

A Study of Satisfaction Level of Tourists Visiting in Rudraprayag District, Uttarakhand

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Abstract: *The tourism potential in the western Indian Himalayas offers a favourable opportunity for long-term economic growth. Given the huge potential for tourism development in Uttarakhand, it has been a good travel destination for domestic and international travellers because of the stunning natural beauty of the landscape and pleasant climate. This study focuses on the satisfaction level of tourists and the inconveniences faced by tourists visiting the Rudraprayag district, Uttarakhand, during the summer season. Kedarnath is taken as the area of the study. This study was based on the primary data and a sample size of 300 respondents was selected with the help of the convenience sampling technique. The respondents were selected from different places, belonging to different climatic and altitudinal zones of the country. The study revealed that there are dissatisfaction and inconveniences among the tourists related to the basic services such as parking space, non-manageable traffic, non-availability of local transport, medical facilities, and high-priced hotels. In contrast, travellers are delighted with their trips because of pleasant climates and beautiful landscapes. This study will help in the development of tourist destinations, improve basic infrastructure facilities, mitigate the economy of the local people and migration issues, and improve tourism policies, which play a vital role in promoting tourism in the Rudraprayag district in Uttarakhand.*

Keywords: Indian Himalaya Region, Rudraprayag, Satisfaction Level, Tourism

INTRODUCTION

The 27th state of India, Uttarakhand, commonly referred to as “Dev Bhoomi,” lies nestled in the foothills of the beautiful Himalayas. The state has abundant natural resources, particularly rivers and deep forests. The state’s unique characteristics include its varied topography, geographical attractiveness, and religious monuments. Uttarakhand is a visually appealing destination because of its attractive tourist scenery, hill stations, pilgrimage sites, and trekking routes. Uttarakhand is well-known among travellers for its hill stations and pilgrimage sites. Both domestic and foreign travellers choose Uttarakhand as their destination. Tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing industries worldwide. Through the establishment of enterprises and employment, improvement of infrastructure, and export earnings, it is a crucial instrument in the socioeconomic development of the economy. Tourism generates 10.2 percent of jobs and 6.8 percent of the nation’s GDP, and is one of the main drivers of Uttarakhand’s economy. In 2017, 34.36 million domestic tourists and approximately 0.13 million overseas tourists visited the state. The State Tourism Board intends to establish Uttarakhand as the adventure capital of India. Uttarakhand has the capacity to greatly boost adventure sports and commercial tourism. Adventure sports such as skydiving, parasailing, kayaking, trekking, mountaineering, and skiing are available in the state, and Uttarakhand tourism could become well-known if the tourism sector had significant growth. Uttarakhand’s designation as a tourist destination is based on several key themes, including adventure and water sports, pilgrimage and festivals, nature and wildlife, sightseeing, health and rejuvenation, and rural tourism.

Study Area:

The Rudraprayag district is located in the northern part of Uttarakhand, India, within the Garhwal Himalayan region. It covers an area of approximately 1,984 square kilometres and is bounded by the Uttarkashi district to the north, the Chamoli district to the east, the Pauri Garhwal district to the south, and the Tehri Garhwal district to the west. Situated at an average elevation of 895 m (2,936 ft) above sea level, Rudraprayag encompasses diverse terrains ranging from river valleys to high mountain peaks. The district is characterized by its rugged mountainous landscape, which includes parts of the Lesser and Higher Himalayan ranges. Rudraprayag is one of the five holy confluences known as Panch Prayag in Hinduism, prominently situated

at the meeting point of the Alaknanda and Mandakini rivers. The district is traversed by the Alaknanda River, which rises from the Satopanth and Bhagirath Kharak Glaciers. It merges with the Mandakini River in Rudraprayag town and then travels downstream to eventually create the Ganga River at Devprayag. The district enjoys a temperate climate with pleasant summers and cold winters. The monsoon season, which runs from June to September, sees the most rainfall, which both adds to the area's abundant greenery and presents problems such as flooding and landslides. Rudraprayag is vulnerable to landslides and seismic activity because it is a part of the geologically active Himalayan zone. Owing to the district's diverse geography, which includes fault lines and various rock formations, careful planning and construction methods are required to reduce natural risks. The total population is 242,285 (M-114,589, F-127,696), and the population density is 122 persons per square kilometer. The total area of the district is 1,984 sq. km. According to the administrative division, there are three blocks in the district.

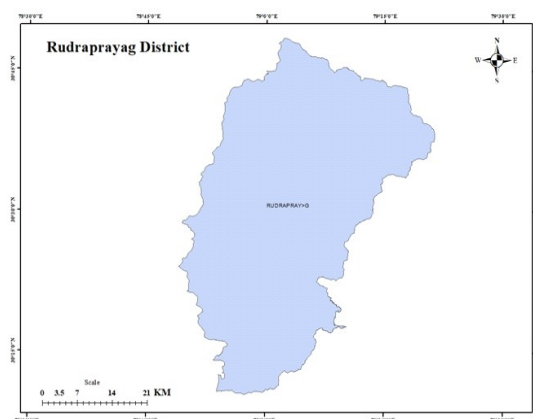
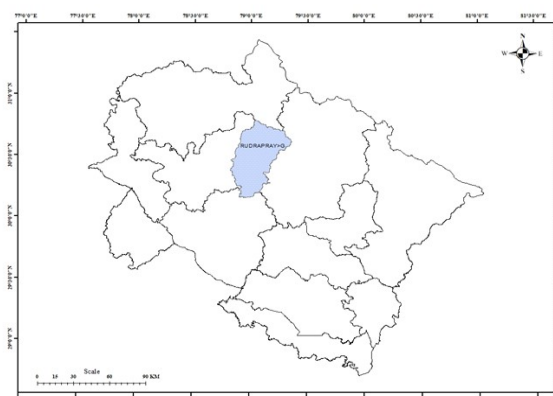


Figure – 01, LOCATION MAP

Objectives:

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) To analyze the satisfaction level of tourists visiting the Rudraprayag area.
- (ii) To assess the inconveniences faced by tourists visiting the study area.

DATA METHODOLOGY

The aforementioned study aimed to evaluate the degree of satisfaction among visitors to Rudraprayag district, which is the most well-known tourist site in Uttarakhand. To fulfil the objectives, the researcher used primary data collection methods, such as questionnaires, schedules, and interviews, and random sampling. The variables that were specific to the destination were taken, which were beneficial in measuring the satisfaction of the tourists visiting the destination and shall give a true picture of the ground-level reality. For the further analysis author used the MS word, MS Excel and Qgis software

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 01, Analysis of Visiting Tourist

Tourist From	Number of tourists	Percentage of Tourists
Foreign	30	8.58%
Within Country	195	55.71%
Within State	87	24.86%
Within District	38	10.85%
Total	350	100.00%

Source: compiled by author

The number of visitors from within the nation, each state, and outside the nation is displayed in Table 1. According to the statistics gathered, the greatest percentage of visitors came from other states in the nation (55.71%), followed by Uttarakhand (24.86%), and the smallest percentage came from foreign countries (8.58%). During data collection, it was discovered that the majority of domestic tourists came from southern India.

Table 02, Measuring the satisfaction level of tourists visiting in Rudraprayag District

S.No.	Statement	% of Respondent
Positive Attitude		
1.	Local Transport is easily available	67%
2.	Climate is pleasant	70%
3.	It is safe while travelling	67%
4.	Food available is hygienic	56%
5.	Hotel staff is friendly and courteous	67%
6.	There is availability of clean drinking water.	59%
7.	There are adequate safety and security facilities at the place	40%
8.	The roads are in good condition.	38%
9.	The hotels are in good condition.	56%
10.	The localities are friendly and helpful.	68%
11.	There is scenic beauty.	73%
12.	The place has relaxed atmosphere.	84%
13.	There is availability of tourist guide.	40%
14.	There are well developed markets.	25%
15.	There are cultural activities and events.	57%
16.	There is availability of sign boards to reach the places.	70%

S.No.	Statement	% of Respondent
Negative Attitude		
17.	The place is crowded.	64%
18	There is litter around the place.	40%
19	The hotels are costly.	69%
20	The food available is costly.	57%
21	There are no proper medical facilities.	72%
22..	The ATMs are not able to dispense cash.	68%
23	The number of hotels is less in comparison to the number of tourists.	49%
24	There is lack of availability of mobile network.	74%
25	There is no proper parking facility.	60%
26	There are traffic jams on the way.	56%
27	The behaviour of the police is rude.	39%

Source: compiled by author

The experience of every variable in the study is displayed in Table 02. The primary goal of this study was to gauge tourists' satisfaction with their visit to Uttarakhand's Rudraprayag area. Percentage analysis was used for the investigation. The advantages and disadvantages of both destinations are displayed in the above table. The easy-going atmosphere, nice climate, and scenic beauty all have favorable percentages. The location's natural beauty satisfied tourists. Public amenities had a significant negative response in comparison to other positive phenomena, including a lack of parking spaces, constant traffic, expensive hotel rooms, littering, inadequate medical facilities, malfunctioning ATMs, and the unavailability of cell networks. The availability of local transportation and cultural events and activities were other criteria with positive responses. Policymakers were concerned about the negative statuses achieved under these variables. The aforementioned factors were primarily responsible for tourists' discontent. The variables that require the government's full attention in the formulation and execution of policies were identified by the analysis.

Finding

It was discovered that travellers had trouble getting to their destinations on time. Heavy and frequent traffic bottlenecks on the route to the destination were the cause. The tourists had to extend their trip by one day because they were stranded in traffic for hours, and when they arrived at their destination, their misery was exacerbated by the absence of adequate parking spaces for their cars. The government is not making the necessary arrangements to handle the rise in the number of automobiles during the busiest time of the year. Owing to a lack of available parking spaces, cars are parked on the side of the road, which impedes traffic flow. The absence of local transportation to move between locations at the destination was another issue that tourists had to deal with. Owing to the high season, local transportation was unable to meet the increased demand from tourists. The fare of the current transportation system has increased due to the lack of local transportation options, and tourists were also concerned about the lack of adequate medical services at the stations. Both residents and visitors found it challenging to access the necessary medical care because Dehradun and Rishikesh, which are 150-200 km from Rudraprayag, respectively, have adequate medical facilities. Another major concern of tourists was expensive

hotels. The hotels were too costly in comparison to the services rendered. The rates charged in the peak season were two or three times the normal rates. The reason for this was the fewer hotels at the destination. The number of hotels already present could not accommodate the increase in the number of tourists. Further the ban by the government on the new construction of hotels is the reason for the limited number of hotels.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, it can be concluded that inadequate public amenities are a major contributing factor to tourist discomfort. The absence of public facilities in well-known tourist locations such as Nainital and Mussoorie demonstrates a lack of political will to transform these areas into places that provide visitors with fulfilling experiences. There is still considerable room for growth in these two locations. In addition to these two, the development of additional Uttarakhand tourist attractions, such as Narender Nagar, Lansdown, Askot, Khati, Kanatal, Chaukori, Chakrata, and many more, should be given careful thought. These locations can be exploited to generate cash. The provision of adequate public facilities increases tourism and encourages return visits. Additionally, this will assist in addressing the issue of unemployment in the hills. Making the most of the natural

The growth of world-class tourism destinations and the visual attractiveness of the hills will increase income sources. This will improve the long-standing issue of migration that residents of the hills have been dealing with. The state will become more self-sufficient with the growth and development of adventure sports, tourist destinations, and preservation of its natural beauty. Due to the unstable situation in Kashmir, tourists have the option of vacationing in Uttarakhand or Himachal Pradesh. This gives the state government the ideal opportunity to take advantage of these locations and take the necessary steps to develop the infrastructure needed to handle the enormous number of visitors.

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