

IDENTIFICATION OF FACTORS AFFECTING TOURISM DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS: A STUDY IN UTTARAKHAND

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Abstract

In the recent year's tourism as an industry has grown many folds in terms of employment opportunities and revenue generation. Uttarakhand as a tourism destination has received its share of domestic and international visitors but still a long way to go before becoming a priority tourism destination. In this paper an effort has been made to identify the factors that affect tourism destination competitiveness for the state of Uttarakhand. A total of 100 factors were identified and then randomly divided into 10 tourism destinations of the state. At the end 54 factors that were important in determining the tourism destination competitiveness were identified with the help of Henry Garret factor ranking method. The details have been discussed and the reasons have been stated. These factors have been taken up for further studies by the researcher.

INTRODUCTION

In the year 2000 Uttarakhand received the position of a 'State' after being separated from the state of Uttar Pradesh. The new state of Uttarakhand was mainly made up of the hilly areas which are illustrious for its picturesque allure and religious places. The state has something or the other to offer to each and every individual. If the person has spiritual faith then they visit for its sanctity and if the person has a passion for the nature then they visit for its ceaseless unrefined allure. Uttarakhand is always been an impeccable destination for any individual across the globe having interest in the almighty god or in the powers of the mother earth.

The land has always had the ability to leave a person marooned for words when someone questions them to delineate the simple word 'charm'. Charm has forever been deep-rooted to approximately all the things present in this state whether be it the altruistic Himalayas, the sacred waterways, the otherworldly enigma, dazzling natural scenery, the endlessly glamorous act of mother earth, fascinating past chiselled in history, captivating decorative and profusion faunal and the uncomplicated individuals. Fables, reminiscence and description are component of all ocular that unravel itself to the eyes of the perceiver.

The travel and tourism industry has always been the backbone of the state's economy as it provides employment to millions in the state and had generated around 23,000 Crores during the financial year 2013-2014. One special ingredient of this industry is that the millions of rupees are not required to start any kind of business activity associated to this sector. This sector has been contributing

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enormously in fabricating and preserving the state's economy. This industry has been a dominant player in the economic advancement and livelihood support in maximum far-flung and secluded areas of the state. The revenue generated from the visitors by various means helps the locals to fulfil their numerous requirements.

Culture has also been a major driver of tourism in the state as a number of religious ceremonies are connected to various pilgrimages places in the state. Daily evening prayers takes place in the holy cities of Haridwar and Rishikesh on the edge of river Ganga and these prayers demonstrate impressive view under the light of the moon and the stars. The Kumbh Mela that takes place every twelve years sees some of the biggest assemblage of religious devotees across the globe. Amazing and astounding scenes escort the devotees who are a part of the yatras of Nanda Devi Raj Jaat and Kailash Mansarovar. While the Sikh devotees across the globe visit famous Sikh shrines of Hemkund Sahib, Nanak Matta Sahib and Reetha Sahib. For Muslims the Dargaah of Piran Kaliyar Sharif hold great religious significant and they visit this shrine throughout the year.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nishaal Gooroochurn and Guntur Sugiyarto in their research paper titled "Competitiveness Indicators in the Travel and Tourism Industry" state that the competitiveness of tourist destinations is important, especially as countries strive for a bigger market share. However, competitiveness is a complex concept, encompassing various aspects that are difficult to measure. They discuss an innovative approach for measuring tourism competitiveness using eight main indicators – price, openness, technology, infrastructure, human tourism, social development, environment and human resources for over 200 countries. The USA, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Australia are found to be the most competitive destinations, while Burkina Faso, Chad, Benin, Ethiopia and Cambodia are the least competitive.

Larry Dwyer and Chulwon Kim in their research endeavour "Destination Competitiveness: Determinants and Indicators" developed a model of destination competitiveness that enables comparisons between countries and between tourism sector industries. This model seeks to capture the main elements of competitiveness highlighted in the general literature, while appreciating the special issues involved in exploring the notion of destination competitiveness as emphasised by tourism researchers. Associated with the model is a set of indicators that can be used to measure the competitiveness of any given destination. These indicators, comprising both objective and subjective measures, were identified from the major elements comprising the generic destination competitiveness model and also from discussions at workshops held in Korea and Australia. The development of a model of destination competitiveness and an associated set of indicators allows identification of the relative strengths and weaknesses of different tourism destinations and can be used by industry and governments to increase tourism numbers and expenditure, and enhance socioeconomic prosperity.

Geoffrey Crouch in his research named "Destination Competitiveness: An Analysis of Determinant Attributes" developed an insight into the importance and impact of attributes which affect the competitiveness of tourism destinations. Using a general conceptual model of destination competitiveness, 36 competitiveness attributes were evaluated by "expert" judgment in the form of an online survey of destination managers and tourism researchers. These judgments were integrated and analyzed using the analytic hierarchy process (AHP). In addition to estimating the importance of the attributes of competitiveness, the results of the AHP were further analyzed to produce measures of attribute determinacy. These measures were then tested statistically to identify which attributes were judged to exert the greatest determinant impact on destination competitiveness. Ten of the 36 attributes were found to have determinacy measures statistically significantly greater than average.

Metin Kozak and Mike Rimmington in their research "Measuring Tourist Destination Competitiveness: Conceptual Considerations and Empirical Findings" presents a method of establishing competitiveness sets for international tourist destinations by using both quantitative (hard data) and qualitative (soft data) data collection. Discussion of findings is based on the analysis of survey data collected from British tourists visiting Turkey in the summer of 1998. Findings revealed that Mediterranean destinations were direct competitors of Turkey in summer tourism. Destination attributes which the sample population liked and complained about across the competitive set are presented and used to assess comparative competitive positions. Methodological issues and limitations are also discussed.

Manjula Chaudhary in her research titled "India's Image as a Tourist Destination: A Perspective of Foreign Tourists" was conducted with the purpose of determining pre- and post-trip perceptions of foreign tourists about India as a tourist destination. The sample consisted of 152 respondents. A gap analysis between expectations and satisfaction levels was used to identify strengths and weaknesses of India's tourism-related image dimensions so that necessary efforts can be made to ensure that tourists' expectations are met. It was observed that India is rated highly for its rich art forms and cultural heritage. However, irritants like cheating, begging,

unhygienic conditions, lack of safety dampen the spirits of tourists. India can be positioned on the world map only after these hygiene factors are improved along with other motivators.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the factors existing in Uttarakhand affecting tourism.
- To analyze the capabilities and capacities of these factors.
- To develop certain strategies for better implementation of these factors.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study will help the government and its various agencies as well as private tour operators to provide better amenities to the tourists visiting the state. The factors that will emerge will assist the operators to identify the areas which needs a face lift to draw more tourists to Uttarakhand. As the number of tourists increase the revenue will escalate to a great extent. This in turn will boost the employment opportunities for the local people and will curtail migration of the local mass which has become a serious issue for the government of the state.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Area of study: The Kumaun and Garhwal divisions of the state of Uttarakhand were taken for the study.

Sample size: 100 factors were considered after thorough studies which were directly related to tourism destination competitiveness. Ten destinations from ten different districts were selected and these 100 factors were allocated randomly to these tourist destinations. These destinations were Almora {District Almora}, Auli {District Chamoli}, Berinag {District Pithoragarh}, Dhanolti {District Teri Garhwal}, Haridwar {District Haridwar}, Kausani {District Bageshwar}, Khirsu {District Pauri Garhwal}, Mussoorie {District Dehradun}, Nainital {District Nainital} and Nanak Matta {District Udham Singh Nagar}.

Duration: The study was conducted from August 2014 to June 2015.

Sample type: An interview schedule was constructed of 100 factors and the responses of the same were recorded.

Population: 10 experts related to the travel and tourism industry in each of the ten destinations of the Kumaun and Garhwal divisions of the state were involved in the study.

Data collection: Primary method of data collection was used.

Data analysis: The responses were analyzed on the basis of Henry Garret Ranking Method. Each destination with 10 factors was analyzed and ranked with the view point of the expert and then each destination with 10 factors was assigned a ranking from 1 to 10.

FINDINGS

The following is the detail of each destination.

DESTINATION ALMORA

TABLE 5.1 HENRY GARRET FACTOR RANKING FOR ALMORA

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Behaviour of Local Society	8200	82.00%	I
F 2	Local Communication	7000	70.00%	II
F 3	Cultural Resources	3465	34.65%	IX
F 4	Discipline	3944	39.44%	VII
F 5	Food Facilities	5200	52.00%	IV

F 6	Geographical Proximity	3840	38.40%	VIII
F 7	Mobile Phone Network	5460	54.60%	III
F 8	Online Travel Information	4140	41.40%	VI
F 9	Road Transport	4321	43.21%	V
F 10	Safety & Security	1800	18.00%	X

Source: Field Survey

The factor that got highest rank was behavior of local society with a score of 8200. Local communication got the second highest rank with a score of 7000. Mobile phone network with a score of 5460 was third. In fourth position were food facilities with a score of 5200. Road transport was fifth with a score of 4321. Online travel information with a score of 4140 was sixth. Discipline with total score of 3944 was seventh. In eighth number was geographical proximity with a score of 3840. The penultimate position was occupied by cultural resources with a score of 3465. The last position was occupied by safety and security with a total score of 1800.

DESTINATION AULI

TABLE 5.2 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR AULI

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Adventures	6478	64.78%	II
F 2	Behaviour of Taxi Operators	7420	74.20%	I
F 3	Diseases Impact	1197	11.97%	VIII
F 4	Fairs & Exhibitions	1450	14.50%	VI
F 5	Games & Activities	1092	10.92%	X
F 6	Government Prioritization of Tourist Industry	1200	12.00%	VII
F 7	Local transport Prices	3780	37.80%	III
F 8	Public Amusement Infrastructure	2916	29.16%	IV
F 9	Safety of Female Members	2900	29.00%	V
F 10	Tourism Policies of Government	1134	11.34%	IX

Source: Field Survey

The factor that got the highest rank for Auli was behavior of taxi operators with a score of 7420. Adventures were second with a score of 6478. Third factor was local transport prices with a score of 3780. Public amusement infrastructure with a score of 2916 was fourth. The fifth factor was safety of female members with a score of 2900. Fairs and exhibitions with score of 1450 was sixth. Seventh in tabulation with a score of 1200 was government prioritization of tourist industry. Eighth position was taken by diseases impact with a score of 1197. Penultimate position was occupied by tourism policies of government with a score of 1134. Games and activities were last in tabulation with a total score of 1092.

DESTINATION BERINAG

TABLE 5.3 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR BERINAG

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Attractions	1230	12.30%	X
F 2	Awareness of Destination	3150	31.50%	VI

F 3	Behaviour of Hoteliers	5040	50.40%	IV
F 4	Effectiveness of Marketing to Attract Tourists	2668	26.68%	IX
F 5	Infrastructure at Tourist Spots	6240	62.40%	II
F 6	Natural Resources	2928	29.28%	VII
F 7	Road Accidents	2730	27.30%	VIII
F 8	Sanitation Facilities	6300	63.00%	I
F 9	Transport Facilities	5394	53.94%	III
F 10	Travelling Safety	3438	34.38%	V

Source: Field Survey

The first factor for Berinag destination is sanitation facilities with a score of 6300. Infrastructure at tourist spots was second rank with a score of 6240. The third position was occupied by transport facilities with a score of 5394. At fourth position was behavior of hoteliers with a score of 5040. Travelling safety with a score of 3438 was fifth position. The factor which was sixth position was awareness of destination with a score of 3150. In seventh position were natural resources with a score of 2928. Road accidents were eighth with a score of 2730. In the penultimate position was effectiveness of marketing to attract tourists with a score of 2668. Attractions were last with a score of 1230.

DESTINATION DHANOLTI

TABLE 5.4 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR DHANOLTI

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Attitude of Population towards Visitors	574	5.74%	IX
F 2	Behaviour of Resturants Owners	5460	54.60%	I
F 3	City Tour Packages	378	3.78%	X
F 4	Commutation	4814	48.14%	III
F 5	Fee for Tourist Spots	4212	42.12%	V
F 6	Internet Connections	5232	52.32%	II
F 7	Protected Areas	3360	33.60%	VI
F 8	Number of ATMs	3600	36.00%	VII
F 9	Safety of Family Members	4524	45.24%	IV
F 10	Touri sm Infrastructure	1800	18.00%	VIII

Source: Field Survey

Behavior of restaurants owners was first position with a score of 5460. The factor that was second was internet connections with a score of 5232. At the third position was commutation with a score of 4814. Fourth position was occupied by safety of family members with a total score of 4524. Fee for tourist spots was fifth with a score of 4212. At the sixth position were protected areas with a score of 3360. At the seventh position was number of ATMs with a score of 3600. Tourism infrastructure was eighth position with a score of 1800. Attitude of population towards visitors was penultimate with a score of 574. In the last position were city tour packages with a score of 378.

DESTINATION HARIDWAR

TABLE E 5.5 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR HARIDWAR

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Air Transport	1394	13.94%	X
F 2	Airport Facilities	2450	24.50%	VIII

F 3	Begging	6300	63.00%	I
F 4	Cheating	5800	58.00%	II
F 5	Corruption	5200	52.00%	III
F 6	Image of Destination	2784	27.84%	VII
F 7	Law & Order	5166	51.66%	IV
F 8	Number of Hospitals	2376	23.76%	IX
F 9	Peace & Sprituality Centres	4785	47.85%	V
F 10	Tourist Help Centres	4248	42.48%	VI

Source: Field Survey

For this destination begging was first with a score of 6300. This was followed by cheating with a score of 5800. At the third position was corruption with a score of 5200. The fourth position was occupied by law and order condition with a score of 5166. At the fifth position were peace and spirituality centres with a score of 4785. Way side amenities with a score of 4248 were sixth. Image of destination with a score of 2784 was seventh. At the eight position was airport facilities with a score of 2450. At the penultimate position was number of hospitals with a score of 2376. At the last position was air transport infrastructure with a score of 1394.

DESTINATION KAUSANI

TABLE 5.6 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR KAUSANI

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Air and Noise Pollution	8200	82.00%	I
F 2	Behaviour of Tour Operators	7000	70.00%	II
F 3	Emergency Facilities	3843	38.43%	VII
F 4	Food Prices	6786	67.86%	III
F 5	Healthy & Hygienic Food	5200	52.00%	V
F 6	Natural Beauty	5846	58.46%	IV
F 7	Natural Environment	4200	42.00%	VI
F 8	Population Density	3600	36.00%	VIII
F 9	Uniqueness of Tourist Places	2900	29.00%	IX
F 10	Well Known Landmarks	1800	18.00%	X

Source: Field Survey

According to the ranking method air and noise pollution with a score of 8200 was first. Behavior of tour operators with a score of 7000 was second. At the third place were food prices with a score of 6786. The fourth position was taken by natural beauty with a score of 5846. Healthy and hygienic food with a score of 5200 was fifth. At the sixth spot was natural environment with a score of 4200. Emergency facilities with a score of 3843 were seventh. At the eighth spot was population density with a score of 3600. At the penultimate position was uniqueness of tourist places with a score of 2376. The tenth spot was taken by well known landmarks with a score of 1800.

DESTINATION KHIRSUI

TABLE 5.7 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR KHIRSU

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Accommodation Prices	8364	83.64%	I
F 2	Clean Drinking Water	7000	70.00%	II
F 3	Crime & Violence	2520	25.20%	IX
F 4	General Health & Hygiene	6960	69.60%	III

F 5	Long Lasting Holi day Experience	3848	38.48%	VI
F 6	Number of Hotels	3840	38.40%	VII
F 7	Theft	5754	57.54%	V
F 8	Tour Packages Prices	6156	61.56%	IV
F 9	Tourism Expenditure by Tourist	2900	29.00%	VIII
F 10	Willingness For Re -Visit	1800	18.00%	X

Source: Field Survey

At the first position were accommodation prices with a score of 8364. The second spot was taken by clean drinking water with a score of 7000. General health and hygiene with a score of 6960 was third. The fourth position was occupied by tour packages prices with a score of 6156. At the fifth position was theft with a score of 5754. This was followed by long lasting holiday experience with a score of 3848. Number of hotels with a score of 3840 was next. At the eight position was tourism expenditure with a score of 2900. At the penultimate position was crime and violence with a score of 2520. The last position in the survey was taken by willingness for revisit with a score of 1800.

DESTINATION MUSSOORIE

TABLE 5.8 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR MUSSOORIE

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Accommodation Infrastructure	8118	81.18%	I
F 2	Climate & Weather	6020	60.20%	IV
F 3	Created Resources	6300	63.00%	III
F 4	Expenditure of Government on Tourism Sector	2320	23.20%	IX
F 5	Grievance Redressal	7280	72.80%	II
F 6	Historical Monuments	1824	18.24%	X
F 7	Medical Facilities	5712	57.12%	V
F 8	Museums & Gallery	2556	25.56%	VII
F 9	Night Life	2349	23.49%	VIII
F 10	Online Information about Tourist Spots	3762	37.62%	VI

Source: Field Survey

Accommodation infrastructure occupied the top position with a score of 8118. This was followed by grievance redressal with a score of 7280. At the third position was created resources with a score of 6300. Next was climate and weather with a score of 6020. At the fifth rank were medical facilities with a score of 5712. Online information about tourist spots with a score of 3762 was sixth position. This was followed by museums and gallery with a score of 2556. At the eighth position was night life with a score of 2379. At the penultimate position was expenditure of government on tourism sector with a score of 2320. At the last position were historical monuments with a score of 1824.

DESTINATION NAINITAL:

TABLE 5.9 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR NAINITAL

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Banking Facilities	7872	78.72%	I

F 2	Behaviour of Government Officials	7280	72.80%	II
F 3	Connectivity to Tourist Spots	5292	52.92%	III
F 4	Educational System	4060	40.60%	VII
F 5	Enforcement of Environmental Regulations	3224	32.24%	IX
F 6	General Commodities Price Level	4800	48.00%	VI
F 7	Online Information about Tour Packages	4872	48.72%	IV
F 8	Openness in Society	3600	36.00%	VIII
F 9	Parking Facilities	4872	48.72%	V
F 10	Rural Tourist Spots	1800	18.00%	X

Source:Field Survey

The top spot was taken by banking facilities with a score of 7872. At the second rank was behavior of government officials with a score of 7280. Next in the list was connectivity to tourist spots with a score of 5292. Online information about tour packages with a score of 4872 was fourth. In the fifth spot was parking facilities with a score of 4872. At the sixth place was general commodities price level with a score of 4800. Seventh was educational system with a score of 4060. At the eighth rank was openness in society with a score of 3600. Penultimate position was taken up by enforcement of environmental regulations with a score of 3224. At the last position were rural tourist spots with a score of 1800.

DESTINATION NANAK MATTA:

TABLE 5.10 HENRY GARRETT FACTOR RANKING FOR NANAK MATTA

SL. NO.	FACTOR DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE {Total Score/100}	RANKING
F 1	Architecture	2870	28.70%	VII
F 2	Local Communication	7910	79.10%	I
F 3	Complaint Redressal	3906	39.06%	V
F 4	Crime Rate	2668	26.68%	VIII
F 5	Local Festivals	5200	52.00%	IV
F 6	Healthy Ambience	5856	58.56%	II
F 7	Local Life Style	2436	24.36%	X
F 8	Prices Of Local Items	2592	25.92%	IX
F 9	Rail Transport	5510	55.10%	III
F 10	Safety of Luggage	3600	36.00%	VI

Source: Field Survey

In the first position was communication of local people with a score of 7910. This was followed by healthy ambience with a score of 5856. Third was rail transport with a score of 5510. The fourth position was taken up by local festivals with a score of 5200. In the fifth spot was safety of luggage with a total score of 3906. Sixth position was taken up by complaint redressal with a score of 3600. Next was architecture with a score of 2870. In the eighth spot was crime rate with a score of 2668. The penultimate position was taken up by prices of local items with a total score of 2592. At the tenth spot was local life style with a score of 2436.

CONCLUSION

The present study aim was to find out the factors that were important in determining the tourism destination competitiveness for the state of Uttarakhand. Firstly four main destinations i.e. Almora, Nainital, Mussoorie and Haridwar were selected for the final study on the basis of the tourist inflow and first six factors in these destinations were taken up for further study. From the rest six tourism destinations i.e. Auli, Berinag, Dhanolti, Kausani, Khirsu, and Nanak Matta first five factors were selected for further analysis and

study. These factors with their capabilities and capacities were analyzed using the Henry Garret factors ranking method and accordingly each was assigned a rank from one to ten. For certain factors, such as 'price' strategy should be made by the state government to curtail prices of important goods and services as the tourists feel that they are being charged extra for availing certain tourism products and services. One more factor that strategy should be made was 'rail transport' as additional trains should be put into service especially for the tourist season. One more factors that needs urgent attention was 'parking' as the concept of base camp parking was needed to be implemented as soon as possible. If the state government along with various stakeholders put more efforts than the state has the potential to be the number one domestic tourism destination in the times to come.

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