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DOI: <http://ijmer.in.doi./2022/11.03.82>

ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT:

In the present study an attempt has been made to study the impact of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Being economically important, tourism has occupied a place on priority list of Government of Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (HPTDC) is trying to promote infrastructure for various tourism activities in Himachal Pradesh. The state has a vast scope of tourism development as almost every place in the state has some ancient, historical, legends attached to it. The number of domestic and foreign tourists visited the state is increasing every year except pandemic (Covid19) era. Tourism is providing direct and indirect employment opportunities as well as generating income to the state. However, it also has some disadvantages as tourism is responsible for various types of socio-cultural problems. But a time bound efforts can be made to meet out the challenges, so that more and more tourists could visit the state. There is need to carry out an expensive survey of the available tourist resources of the state. Therefore, this study explores the status of economic analysis of tourism development in a North Indian province Himachal Pradesh located in the western Himalaya.

Keywords: HPTDC, Covid19, Tourism, Development, Tourist.

Introduction

Since 1950, the number of international tourists arriving in India has increased significantly, with a strong rebound in the second half of the century. Pandemics, on the other hand, are posing a serious threat to this vulnerable industry. India is the uncrowned queen of world tourism resources, with its unique tourism resources that make it a tourist paradise. The country's size, diversity of people, wealth of cultural traditions spanning thousands of years, natural surroundings, architectural masterpieces, customs and dialects, historical landmarks, and artistic tradition all make it a tourist destination of potential.

Tourism growth may necessitate a more comprehensive use of infrastructure and services, as well as increased investment productivity. Despite resource constraints and a low emphasis assigned to this economic activity, India's tourism industry has grown. The India Tourism Development Corporation has grown into a massive and active public sector institution that carries out the government's programmes and strategies. The tourism industry in India has become one of the most efficient and dependable earners of precious foreign exchange revenue of the country. Indian Tourism has been developing in spite of constraint on resources and relatively low priority given to this economic activity.

India Tourism Development Corporation has shaped into a gigantic and dynamic public sector organization implementing programmes and policies laid down by the Government. India's share in the tourism industry has been given below in the chart 1. The figure given in the chart displays the data of tourist's arrival from 2010 to 2020. Initial years from 2010 to 2019 saw drastic growth in tourist arrival whereas the year 2020 saw a sudden fall due to Covid19.

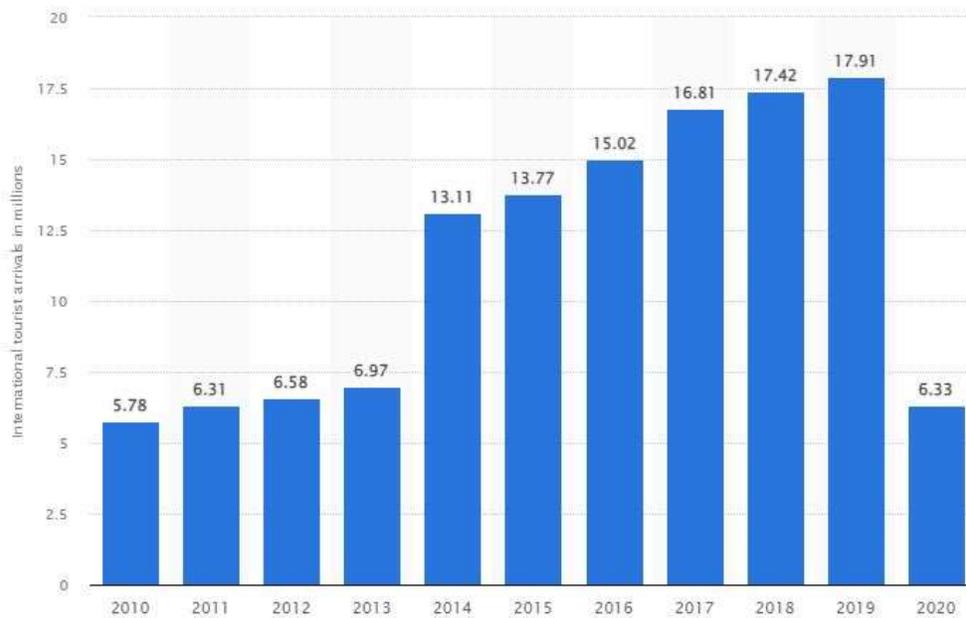


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Chart: 1 Tourist Arrival in India (in millions)



Source: <https://www.statista.com/>

Development of Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh is situated between 30⁰ 22' to 33⁰ 12' North Latitude and 75⁰ 47' to 79⁰ 04' East longitude. Himachal Pradesh which emerged as the 18th state of Indian Union on 25th January, 1971, now has 12 districts over a geographical expanse of 55,673 sq. km. and inhabited by 68,64,602 persons according to the Census (Government of Himachal Pradesh, 2011). Himachal Pradesh is situated in the lap of Himalayas. In the north, it has Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh in the south east. In the south it is bounded by Haryana and in the west, it has Punjab. Himachal Pradesh has a lot of tourist potential. Himachal Pradesh is a one-of-a-kind treasure trove of clean, calm, and attractive environment, scenic and appealing forests, lakes, mountains, rivers and streams, spiritual shrines, and ancient monuments, among other things. Not only does Himachal Pradesh cater to nature lovers, but it also caters to pilgrims, with millions of pilgrims visiting numerous shrines and temples each year. Golf, ice skating, paragliding, swimming, mountaineering, tracking, and rock climbing, among other sports and adventure activities, have a huge geographical reach. Pashmina and woollen shawls, native tweeds (Pattu), hats, and socks are some of the most well-known handcraft productions from Himachal Pradesh. Chamba Rumal and Chamba Chappal are famous for its craftsmanship. Walking sticks, bowls, lamp shades, furniture grass mats, and bamboos, among other things, are examples of beautiful handicrafts. Kangra, Guler, Kullu, Nurpur, Chamba, Mandi, Bilaspur, Sujampur, and Shimla hills have beautiful artwork. The state's Kangra paintings are well-known across the world. The following chart shows the tourist map of Himachal Pradesh.



Practically every location in the state has some ancient historical or religious legend associated to it, tourism development in the state has a lot of potential. Himachal Pradesh is a state rich in natural beauty. The principal natural resources include river minerals, forests, and mines. Himachal Pradesh is blessed with cold and clear lakes, peaks, rivers, mountains, springs, and temples, making it a popular pilgrimage destination. The lovely valley is characterised by a white snow-covered peak, a green forest of a large towering mountain, and a never-ending show. The Dhauladhar range provides scenic grandeur to this valley. The state's five rivers, the Satluj, Beas, Ravi, Chenab, and Yamuna, offer a lot of potential for generating electricity. The history of tourism began in 1966, when the Punjab state was established and portions of its territory were ceded to Himachal Pradesh. The India Tourism Development Corporation was founded in October 1966 with the goal of promoting the tourism business in India. The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation was created in 1972 as one of the primary movers in the progressive construction of India's tourist infrastructure to cope with the increased work load and rise of development in the state. Himachal Pradesh's tourism industry plays a vital role in the state's economy. The tourism business is quickly becoming one of the state's most profitable industries. The tourist industry is a top priority for the Himachal Pradesh government. It has built the necessary infrastructure for Himachal Pradesh's tourism development. It entails the construction of different public utility services such as roads, transportation, airports, communication networks, and civil amenities, among others. In Himachal Pradesh, the tourism department is attempting to promote a variety of tourism activities. According to an IFEB report, Himachal Pradesh's tourism sector contributes 7% to the state's GDP. In 2019, the state's domestic tourist intake totaled 16.83 million, while foreign tourist arrivals totaled 383,000. There were 3,679 hotels registered in the state as of December 2019.

Tourist Arrival in Himachal Pradesh:

Himachal Pradesh has all of the essential resources required for a strong tourism industry, including regional and cultural diversity, a clean, tranquil, and beautiful environment, natural beauty, religious shrines, historic sites, and, most importantly, nice and welcoming people. With the growing popularity of Himachal as a tourist destination, there has been a substantial increase in the number of tourists in the previous few years. Table 1 shows the number of tourists who visited Himachal Pradesh from 2009 to 2020.



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TABLE 1 Tourist Arrival in Himachal Pradesh

Year	Foreign Tourist	Domestic Tourist	Total Inflow
2009	400583	11036572	11437155
2010	453616	12811986	13265602
2011	484518	14604883	15089401
2012	500284	15646048	16146332
2013	414249	14715586	15129835
2014	389699	15924701	16314400
2015	406108	17125045	17531153
2016	452770	17997750	18450520
2017	470992	19130541	19601533
2018	356568	16093935	16450503
2019	382876	16446355	16829231
2020	42665	3170714	3213379

Source: Government of Himachal Pradesh, Tourism Department of Himachal Pradesh various issue from 2009-2020, Shimla.

Table 1 clearly showed that during the period of 2009 to 2020 the numbers of Domestic and Foreign tourist visited the different places of Himachal Pradesh has increased in manifold. In 2009 there were total 11437155 tourist visited the state. Which has increased to 19601533 in 2017. The number of Domestic and Foreign tourist visited the state showed an increase from 2009 to 2017. It happened mainly because of the better infrastructural facilities. With a dangerous hit by the Covid pandemic and lockdowns, the tourism sector in Himachal witnessed an unprecedented fall of 81.4 per cent in tourist arrivals during 2020 as compared to the preceding year (2019). The state received 31,70,714 domestic and 42,665 foreign tourists in 2020 compared to 1,68,29,231 domestic and 3,82,876 foreign tourists in 2019, a drop of 81.6 per cent and 88.86 per cent respectively. The number of domestic and international tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh's various destinations has surged dramatically during the previous decade. It happened mainly because of the better infrastructural facilities. Tourism associations blame decisions like night curfew and closing markets on Sundays for poor inflow of tourists due to Covid19 restrictions. However, the inauguration of Atal Tunnel emerged as a hotspot and 3,58,249 and 10,460 tourists visited Kullu and Lahaul-Spiti from Oct to Dec 2020. According to Manali hotelier association tourism and allied industry had suffered a loss of Rs 2,500 cr in 2020. As per the data with the Tourism Department, the state breached the one crore mark in 2009 with 1,14,37,155 tourists visiting the state while the highest number of 1,96,01,533 tourists visited the state in 2017. There was a gradual increase in tourist inflow from 2009 barring 2013 and 2018 when a negative trend was witnessed, but 2020 was the worst.

Objective & Methodology

The specific objective of the present study is to highlight the economic impacts of tourism; to assess the growth of tourism sector; and to suggest suitable measures to develop sustainable tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Present research is descriptive in nature based on the secondary data collected from different journals, magazines, newspapers and online resources. The data from year 2010 to 2020 was analyzed for further results. Secondary data has been analyzed by simple percentage for key indicators viz. employment and income generated by tourism, tourism contribution to state domestic product. The data collected in tabular form from different sources has been analyzed with mathematical and statistical tools.

Impact of Tourism

The economic impact of tourism on regional, national and international economy is of far-reaching significance both in terms of magnitude and direction due to the expansion of the market (Stynes, 1997). In the developing economies through the transfer of resources has a powerful potential to influence the peace and direction of development and expand employment opportunities besides correcting imbalances in balance of payment and rising revenue (Archer & Fletcher, 1990). The economic value of tourism is often measured by way of estimating its contribution to national income, employment and tax revenue accruing to the economy. According to the economic survey of Himachal Pradesh 2019-2020, tourism sector did well in 2019 and witnessed a 4.63 per cent growth in both foreign and domestic tourist arrivals. One of the hardest hit sectors by the Covid-19 pandemic was tourism; it saw a contraction of 81.33 per cent in foreign and domestic tourist arrivals in 2020. Trade, Hotel and Restaurant sector showed a contraction of 9.2 per cent during 2020-21 as against a growth of 4.6 per cent in 2019-20. Transport by other means, namely, road transport, water transport, air transport and services incidental to transport, too showed a negative growth of 28 per cent during 2020-21 as against 5.6 per cent growth during 2018-19.

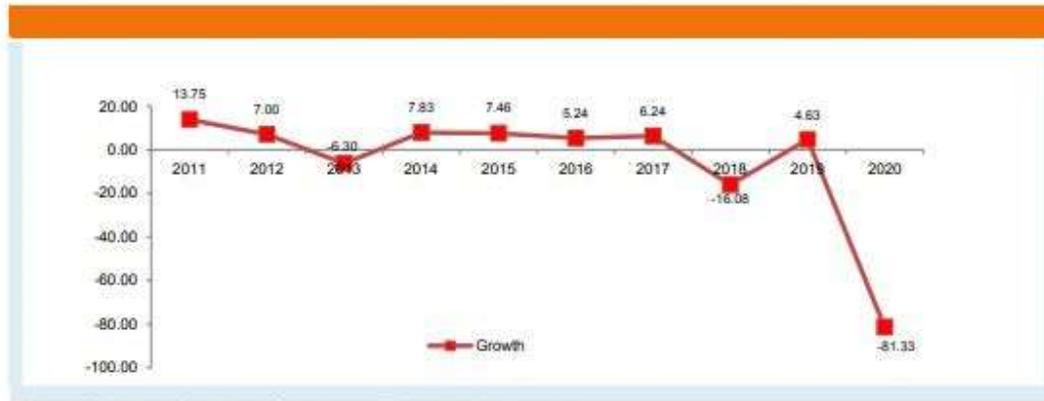


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YoY Growth Rate of Tourist Inflow



Note: The data for these figures pertains to calendar year
Source: Tourism Department, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh

State Government has released an additional sum of 40.49 crore to the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (HPTDC) during the current financial year, keeping in view the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Tourism industry is labour intensive service industry. It has become a valuable source of employment. The promotion of tourism can prove to be an encouragement to economic development and employment. For the tourism sector as a whole, the number of jobs directly or indirectly concerned represents nearly 5 per cent to 8 per cent of the total number of jobs available in the country. In many tourists' areas employment is of seasonal nature only. Thus, tourism activity can be treated as an essential feature of regional economic development at least in respect of creating work opportunities. Tourism has provided a number of employment opportunities for local people in Himachal Pradesh. It is noticed that in tourism sector the number of direct and indirect employment opportunities increased year by year. Tourism activity is used by certain economies as an important resource for generating government revenue. Tourism generates tax revenue. The income generated from the tourism sector is increasing year by year. Almost every country/ destination looks at tourism not just as attracting tourists but as a platform which supports economic growth and complete development (Amanovich, 2022). Very recently Tokhirovich, (2021) highlighted the role and importance of pilgrimage tourism in the economy of small areas, the influence of pilgrimage and tourism in small areas. Incera & Fernández (2015) explored the ways in which tourism consumption affects income distribution involves three channels: changes in prices, earnings of households and government revenues. Results show that the positive effects on all income groups are significant. However, high-income households benefit more than low-income ones, contributing to a slight increase in income inequality within the region. Gupta & Dutta (2018) analysed comparative steady-state effects and show that tourism development raises the level of capital stock as well as national income but lowers the quality of environment in the new steady-state equilibrium leading to a relative expansion (contraction) of the capital (labour) intensive non-tourism (tourism) sector. Liu & Wu (2018) examined the transmission mechanism between tourism productivity and economic growth. Results further disclose that when the productivity of overall economy improves, inbound tourism demand expands more than domestic tourism demand, whereas when the productivity of tourism sector improves, domestic tourism consumption increases more than inbound tourism consumption. Khakhobaia (2019) examined how tourism industry can promote balanced growth of local economic activities through the prism of small and medium size enterprises. For the same establishment of the relevant policy on the national and also on the regional level was recommended. In broader sense the economic effects of tourism include improved tax revenue and personal income, increased standards of living, and more employment opportunities. However, the economic potential of the tourism industry is indisputable. In fact, it is because of the positive economic impacts that most destinations embark on their tourism journey. Tourism is a significant economic driver the world over. However, not all economic impacts of tourism are positive. In order to ensure that the economic impacts of tourism are maximized, careful management of the tourism industry is required.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The state is endowed with all the basic resources necessary for thriving tourism activity like geographical and cultural diversity, clean and peaceful environment and beautiful streams, sacred shrines, historic monuments and the friendly and hospitable people. The domestic tourist inflow in the district of Kullu in the state of Himachal Pradesh is the highest and the lowest amount of tourist inflows are in the district of Kinnaur. This is also because Kinnaur is marginally less approachable as compared to the other tourist places in the state in terms of infrastructure, which shows that there is a need to improve the infrastructure so that it provides tourism friendly services to people.



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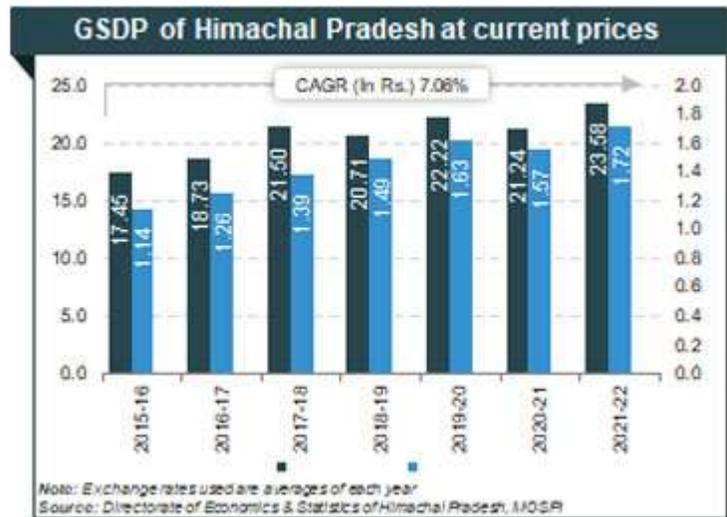


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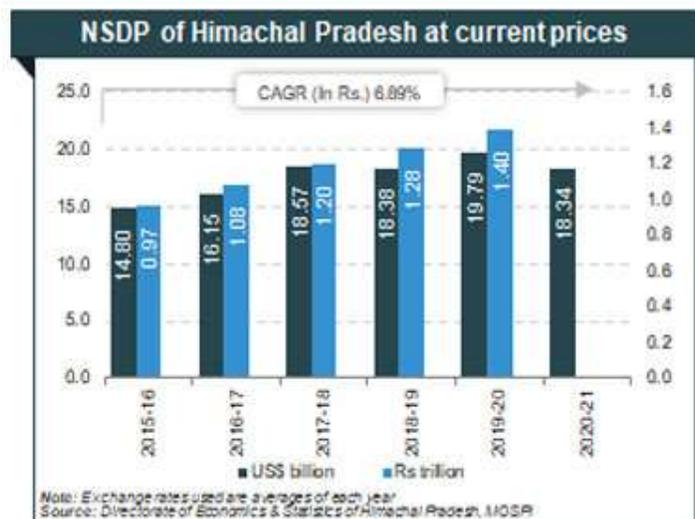
1. Employment: Himachal government has emphasized on increasing employment in tourism sector to 12% of the total employment generation in the state. Govt. also wants to Increase the tourism share to the state GSDP to 8.5%. According to 2018-19, 2019-20 Statistical abstract of Himachal Pradesh There are 16 posts (11 under class I and 5 under Class II) under gazetted category and 76 posts under non -gazetted category including 8 on class II, 48 on class III and 27 on class IV. However, there was no part time worker, 9 daily paid workers and 27 people are employed under others categories. It is important to note that, the indirect employment by tourism is huge which cannot be calculated appropriately. Above data also indicates that there is dearth of regular employment in the tourism sector. Therefore, government must emphasize on creating new job opportunities by expending tourism operations and activities inside the hill state. As per times of India newspaper, considering the importance of tourism in Himachal Pradesh, 225 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), worth INR 16000 crore, have been signed for the tourism sector in 2020. It will further boost the employment opportunities in Himachal Pradesh for the tourism aspirants.

2. Income from Tourism: The total education expenditure amounts to be 9.03% of the state GDP and 18.4 per cent of the total state government exchequer. With around 20 million tourists visiting the state every year, Himachal Pradesh has huge tourism potential. Tourism activity contributes significantly to the creation of employment opportunities and also in enhancing the state’s income through the generation of demand for goods and services among tourists.

Tourism Contribution to SGDP& NGDP: According to the TSA of Himachal Pradesh, tourism is estimated to contribute 3.46% directly to the State Gross Value Added and 3.89% to the State employment. With the inclusion of indirect shares, these shares work out to be 7.53% in GVA and 14.4% in employment. At current prices, Himachal Pradesh’s gross state domestic product (GSDP) is estimated at Rs. 1,72,174 crore (US\$ 23.58 billion) in FY22, an increase of 3% per year. The state’s GSDP is estimated to increase at a CAGR of 7.06% between 2015-16 and 2021-22. Tertiary sector witnessed the fastest growth at a CAGR of 10.76% between 2011-12 and 2020-21. Total exports from Himachal Pradesh stood at US\$ 1,392.91 million in 2019-20.



3. Infrastructure facilities for Tourist: Infrastructure is an important growth driver and its development is essential for propelling long term growth in the economy. Indian Government has emphasized on Augmentation of quality tourism infrastructure throughout the country. Ministry of tourism has started 3 major schemes towards developing infrastructure for tourism viz. Infrastructure Development Division (IDD), PRASHAD, Swadesh Darshan (SD). Himachal government. Himachal Pradesh Governmentsought revival of the \$100 million ADB project (Phase I) aimed at building world-class tourism infrastructure in the state.INR 200 Crore has been sanctioned under “Nayi Rahen Nyi Manzilein” Scheme.



Roads: Total Length of National Highways in Himachal Pradesh is 2592 Km. as mentioned below:

- 1.PWD =1238Km.
- 2.NHAI =785Km.
- 3.BRO = 569 Km.

National highway length (km) (as of FY21) in India is 1,36,440 km and in Himachal Pradesh is 2,606.88 km.

Source:https://www.ibef.org/states/himachal-pradesh.aspx



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Railway: With the focus on infrastructure development, the Centre has allocated adequate funds for states to boost rail connectivity across the country. While all states got an increase in the allocations to complete rail projects in their respective states, Himachal Pradesh got the maximum with Rs 1,780 crore allocations as against Rs 770 crore last year.

Civil Aviation: At present there are only three airports in Himachal Pradesh namely Shimla, Bhuntar (Kullu-Manali) and Kangra. There are 63 operational helipads in the state at present and the State Government has announced the approval for construction of new helipads. Finance Commission has also recommended Rs 1000 crore for this airport which would not only add wings to tourism development in the State but also was important from strategic point on view.

The available infrastructural facilities provided by Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation in term of Hotels /Guest House and Bed capacity presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

STATISTICS RELATING TO NO. OF HOME STAY UNITS AS ON 31.12.2021

Sl. No.	DISTRICT	NO. OF HOME STAY UNITS	NO. OF ROOMS					TOTAL ROOMS	BED CAPACITY
			SBR	DBR	DOR	FS	TBR		
1.	Bilaspur	29	5	71	0	1	1	78	149
2.	Chamba	241	12	544	0	3	0	559	1112
3.	Hamirpur	14	0	41	0	0	0	41	88
4.	Kangra	380	7	965	0	28	1	1001	2052
5.	Kinnaur	103	0	257	0	0	0	257	514
6.	Kullu	684	35	1766	0	114	0	1915	4106
7.	Lahaul & Spiti	794	0	1588	0	0	0	1588	2268
8.	Mandi	153	10	446	0	11	1	468	924
9.	Shimla	558	0	1797	0	0	0	1797	3594
10.	Sirmour	85	24	204	0	4	0	232	312
11.	Solan	218	8	567	0	26	0	601	1244
12.	Una	12	0	31	0	0	0	31	62
	TOTAL	3271	101	8277	0	187	3	8568	16425

Source: Dept. of Tourism, Government of Himachal Pradesh

It is clear from the above table that up to December 2021 there are total 3271 home stay units in the state with 8568 rooms having 16425 bed capacity. Whereas there were only 2416 home stay units in 2020 with 6706 rooms having 13666 bed capacity. It shows the infrastructural growth for tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Since the formation of Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, it has been working hard for the promotion of tourism in the state of Himachal Pradesh and has built up the much-needed infrastructure for the promotion of tourism in the state. Beside these, Billing in Kangra district is developed as a paragliding and adventure sports destination, Chanshal in Shimla district as Winter sports destination, Janjehli in Mandi district as Eco tourism destination and Pong Dam in Kangra district as water sports destination. The government introduced 'Himachal Pradesh Tourism Sector Policy 2019' to position the state as a leading global sustainable tourism destination for inclusive economic growth.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that tourism is rapidly growing industry and Government must encourage it. As income and education rise, the demand for holidays and travel also increases. Tourism can act as an instrument for removing regional disparities, generating extra income for a country. Further, it is an effective mean of transferring wealth from developed to undeveloped areas. Development of tourism projects enhances the image of the state and brings it on to the world map. However, it also has some disadvantages. The negative impact of tourism is a serious matter. Tourism is responsible for increased drug abuse, alcoholism and the increased pollution level, increase in illegal practices and increase in prices of the essential commodities in the State. It can be said that tourism has



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increased overcrowding and crime rate in the state which creates a serious problem to the public also especially at key tourist locations e.g., Shimla, Dharmshala, Kullu etc. Therefore, a time bound efforts can be made to meet out these challenges, so that more and more tourist could visit more freely and the state can also feel more comfortable with the tourism development. There seems a necessity to carry out an extensive survey of the existing tourist resources (both cultural and natural) of the state on scientific basis. The information collect must be assessed thoroughly and mapped at micro and macro level. There are many beautiful places, temples and other historical monuments in the state which are to be connected with road network. Therefore, the government should make an effort to provide link road to all such places so that every tourist coming to state could visit all these places comfortably. Further the rail and air transport facilities should be properly upgraded. The taxi services should be regularized properly. The state Government should concentrate on rural tourism, Agri-tourism and Eco-tourism where ample tourist potential is available. The adventure sports activities like hand gliding, Para gliding; trekking etc. should be promoted through proper planning.

Himachal Pradesh government has decided to focus on caravan tourism, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic years, for being safe and flexible while providing social bubble. Caravans' tourism is a unique tourism aimed at promoting tourism activities in circuits and destinations, which are not having adequate hotel accommodation. Government also wanted to link traditional Kathkuni style architecture sites to various tourist circuits and the art gallery in Kangra. The historical forts of the state would be developed as tourist attractions. On A mountain biking tracks under the 'Nai Rahein Nai Manzilen' scheme Rs 50 crore will be spent in 2022-2023. Shiv Dham in Mandi, water sports in Larji and Tattapani, paragliding in Bir Billing and Chanshal will be covered under the scheme. Beside these Asian Development Bank assisted Rs 2,095 crore projects for development of tourism infrastructure in the state. Beautification of towns, conservation of heritage buildings, construction of heliports, eco-tourism, water sports wellness centres, Buddhist circuits, tourism infrastructure, training of youth will be undertaken in two phases of the project.

The entertainment facilities should be increased as to enhance satisfaction level of the tourist and to ensure more in flow of tourists in the state. The Private sector investment should be encouraged to boost the tourism industry in the state. There is a need for the close co-ordination between private sector and public sector at different level. The government should make such a provision in the policy so that a part of the profit earned by private entrepreneur could be invested in the welfare of the state. There should be a provision in the policy to give priority in the employment to the local person. It will certainly be helpful to generate more direct and indirect employment opportunity in the state. Tourism plan must be developed in accordance with national objectives of tourism and consistent with the role that tourism is assigned to play in the national development. Special tourist facilities should be created for writers, academicians, authors, artists, student and religious tourists etc. in the State.

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