

# Destination competitiveness, tourism facilities and problems in promoting Uttarakhand as a tourism destination

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## Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to identify Uttarakhand destination competitiveness, tourism facilities and problems faced by the tourism department in promoting Uttarakhand. One hundred stakeholders from the five major cities of Uttarakhand were surveyed using the random sampling method. For the analysis of data collected by questionnaires, the researcher has applied both descriptive and advanced statistical techniques. The findings revealed that there were significant differences among the perceptions of stakeholders in the field of tourism in Uttarakhand. As per the stakeholders' opinions, Uttarakhand tourism is facing various sorts of problems, mainly economic, political, environmental, infrastructural and social issue. It may be also helpful for the government in taking implementing suggestive measures for the promotion and development of tourism sector, which might then satisfy the stakeholders.

## Keywords:

Tourism destination competitiveness; tourism facilities; tourism problems; stakeholder perceptions

## 1 Introduction

Travel and tourism industry has a significant share in the global employment and also plays a vital role in terms of growth and development of any nation (WEF, 2015). In 2018, travel and tourism activities generated US\$ 8.8 trillion in the global economy and contributed to the world's GDP at the rate of 10.4% of global GDP. Travel and tourism supported 319 million jobs which are equivalent to one in ten jobs around the world. Travel and tourism industry has organized US\$1.6 trillion exports (6.5% of total exports, 27.2% of global services exports) and invested US\$941 billion, which is equivalent to 4.4% of total investment. The year 2018 was another year of strong growth for the global travel and tourism sector reinforcing its role as a driver of economic growth and job creation (WTTC, 2019). According to the WTTC (2019) report, India is expected to establish itself as the 3rd most extensive travel and tourism economy by 2028 in terms of direct and total GDP. India comes at 8th rank in World top ten most extensive travel and tourism markets with the contribution of 247.3 US\$ in GDP in the year 2018. WTTC forecasts that India will add nearly 10 million jobs in the tourism sector by 2028 and the total number of jobs dependent directly or indirectly on the travel and tourism industry will increase from 42.9 million in 2018 to 52.3 million in 2028. India is forecasted to be one of the fastest-growing tourism economies in the world over the next decade if India attempts to develop tourism infrastructure and exploit its tourism potential to attract and cater to visitors from both domestic and international markets.

Tourism is considered as one of the key industries for development and a major source of revenue, employment and wealth creation, particularly for less developed but highly potential tourist destination places. The tourism industry has an influential role in promoting the perception and image of a destination. For example, Uttarakhand in India is well known for its landscape, natural sceneries and religious tourist destinations. However, Uttarakhand's performance levels are low in infrastructure, transportation, promotional activities, implementation of planning in the practical ground and many more. Although, it is true that tourism in Uttarakhand acts as a stimulating factor for economic and social development of the state and is the primary source of revenue and employment generation due to its multiple effects on other industries. Thus, tourist destinations need to develop and strengthen a competitive position in an increasingly competitive national and international market. It is possible only when the stakeholders of the tourism industry take the initiative and involve positively in the projects for the growth of the tourism industry. That is why an analysis of the competitiveness of individual destinations around the world remains apposite. Nevertheless, most research on tourist destination competitiveness considers the demand side and limited research has addressed destination competitiveness from a supply-side stakeholders' perspective (Zehrer & Hallmann, 2015).

On the other hand, destination competitiveness is connected with the economic prosperity of citizens of a country (Buhalis, 2000; Crouch & Ritchie 1999). However, practically this link is not always distinct. Although some destinations have been effective in attracting tourists and have been assessed as very competitive destinations,

other destinations fail to develop competitiveness or effectively transform it into economic benefits for their local populations (Webster & Lvanov, 2014). As a result, tourist destinations face various problems and challenges in transforming a fragmented supply offer into a consistent tourism product. Hence, for the development of tourist destination competitiveness, management of tourism facilities provided by stakeholders to the tourists and resolving the various issues, challenges and problems related to the tourist destinations play an essential role. Several authors have advised that major stakeholders of the supply side are the crucial elements for the sustainable development and competitiveness of tourist destinations (Dredge, 2006; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Additionally, one primary key to the success and implementation of strategies for tourist destinations is the coordination and support of stakeholders. Therefore, it is essential to know the perceptions of stakeholders directly or indirectly connected with the tourism industry about the development of destination competitiveness, tourism facilities and tourism problems.

## **2 Literature Review**

Stakeholders perceptions of tourism development within destinations have been emphasized as essential elements of tourism success by various researchers and practitioners. However, literature has only focused local residents' role in tourism development, leaving a gap in knowledge on stakeholders' engagement in tourism development process. International organizations such as World Tourism Organization have stated that tourism development activities have to be planned, managed and developed so as to be in line with the needs and attitudes of the stakeholders towards tourism development (Gursoy, Chi & Dyer, 2010; Sdrail, Goussia-Rizou & Kiourtidou, 2015). In other words, to achieve sustainable tourism development, a collaborative policymaking is needed where stakeholders, including local authorities, government agencies, businesses and host communities, must work together in planning and regulating tourism development (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Presenza et al., 2013).

In this context, Del Chiappa (2012) highlighted the importance of understanding the groups of stakeholders and how their perceptions, attitudes and involvement can influence tourism development. Presenza et al. (2013) insisted in their study that research on resident attitudes and perceptions towards tourism development is an essential springboard for tourism planning and residents' attitude towards tourism development has gained much attention from tourism researchers because of its significance for the success and sustainability of tourism development (Chen & Raab, 2012; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Gursoy, Chi & Dyer, 2010). Conversely, this argument is contended by McGahey (2012) who supports studying attitudes of all the stakeholders and not only the residents. Understanding the stakeholders' perspective can facilitate policies which minimize the potential negative impacts of tourism development and maximize its benefits, leading to community development and greater support for tourism (Timur & Getz, 2008).

However, Ellis and Sheridan (2014) have concurred that to date there has been too little consideration of the role stakeholders play in the concept of tourism development and its practice in the field. Considering the stakeholders' attitude is a moral and democratic approach to tourism development because of its significant influence on their stakes as well as the success and sustainability of tourism in a particular destination (Ven, 2015). In the same line, Ellis and Sheridan (2014) stated that stakeholders' positive attitude point towards their favourable behaviour towards tourism development. Ven (2015) suggested that initially, stakeholders have a homogenous attitude towards tourism development and with the passage of time, this attitude becomes heterogeneous. Hence, it is necessary to assess stakeholders' attitude towards mature destinations. In this context, some of the scholars have adopted segmentation approaches to assess stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development because this approach generates important information for tourism policy-makers (Oviedo-Garcia, Castellanos-Verdugo & Martin-Ruiz, 2008; Presenza et al., 2013; Ven, 2015).

Recently studies related to destination governance have focused on understanding the associations established between various stakeholders including government, businesses and the local community towards tourism development (Brida et al., 2014; Del Chiappa, 2012; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Pulina et al., 2013). These studies argue that the concept of governance is not limited to only the government. Rather it involves other stakeholders (business, community and voluntary sectors) because they may use their own resources (Presenza et al., 2013). Ritchie and Inkari (2006) also advocated the understanding of stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions towards any plans of tourism development. In this context, Ven (2015) specified that stakeholders' participation in tourism development is necessary because they form an essential ingredient in the 'hospitality atmosphere' of any destination. Hence involving local stakeholders becomes obviously important for the sustainability of tourism development at destinations. This argument is supported by Kibicho (2008) who furthers it by saying that if properly planned, tourism development can benefit all of the stakeholders starting from generation of employment opportunities, improvement can benefit all of the generations of revenues and development of institutions.

In the Indian context, Chavan and Bhola (2013) found a difference among stakeholders' opinions in case of destination satisfaction and the importance of available tourist services and amenities in the Satara district of India. But they considered only three actors of the tourism industry, namely tourists, hoteliers and tour operators and ignored other major actors to establish the perception gap which limits the scope of the study. Brida et al. (2011) found that future tourism development policies were supported by the residents who viewed it as a positive impact on tourism. The findings also showed that nature residents generally had negative views on the impact of tourism and these groups were less willing to support the tourism industry and its policies. However, their analysis was limited to residents only, and since it was a case study, it is difficult to generalize the findings. Chavan and Bhola (2013) study

focused on determining the stakeholders' profile and establishing the perception gap between tourists and service providers, mainly hoteliers and tour operators.

The main objective of the study is to investigate the perceptual gap between the tourists who visited the Satara district of India and tourism service providers' estimations. They found a difference among stakeholders' opinions in the case of destination satisfaction and the importance of available tourist services and amenities. The significance of tourist destination competitiveness and its determinants has also been widely explained in the literature (Botti, Peypoch, Robinot & Solonandrasana, 2009; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Crouch & Ritchie 2005; Dwyer & Kim, 2003). Crouch and Ritchie (2005) claimed destination competitiveness has real ability to attract visitors with the satisfied tourism facilities without any problems and to do so in a profitable way for enhancing the well-being of destination's residents and maintaining as well as preserving the natural resources for the sustainable development of tourism sector. Since tourism is a relevant and exciting area of study, numerous research worldwide have been done on the subject. However, a study on major stakeholders' perceptions of Uttarakhand's tourism industry has not been well examined. Therefore, this research attempts to assess the perceptions of major actors in Uttarakhand's tourism industry, such as hotel owners, transporters, tour operators, tourism department employees and residents.

### **3 Methodology**

The present study is done using the quantitative method. The primary data is collected with the help of a structured questionnaire from a sample of 100 respondents, i.e. various stakeholders like hotels' owners, transporters, tour operators, employees of the tourism department and local residents from major five cities of Uttarakhand using a random sampling method. The questionnaire was prepared by the researcher with the help of extensive literature review along with discussions with subject experts. For the analysis of data collected by questionnaire, the researcher has applied both descriptive and advanced statistical techniques. Mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, one-way ANOVA test and other statistical tools are also applied to find out the difference among the perceptions of various stakeholders regarding tourism destination competitiveness, tourism facilities and tourism problems faced by them. In addition, the relationship between the satisfaction level of the stakeholders and different aspects of the development of tourist facilities is estimated with the help of Pearson's coefficient of correlation.

### **4 Findings**

This section discusses the perceptions of various stakeholders regarding the competitiveness, tourism facilities and problems in the field of tourism in Uttarakhand. All we know that Uttarakhand, the state of India, is well known for its religious tourist destinations, natural sceneries and natural disasters. However, Uttarakhand's performance levels are low in infrastructure, transportation, promotional activities, the

trend of financing, implementation of planning in the practical ground and many more. Hence, it is vital for tourists' destinations to develop and strengthen a competitive position in an increasingly competitive national and international market. It is possible only when the stakeholders of the tourism industry take initiatives and involve positively in the projects for the growth of the tourism industry. In this study, the perceptions of various stakeholders who directly contributed in the tourism sector like owners and employees of hotels, restaurants, guesthouses and resorts, transporters (public or private), travel agents, tour operators, tourist guide etc. and the others like educationist, professionals, residents etc. who indirectly contributed in the tourism sector are considered regarding the destination competitiveness, tourism facilities and problems faced by them in promoting tourism in Uttarakhand.

#### 4.1 Competitiveness in Uttarakhand tourism promotions

This section seeks to provide insight from the supply side perspective of destination competitiveness of Uttarakhand as a tourist destination. The major purpose is to identify the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the attributes that drive or inhibit the competitiveness of Uttarakhand as a tourism destination in the global marketplace. Uttarakhand is known for various tourist destination attractions as well as it has natural environment based unique tourist destinations. Thus, the basic tourism infrastructure especially road connectivity and basic necessities, banking, financing, medical facilities, proper sources of information and communication channels about tourist spots are required to be developed for the sustainability of tourist destination attractions. In addition, Norms and standards for quality tourism products must be defined for the determination of the level of competitiveness of a tourist destination. It is essential to note that the friendly and hospitable attitude of the local community for the tourist and the provisions for personal safety and security of public directly or indirectly linked with tourism sector play a significant role in developing the competitiveness of tourist destination in the national and international market.

Table 1: Competitiveness in Uttarakhand tourism promotions

	Mean	Standard deviation
Availability of various tourist destination attractions	4.09	0.914
The friendly and hospitable attitude of local people for the tourists	3.56	1.163
Personal safety and security of the public directly or indirectly linked with the tourism sector	3.19	0.880
Availability of proper sources of information and communication channels about tourist spots	3.79	1.142
Tourism infrastructure especially road connectivity and basic necessities	3.06	0.862
Tourism promotion and marketing policies and strategies	3.00	0.759
Banking, Financing and medical facilities	3.41	1.075
Natural environment based on unique tourist destinations	4.20	0.768

Sustainability of tourist destination attractions	3.38	1.159
Norms and standards for quality tourism products	3.08	0.841

## 4.2 Tourism facilities for stakeholders in promoting Uttarakhand

The Uttarakhand state is known for a different type of tourism suggest religious tourism, adventure tourism, nature tourism, medical tourism, eco-tourism, rural tourism etc. The livelihood of many people in Uttarakhand depends on the growth of tourism facilities in Uttarakhand. The economy of the state majorly depends upon the different types of tourism activities. The state government is expected to promote the different tourism facilities in the state in order to attract domestic and foreign tourist and promote different tourism activities. The role of state government is to support the different stakeholders involved in the tourist activities directly and indirectly in such a way that there will be a win-win situation for all the stakeholders.

In the study, ten statements are included in the questionnaire in order to study the perception of different stakeholders with respect to different activities done by the state government of Uttarakhand to provide the different tourism facilities in order to promote tourism activities in the state. These ten statements represent the role of state government is to support the various stakeholders involved in the tourist activities in Uttarakhand state. This section focuses on studying the different roles of state government is to support the different stakeholders involved in the tourism activities in Uttarakhand state. Their roles are divided into three categories which are tourism promotional activities, essential and supporting tourist facilities, and comprehensive planning and financing.

### 4.2.1 Tourism promotional activities

There are many unique tourist destinations with various forms of tourism in Uttarakhand. However, Uttarakhand does not stand among the top ten states of popular tourist destinations in the Indian tourism map as well as it does not come within the top ten famous tourist destination in regard of foreign tourist visits. It indicates that the Ministry of Tourism, Government of Uttarakhand has no strong strategies for the promotional activities of the unique tourist attractions as well as the beauty of unexplored tourist destination. In total, the promotional activities with planned infrastructure development will maintain the sustainability of tourism in the state. To make Uttarakhand one of the top tourist destinations not only in India but around the World, Government needs to focus on funding for expert advice, research and development, regular monitoring law and order regarding safety, security and hygienic environmental and attractive as well as well-designed tourism promotion strategies for targeting national and international tourists. To control overcrowding at tourist destination during the peak seasons, The Government should focus on developing new tourist destinations, raising opportunities in a variety of tourist's attractions, limit the flow of tourist during peak seasons as per the capacity of the destination and to make efforts for year-round tourists' footfall.

Table 2: Tourism promotional activities for stakeholders

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
Funding for expert advice and research for the promotion of tourism	3.06	0.960
Regular monitoring law and order regarding safety, security and hygienic environmental requirements	3.26	0.807
Attractive and well-designed tourism promotion strategies for targeting national and international tourists	3.38	1.060
Making tourism plans and designs for year-round as well as raising opportunities in a variety of tourists' attractions	3.24	0.905

#### 4.2.2 Essential and supporting tourist facilities

Uttarakhand is very popular for religious and leisure tourism. Since it is situated near the state of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh as well as Delhi, NCR region, it is a very demanding destination as a weekend tourist destination among the residents of adjoining states. That is why during the peak seasons, Uttarakhand becomes a favourite tourist destination and the stakeholders connected directly and indirectly with the tourism sector has to arrange essential and supporting tourist facilities to adjust and fulfil the basic requirements of tourists. The Ministry of Tourism Uttarakhand and regional entities of tourism make efforts for arranging basic facilities like accommodation, transport and communication in promoting tourism. The government of Uttarakhand prepares comprehensive and well-designed planning for developing tourism infrastructure. In addition, it is also essential to establish standards for qualitative tourists' service facilities and to arrange training facilities on a regular basis for service providers in the tourism sector. Through these essential and supporting tourist facilities, the stakeholders can not only develop tourism infrastructure but also promote tourism on a large scale in the map of Indian tourism.

Table 3: Essential and supporting tourism facilities for promoting tourism

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
Arrangements for training facilities on regular basis for service providers in tourism sector	3.28	0.888
Comprehensive and well-designed planning for accommodation, transport and	3.20	0.788



communication facilities		
Establishment of standards for qualitative tourists' service facilities	3.27	0.939

#### 4.2.3 Comprehensive planning and financing

It is true that without planning and financing, no scheme or project can be successfully completed. So, there is a huge requirement for comprehensive planning, and there are various resources for financing the activities which are run for the development of tourist destinations. The growth of tourism basically depends on proper facility of capital investment at high potential and un-explored destination for good or scientifically developed infrastructure. Tourism infrastructure involves accommodation, transport, communication, restaurants, medical and banking facilities etc. As Uttarakhand is also known as 'Land of disaster', so after the disaster period, the flow of tourist and availability of tourism facilities for basic needs are badly affected. Then immediate action for resettlement and rehabilitation of disaster-affected areas are required to come back into the normal form and to streamline the track of tourism. But the whole process takes time, and the growth of tourism is paused for that period. To promote tourism in Uttarakhand, the state government should take effective measures and actions to aid the victims of disaster and try to support the stakeholders for the renovation of destroyed tourism infrastructure. Ultimately, the Uttarakhand Ministry of Tourism should put an effort for the use of advanced techniques to control natural calamities or to forecast accurately about the unexpected disasters so that the graph of the growth of tourism can raise without any hindrances.

Table 4: Role of the government in comprehensive planning and financing

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
Use of advanced techniques to control natural calamities or to forecast accurately about the unexpected disasters	3.32	1.122
Immediate action for resettlement and rehabilitation of disaster-affected areas	2.90	0.999
The proper facility of capital investment at high potential and unexplored destinations for good or scientifically developed infrastructure	3.17	1.140

#### 4.3 Tourism problems faced by stakeholders in Uttarakhand

The stakeholders have a significant role in tourism destination development. Uttarakhand has lots of potential and resource of tourist attractions to attract domestic and foreign tourists, even though Uttarakhand tourism doesn't stand in the list of top ten states of Indian tourism map form the last few years. Thus, it is essential to know the perceptions of various stakeholders regarding the tourism problems faced by them. These problems can be seen in the various zones like economic, political, social,

environmental and infrastructural zones etc. The economy of Uttarakhand majorly depends upon the different types of tourism activities and the availability of various facilities provided to the stakeholders for promoting tourism. The role of state government is to support the different stakeholders involved in the tourist activities directly and indirectly in such a way that there will be a win-win situation for all the stakeholders. But in the practical ground, the stakeholders have to face different sorts of problems which create hindrance in the development of tourist destination. In the study, twenty statements are included in the questionnaire in order to study the perception of different stakeholders with respect to different problems in tourism sector faced by them in the state. These twenty statements represent the different problems of tourism in Uttarakhand state. This section makes an effort in identifying the major problems faced by the different stakeholders related to tourism in Uttarakhand state.

#### 4.3.1 *Economical Problem*

Due to red-tapism in the government department, the decision and development activities get prolong, resulting in either less investment or withdrawal of proposals, thereby hampering infrastructure and tourism-related development activities and capital investment in the region. In addition, natural calamities and unexpected weather conditions demotivate the investors for investing in tourism-related developmental activities. In Uttarakhand, the local people of hill districts have less opportunity for setting up their own small businesses due to unavailability of a loan in time as well as a complicated process of acquiring a license to start the business in the popular tourist destinations. Apart from these financial problems, the stakeholders directly or indirectly related to the tourism sector, cannot contribute to the growth of tourism in the state. This thereby negatively impacts tourist inflow which becomes a major cause of downfall in revenue and employment generation.

Table 5: Descriptive analysis of economic problems

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
Dependency on Government decisions for capital investment	3.25	1.081
Availability of loan in time	3.25	0.992
Fewer opportunities for small independent businesses	3.32	0.975
Negative investor sentiment due to uncertain weather conditions	3.21	0.975
Absence of livelihood opportunities in the hill districts of the state	3.23	1.013

#### 4.3.2 Political Problem

Tourism in Uttarakhand is also paralyzed by various issues related to the government (both central and state) attitude and working. Inter government infight and differences add to weak liasoning both within the various departments of government as well as between Government departments and private sector lead to deadlock which negatively impacts tourism and create a lot of mistrust and agony to stakeholders. Besides it, the capital investment that is dependent on government decisions and also on government funding is experiencing difficulties on account of a slowing down in the approval process for projects. Delay in clearing projects, especially that of forest and environment are causing delay, time and cost overruns. The existing public institutional arrangements need modernization and qualitative improvement. Thus, there is a need to promote and encourage private sector participation in the development of modern tourist facilities and infrastructure and management practices in the state.

Table 6: Descriptive analysis of political problems

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
Political instability	3.50	1.024
Slowing down the approval process for projects	3.29	1.262
Lack of provisions for registration and licensing of business establishments related to tourism	3.30	1.105
Lack of co-operation between public and private sector partnership	3.43	1.029

#### 4.3.3 Infrastructural Problem

One of the biggest bottlenecks of Uttarakhand tourism is the lack of a proper and planned infrastructure. Even though the rosy project has been announced or is in the pipeline, these projects are yet to take shape. Completion of these projects in fast pace along with better provisions for basic amenities or requirements like accommodation, transport, water, electricity, hospitals, banks, roads from the core for improvement in tourist activities in Uttarakhand. Proper tourist management and guidelines are also essential in this regard. In order to attract tourists from all over the world, there is an urgent need to create efficient, modern and state of the art infrastructure to cater to the specific needs of tourists of all categories. Rail and Air services, Road transport, Accommodation facilities for tourist of different income groups, modern telecommunication facilities, hygienic conditions and clean drinking water, these parameters are the crux on which tourism can flourish and improve in Uttarakhand.

Table 7: Descriptive Analysis of infrastructural problems

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
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Lack of tourism infrastructure during peak seasons	3.35	1.127
Big gap between the paperwork and practical work	3.35	1.149
Unavailability of land at high potential destinations	3.66	1.173
Shortage of accommodation, transport, water and power supply facilities	3.26	0.920

#### 4.3.4 Environment Problem

Uttarakhand is notorious for various natural calamities that have occurred time and again. This not only acts as a hindrance to many tourists but also puts financial burden over the stakeholders, especially for reconstruction after major calamities and very low tourist inflow immediately after such natural calamities. Though the government is trying to develop new tourist destinations not only to attract more tourists but also to lessen the burden on already existent and traditional tourist destinations yet the said development has negatively impacted the natural terrain, flora and fauna of these new locations due to non-ecological and proper plan towards development of these locations in such a way that development occurs without any determination and degradation of nature. Besides it, local residents of famous tourist locations of Uttarakhand also face the various issues created by uncivilized tourists during the peak seasons. These tourists create unhygienic and pathetic conditions after every visit to these locations, which burdens the state's stakeholders, locals and nature both financially and ecologically.

Table 8: Descriptive analysis of environmental problems

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
Natural calamities	3.27	1.030
Efforts for developing more new, unexplored and untapped tourist destinations in the state	3.27	0.904
Unhygienic and pathetic conditions of tourist spots during the peak seasons	3.40	0.962

#### 4.3.5 Social Problem

Tourist visits the location for leisure, adventure and recreation but the sense of belongingness and moral responsibility towards nature and country is lacking. Majority of the tourist lack civic sense towards the tourist destinations. This negatively impacts both financial and social domain of the state as maintaining of the locations becomes costlier, in many cases, even higher than the earnings. The by-product of this is corruption, focus on low-quality infrastructure rather than standard quality

infrastructure. This also results in a lack of dynamic and foster partnership creation across all sorts of barriers among district, state and national level entities.

Table 9: Descriptive analysis of social problems

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
More focus on mass tourism instead of quality tourism	4.00	1.080
Lacking dynamic and foster partnership creation across all sorts of barriers among the district, state and national level entities	3.00	1.027
High corruption level in the state	3.00	1.938

## 5 Test of difference: tourism destination competitiveness v/s different stakeholders

The attributes of tourism destination competitiveness have a significant role in the growth of tourism at the national and international level of tourism map. The various stakeholders work with these attributes, out of which some are readily available, and some are not sufficient and try to fulfil the needs of tourists to visit the places and provide various sources for the generation of revenue for the government. Uttarakhand is rich in the availability of various tourist destination attractions with the pleasant natural environment based unique tourist destinations, but there is lacking basic tourist facilities like tourism infrastructure, friendly and hospitable attitude of local people, personal safety and security, proper sources of information and communications channels, road connectivity, banking, financing and medical facilities as well as tourism promotion and marketing policies and strategies and standard quality of tourism products. That’s why the different attributes of tourism destination competitiveness are measured with the help of ten statements included in the questionnaire. The one-way ANOVA is applied to compare the perceptions of the different stakeholders selected in the study with respect to their perceptions regarding the tourism destination competitiveness. The different stakeholders are considered as a categorical variable with three different sub-categories, namely hotel owners, transporters and tour operators, tourism department employees and local residents.

Table 10: Comparison among the perceptions of stakeholders over the competitiveness of tourist destination in Uttarakhand

Variables	Stakeholders
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	Hotels' owners, Transporters and Tour operators Mean (Standard deviation)	Tourism department employees Mean (Standard deviation)	Local residents Mean (Standard deviation)	F statistics (p-value)
Competitiveness	3.234 (0.455)	3.770 (0.537)	3.485 (0.545)	11.408 (0.000)

The results indicate that the probability value of F-statistics in case of all the statements of tourism destination competitiveness is found to be less than 5% level of significance. Hence, with a 95% confidence level, the null hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in the perceptions of selected stakeholders with respect to different attributes of tourism destination competitiveness can be rejected. The results indicate that the perceptions of the stakeholders about the tourism destination competitiveness are significantly different. In the case of tourism destination competitiveness, the employees of the tourism department are found to have the highest mean as compared to other stakeholders and hotels, transporters and tour operators are found to have the lowest mean. But the perceptions of local residents about the tourism destination competitiveness are found neutral. The results indicate that the perception about the different attributes of tourism destination competitiveness is higher in case of the employees of the tourism departments working under the regional and state government of Uttarakhand. This is because of their high acceptance towards the availability of various tourist destination attractions along with natural environment based unique tourist destinations in Uttarakhand.

In their opinion, the basic requirements for developing tourism infrastructures like road connectivity, accommodation, communication, banking, financing and medical facilities are progressive and satisfactory towards the efforts of state government by promoting privatization and by adopting three PPP (Public-Private Plan) formulas to improve the pricing, quality and standard of tourist facilities. They agree that the law, rules and regulations, tourism promotion and marketing policies and strategies of the government are appropriate for increasing the destination competitiveness in Uttarakhand. On the other hand, the results indicate that the perception of hotels' owners, transporters and tour operators are significantly lower as compared to the employees of the tourism department. This is because of the difference in expectations and perception level. For example-Government of Uttarakhand is planning to build Glass Bridges near picturesque spots in order to enable the tourist to have a 360-degree view of natural beauty through a transparent glass while hotels' owners, transporters and tour operators are thinking that the amount spent on this plan can be shifted to construct roads and accommodation's facilities in the un-explored tourist destinations which have lots of potentials to attract domestic and foreign both type of tourists.

### 5.1 Test of difference: tourism facilities v/s different stakeholders

Government agencies play a very important role in developing tourism facilities in the state at different locations. The increase in the facilities attracts more tourists to visit the places and provides the generation of revenue for the government. Developing the tourist facilities not only develop the tourism business but also provides the multi-facilities benefits to the different other stakeholders namely owners of the hotels, restaurants, rest houses, guest houses, resorts, tour operators, travel agents' transporters and local residents. In the study, efforts are made to understand the perceptions of different stakeholders with respect to the development of tourism facilities by the state government at different locations of Uttarakhand. The tourism facilities developed by the state government are measured with the help of different statements included in the questionnaire. These statements were further divided into three categories on the basis of the EFA method applied in the previous section. These three factors of tourism facilities are named as Tourism promotional activities, Essential and supporting tourism facilities and Comprehensive planning and financing. The score of these factors is calculated and compared for the different stakeholders. The one-way ANOVA is applied in order to compare the perceptions of the different stakeholders selected in the study with respect to their perceptions from different dimensions of tourism facilities.

Table 11: Comparison between the perceptions of stakeholders over the role of government in the development of tourism facilities

Factors	Stakeholders			F statistics (p-value)
	Hotels' owners, Transporters and Tour operators Mean (Standard Deviation)	Tourism department employees Mean (Standard Deviation)	Local residents Mean (Standard Deviation)	
Tourism promotional activities	2.819 (.622)	3.737 (.713)	3.195 (.576)	21.494 (.000)
Essential and supporting tourism facilities	2.907 (.592)	3.600 (.676)	3.284 (.664)	12.048 (.000)
Comprehensive planning and financing	2.635 (.828)	3.591 (.881)	3.211 (.835)	13.404 (.000)

The results indicate that the probability value of F-statistics in case of all the factors of tourism facilities is found to be less than 5% level of significance. Hence, with 95% confidence level the null hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in the perceptions of selected stakeholders with respect to different dimensions of tourism facilities developed by the state government agencies can be rejected. The results indicate that the perceptions of the stakeholders about the development of tourism

facilities are significantly different. In the case of tourism promotional activities, the employees of the tourism department are found to have the highest mean as compared to other stakeholders because there are two extremities. These two extremities are because of the fact that they have come from two different sets of stakeholders. This counter observation is because of the fact that though the government has come up with various plans and policies regarding the promotion of tourism in Uttarakhand but the implementation of these has been very poor, and that is the reason why the government officials believe that the government is doing enough to promote tourism because they being insiders, are well aware of government plans and actions. Other stakeholders such as hotels' owners, transporters and tour operators are found to have lowest mean because of poor implementation of government plans and actions for tourism promotional activities which make them almost zero at ground level and hence the said, reflects differentiation between the perceptions of tourism department employees and Government Employees.

In the case of essential and supporting tourism facilities again the employees of tourism department are found to have the highest mean as compared to other stakeholders. This is primarily because of the fact that the respondent among government officials may have directly or indirectly been involved in planning and arrangement of essential and supporting tourist facilities and hence their response could be biased, but the owners of hotels, transporters and tour operators are found to have lowest mean because they are looking at the ground facts and are also facing problems and issues because of lacking standards for qualitative tourist facilities, arrangements for training facilities and well-designed planning for basic tourists facilities. The same results follow it in the case of comprehensive planning and financing.

The results indicate that the perception about the role of government in the development of comprehensive planning and financing is higher in case of the employees of the tourism department working under the state government of Uttarakhand. This is because of various running projects like Underwater tourism at Old Tehri town, development of ropeway and rail connectivity between Char-Dham, Promotion of Homestay concept, Yearlong tourism programmes and traditional food of Uttarakhand, development of Mahabharat tourism circuit etc. which indicate towards the planning and efforts of state government for the development of tourism facilities. But the results indicate that the perception of hotels' owners, transporters and tour operators are significantly lower as compared to the government sector employees because of difference in their expectations and perceptions level regarding the implementation of these planning at the practical ground. As per their saying, all the running projects are taking too much time and resources to complete and due to them, the basic requirements for tourism facilities are being ignored by the employees of the tourism department.

## **5.2 Test of difference: tourism problems v/s different stakeholders**

The government agencies play a very important role in resolving the tourism problems in the state of Uttarakhand at different locations of tourist spots. The



increasing tourism problems distract both the national and international tourists from visiting the places and affecting negatively over the generation of revenue for the government. By reducing the tourism problems not only develop the tourism business but also provides the multi-facilities benefits to the different other stakeholders namely owners of the hotels, restaurants, rest houses, guest houses, resorts, tour operators, travel agents' transporters and local residents. In the study, efforts are made to understand the perceptions of different stakeholders with respect to the different types of tourism problems faced by them at different locations of Uttarakhand. These five factors of tourism problems are named as economic problem, political problem, infrastructural problem, environmental problem and social problem. The score of these factors is calculated and compared for the different stakeholders. The one-way ANOVA is applied in order to compare the perceptions of the different stakeholders selected in the study with respect to their perceptions from different dimensions of tourism problems.

Table 12: Comparison between the perceptions of stakeholders over the tourism problems faced by them

Factors	Stakeholders			F statistics (p-value)
	Hotels' owners, Transporters and Tour operators Mean (Standard Deviation)	Tourism department employees Mean (Standard Deviation)	Local residents Mean (Standard Deviation)	
Economical problem	3.018 (.693)	3.460 (.793)	3.307 (.839)	3.479 (.034)
Political problem	2.907 (.592)	3.600 (.676)	3.284 (.664)	12.048 (.000)
Infrastructural problem	3.017 (.890)	3.625 (.802)	3.615 (.923)	6.675 (.002)
Environmental problem	3.124 (.762)	3.483 (.853)	3.357 (.761)	2.207 (.114)
Social problem	3.317 (.752)	3.600 (.906)	3.528 (.826)	1.312 (.273)

The results indicate that the probability value of F-statistics in case of the first four factors of tourism problems is found to be less than 5% level of significance. Hence, with a 95% confidence level, the null hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in the perceptions of selected stakeholders with respect to different dimensions of tourism problems faced by the stakeholders can be rejected. The results indicate that the perceptions of the stakeholders about tourism problems are significantly different. In case of the economic problem, political problem and infrastructural problem the employees of tourism department are found to have highest mean as compared to other stakeholders and hotels, transporters and tour operators are found to have the lowest mean. This is because of the current status of tourism in Uttarakhand, where

Government measures are quite insufficient for tourism infrastructure. During the peak seasons, tourists face the problems on account of less capacity of tourism infrastructure. Good quality intra and inter city all-weather roads, rail network, airports, good hotels and resorts, transport facilities, efficient telecommunication and other basic requirements need capital investment which depends on central funds. Hence, it takes time to take approval for the development of tourism as well as civic infrastructure.

In addition, due to uncertain weather conditions, the majority of stakeholders don't want to take the risk in investment in infrastructure. That's why; the negative investors' sentiment creates problems in the research and development of tourism infrastructure. Migration of population from hill districts to plain districts due to non-availability of economic opportunities also affects the growth and promotion of tourism in hill areas of Uttarakhand. After the division of the state from U.P., expecting immense opportunities in the tourism sector for livelihood and development in public and private sectors, but nothing is achieved due to political instability and lack of political will for the development of tourism, lack of co-operation between public and private sector partnership, lack of provisions for registration and licensing of business establishments related to tourism etc. Hence, the employees of the tourism department strongly agree that economic, political and infrastructural problems strongly affect Uttarakhand tourism. This can also be attributed by the fact that the employees of tourism department are majorly involved in administrative and planning work and they perceive issues and problems, basically, in these three angles, i.e. economic, political and infrastructural.

Any changes in these factors greatly impact the planning and administrative outlook and hence, their concern. On the other hand, a major part of stakeholders like hotels' owners, transporters, tour operators only focuses on mass tourism, not quality tourism. They believe that in this way they can be able to generate more revenue and employment from the tourism sector, but due to this privatization, the price, quality and standard of tourism facilities has become the main hurdle in the way of the growth of tourism. However, in the case of the environmental and social problem, the perceptions of all categories of stakeholders are the same. They agree that these two factors, i.e. environment and social play a major and key role in tourism of that area in attracting/repelling tourist to/from that area.

## **6 Conclusion**

The Uttarakhand state has various tourist destination attractions as well as natural environment based unique tourist destinations to compete with the other states yet there is need for paying attention towards the tourism promotional activities, essential and supporting tourist facilities and comprehensive planning and financing activities. As per the stakeholders' perceptions, Uttarakhand tourism is facing various sorts of problems, mainly economic, political, environmental, infrastructural and social problem. After testing the perceptions of various categories of stakeholders regarding the tourism destination competitiveness, it is found that there is significant difference exists in the

perceptions of employees of the tourism department and hoteliers, transporters and tour operators. In the concern of the role of Uttarakhand government in the development of tourism facilities, there can be seen a significant difference in the perceptions of various stakeholders. The employees of the tourism department are mostly in favour of government efforts, but hoteliers, transporters and tour operators are not agreed with it. On the issue of the economic, political and infrastructural problem, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of various stakeholders but in case of the environmental and social problem, the perceptions of all the stakeholders are same. It indicates that all the stakeholders accept that for the development of tourism facilities, the Uttarakhand government is making efforts, thus the satisfaction level of various stakeholders about the development of tourism facilities are significantly positive.

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