related itself, and cash on its vast religious backdrop.
- Internet and Social media must be used effectively to influence and advertise. Himachal government, hoteliers, tour operators and travel organizations could promote Himachal Pradesh as tourist destination on national as well as international stage.
- Leverage the gifted religious pilgrims in the state to attract domestic tourists.
- The government could focus more on encouraging investment from private sector to sustain state tourism. Areas in which private sector participation could benefit are but not limited to:
  - Developing infrastructure: Building quality and luxury hotels in state with all the modern facilities.

- Maintaining tourist sites and developing new sites in order to preserve natural and cultural heritage of Himachal Pradesh.
- Development of Recreational centers across the state.
- Development of shopping complex, multiplex, amusement parks and other entertainment facilities.
- Travel and tour operation.
- Adventure activity operation.

## 5.3 Limitations Of The Study

1. Less sample size may not be very large to conduct a proper study. And thus it may not be a true representative of the entire population.
2. The proportion of foreign tourists in the analysis is very less.
3. Since the study was conducted on total Himachal and its tourist destinations and due to the very short research period the study was not conducted on all tourist destinations.
4. It is limited to data obtained from both primary and secondary information sources.
5. Respondents were not able to communicate properly.

## 5.4 Directions For Future Use

1. This study require ample amount of time, which should be taken care of in near future.
2. A large sample size should be taken so to gain more relevant and obvious data.
3. When going to the local places proper approval and NOC to be taken from the university so that there should be no problem while gathering the data and filling the questionnaires.

## 6. Conclusion

Blessed with natural beauty, peaceful environment, thick forests, wild life, sacred shrines, and historical monuments, Himachal Pradesh is a land of faith, religion and Mysticism. The natural beauty and exotic climate of Himachal Pradesh has made Himachal Pradesh Tourism really popular for a long time now. Because of these Himachal Pradesh has a vast potential in tourism industry. The government of Himachal Pradesh has made various policies to develop sustainable tourism in the state. Many initiatives at the policy formulation and implementation steps taken by the government of Himachal Pradesh to promote sustainable tourism in the state and to provide better employment and greater opportunity for residents, to contribute to protection of the state's unique natural and cultural heritage and to ensure the long-term prosperity and good quality of life to future generations in Himachal Pradesh. There are some difficulties and bottles necks in Himachal tourism developments

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- [48] <http://www.hptdc.nic.in>