

An Analysis of Pattern of the Tourism Industry in Sikkim

Kalden Tamang

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography,
Sikkim Government College, Namchi

Abstract

The tourism industry is one of the financial pillars of a state of Sikkim. Sikkim, a state with its natural magnificence, harmony and peace, and charming weather has the potential to develop in the field of tourism. This research paper shows the pattern of the tourism industry in Sikkim. Both the domestic and foreign tourist's influx has been analyzed. Alongside the pattern of the tourism industry, the pattern of tourist movement and the issues looked by the tourists have likewise been analyzed. The lopsided inflow of the tourists differentiating a peak season and offseason and the reason behind it has also examined and explained.

Keywords: *development, movement, Sikkim, tourism industry.*

Introduction

Tourism has been defined as the activities in which a person travels to and staying in a new environment or place outside of their usual space for pleasure or any other purposes which ends once reaches the starting point of their journey (Barten, 2024) Tourism is of various forms like eco-tourism, adventure tourism, wildlife tourism, pilgrimage tourism and rural tourism. The attraction of tourist depends upon the form of tourism provided to them. Tourism is being one of the global contributors in growing the economy of the tourism providing countries. India also has the potential to grow with the tourism industry in economic sector. Tourism industry is not only providing a sustainable feature of development but also develops all round development of the country. India with its diverse culture and tradition seeks to provide over 382 million domestic tourists every year visiting different parts of the country and understanding different lifestyles of the country (Bora, 2009). Sikkim being the second smallest state of the Indian union situated in the north eastern part covers an area of 7096 sq. km. has also diverse culture and tradition and supports all forms of tourism (Sikkim, n.d.)

Sikkim is in any case topographically different because of its area in the Himalayas; the atmosphere ranges from subtropical to high snowcapped, and Kanchenjunga, the world's third-most noteworthy peak, is situated on Sikkim's outskirts with Nepal. Sikkim is a well-known traveler goal, inferable from its way of life, view and biodiversity. It additionally has the main open land outskirts among India and China. Sikkim's capital and biggest city is Gangtok. The present research is an attempt to analyze the pattern of tourist industry in Sikkim.

Objectives

The major objectives of the study are:

- 1) To analyze the pattern of tourism industry in Sikkim, and
- 2) To examine closely the problems faced by the tourist in Sikkim.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data have been taken for the study. The primary data have been collected from the field survey by personal interviews in the entire tourist spots mostly visited by tourist in all four districts of the study area. There are a few sources from which secondary data have been collected. They are of the accompanying kinds: 1) Government publications/records and state tourism statistics, 2) Web publications, and 3) Published and unpublished data and reports of study carried on comparative regions.

Results and Discussion

Sikkim before converging with India, visitor inflow was hard to follow just as it was unimportant. It was from the earliest starting point of the 21st century that the tourism industry part in Sikkim got thrived as confined territories went under unwinding by the administration and it picked up notoriety as the most secure and most beneficial tourist's goal in India. The development of the tourism industry was exceptionally moderate till the 1980s the same number of territories were limited for sightseers but from 2005 there was a quick progression of tourists in the state in light of the fact that the greater part of the region was open for the travel industry purposes.

The figures of visitor appearance were approaching and outperforming the state population. The travel industry in present is one of the quickest developing parts, and one of the most significant drivers in the state economy (Sikkim Tourism Policy, 2018). There are around 460 towns in Sikkim (Census, 2011). The travel industry action step by step expanded and created from the capital city Gangtok to the different corner of the state particularly in provincial regions. Sikkim being the center point of normal and beautiful magnificence it gave a pathway to eco-tourism industry, with the standards of networks the travel industry while protecting the nature and culture of the state.

Table 1						
Tourist Arrival in Sikkim (2000-2017)						
Year	Domestic Tourists	% of Total (Domestic tourists)	International Tourists	% of Total (International Tourists)	Total	% of Total
2000	180256	95.3	8974	4.7	189230	100
2001	192354	96.1	7757	3.9	200111	100
2002	203835	96.0	8433	4.0	212268	100
2003	220824	95.3	10954	4.7	231778	100
2004	286687	95.5	13528	4.5	300215	100
2005	347650	95.5	16518	4.5	364168	100
2006	421943	95.9	18049	4.1	439992	100
2007	455204	96.2	17837	3.8	473041	100
2008	512373	96.0	21162	4.0	533535	100
2009	615628	98.1	11730	1.9	627358	100

2010	700011	97.2	20257	2.8	720268	100
2011	552443	95.8	23945	4.2	576388	100
2012	558538	95.5	26489	4.5	585027	100
2013	576749	94.8	31698	5.2	608447	100
2014	526418	91.5	49175	8.5	575593	100
2015	705023	94.8	38479	5.2	743502	100
2016	740763	91.8	66012	8.2	806775	100
2017	1375854	96.6	49111	3.4	1424965	100

Source: Tourism and Civil Aviation, Government of Sikkim

Administration of Sikkim at that point took a few activities for the help of town the travel industry just as eco-tourism industry where the government incorporated the Sikkim Ecotourism Policy 2011 and the enlistment of homestays under Sikkim enlistment of Homestay foundation rules 2013 and built more than 300 homestays which were supported by XIII Finance commission in various towns everywhere (Sikkim Tourism Policy, 2018).

There has been a huge development rate in both local and outside tourists' appearance of 86% and 81% separately from 2000-2017. During the field study it was found that the primary purpose for the gigantic development of traveler inflow in the small Himalayan state is because of the best friendliness, its hypnotizing picturesque excellence, tranquil nature. There has been a decent inflow of sightseers till 2010 then the chart somewhat descended in 2011 as Sikkim was hit by an enormous earthquake which made the modest Himalayan awful and inflow descended. Till 2015 the inflow was very standard as it was recouping at that stage with infrastructural, transportation, and so forth. After 2015 visitor inflow again expanded as it was pronounced as the principal natural state in the country and numerous sightseers were pulled in to it. The year 2017 was recorded as the year where most extreme traveler appearance was recorded.

To improve the settlement condition in the country zone's homestay idea was created and the enlistment of the homestay began and it arrived at a most extreme in 2013. Aside from approaches and foundation the seasons are additionally assuming its job in molding the traveler stream to this territory, from the underneath information, without much of a stretch delineate that in various seasons we have an alternate sort of vacationer inflow. It was found during the field overview as the rainstorm shows up the traveler flow begins declining as it makes the danger of landslides and cloud bursts. Being a state with hills and valleys and accepting an adequate amount of precipitation in the monsoon season and absence of railroads and air terminal transportation, the state depends upon on-street transportation which most extreme occasions get hindered because of landslides causing the disturbance in the progression of tourists.

Table 2							
Tourist Arrival in Sikkim (2011-2017)							
YEAR	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
January	7.7	5.1	5.3	5.1	7.7	10.6	12.1

February	9.2	5.3	5.4	3.5	6.3	11.9	13.8
March	11.3	8.1	8.3	4.4	4.6	10.1	15.8
April	16.2	11.7	12	11.3	12.7	12.6	19.3
May	22.5	21.5	22.9	16.4	19.7	19.5	14.2
June	12.6	11.8	11.8	15.2	12.2	12.1	7.9
July	5.3	3.3	3	3.5	2.8	2.7	1
August	7.1	6.3	1.3	2.1	2.8	2.7	1.2
September	2.5	2.3	3.5	4.5	3.6	3.6	2.5
October	1.8	7.6	8.7	13.3	10.8	10.7	3
November	1.5	7.1	7.4	9.5	7.9	1.4	4.1
December	2.4	9.9	10.4	11.1	8.9	2.1	5

Source: Tourism and Civil Aviation, Government of Sikkim

Seasonal Inflow of Tourists

Table 3 Tourist Seasonal Inflow (Year-2017)		
Month	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists
JANUARY	166824	5883
FEBRUARY	189358	5054
MARCH	217762	5888
APRIL	265055	8474
MAY	195890	3407
JUNE	109334	1933
JULY	14350	1000
AUGUST	16680	1043
SEPTEMBER	34736	2182
OCTOBER	41281	5892
NOVEMBER	56438	4084
DECEMBER	68146	4271

Source: Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Sikkim.

The month-wise domestic and foreign progression of tourists in the year 2017. Unmistakably the quantity of domestic travelers is a lot more noteworthy than foreign travelers. Tourist's

arrival is more in the late spring season that is in months April-June, in view of the chilly uneven atmosphere of Sikkim. Also, in the stormy season (July-August) the quantity of tourists is less as a direct result of the shady and blustery season. So unmistakably there is regularity in tourists flow stream. The quantity of foreign tourists needs to increment and the tourism industry needs to make an all-year movement for additional advancement of this area. The main reason for the difference in inflow of domestic and foreign tourists is in the choice of type of tourism. Domestic tourists focus on scenic beauty and sight seeing where foreign tourists focus on exploration and adventure tourism.

Catchment Range of Tourist Arrival in Sikkim

To distinguish the tourist arrival in Sikkim, the following are the seven-region considered:

- 1) From East States of India
- 2) From West States of India
- 3) From North States of India
- 4) From South States of India
- 5) From Central States of India
- 6) From Northeast States of India
- 7) From Abroad

Table 4		
Percentage of Tourist Arrival from Different Sectors		
Tourist Arrival From Different Sectors	Number of Tourists	% of total
East	6	5
West	9	7.5
North	65	54.2
South	6	5
Northeast	15	12.5
Central	8	6.7
Abroad	11	9.2
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

The numbers show tourist arrival in Sikkim in mainly from the north states of India (54.2 %). The quantity of sightseers originating from other locale of India is significantly less for example 40%. It is just about 9.2% sightseers originating from abroad. It shows that Sikkim as a position of the travel industry has a huge fascination among the individuals of northern conditions of India.

Purpose of Visit

Table 5
Reasons of visitors to visit Sikkim

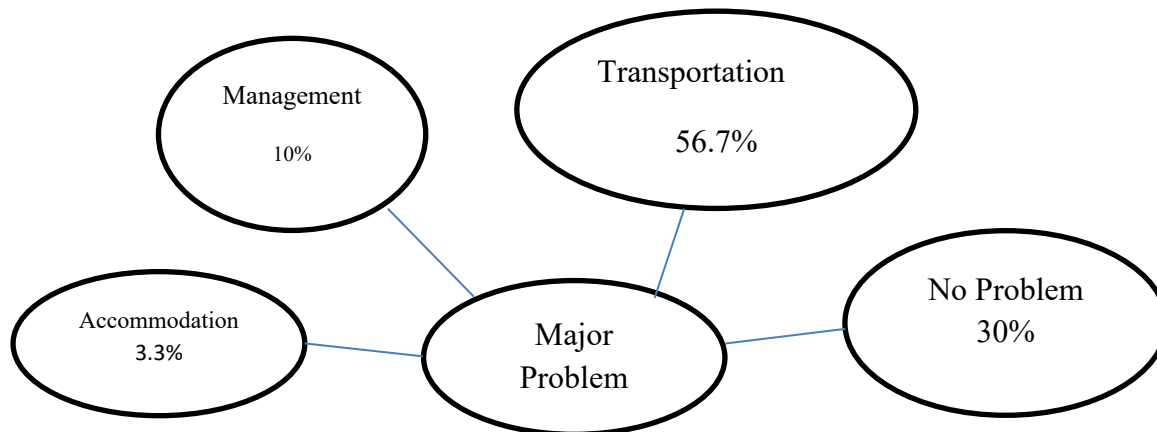
Purpose of Visits	No. of Tourists	% of Tourists
Pleasure	105	87.5
Trekking	5	4.2
Business	4	3.3
Any Other	6	5
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey.

Individuals make a trip starting with one spot then onto the next for an alternate reason. It very well may be for pleasure, business or visiting companions and family members. The above table shows that the most extreme number of visitors that visit Sikkim want pleasure (88%) in light of the fact that it gives normal magnificence and charming atmosphere which pull in more tourists. As per the outcome drawn from the other purpose for visit when brought out, and out likewise cannot take on pleasure as a motivation behind movement.

The tour planning for length of staying of visitors to stay in Sikkim by all accounts have a greater amount of underneath 5 days (60%). The length of staying is conversely identified with the motivation behind visit. From the field review it demonstrated that the tourists who visit Sikkim for trekking have a more drawn-out length of remain though individuals visiting Sikkim for pleasure, business purpose and other purpose have a shorter length of stay.

Major Problems faced by Tourists



There are numerous elements for a tourism industry to prosper. The region which can satisfy all the requirements and needs of the visitor can consequently thrive in the advancement of the tourism industry. The components which influence the tourism industry of any zone rely upon the services and facilities like transport, management, accommodation, and so forth.

In this way, from the above outline, it portrays that tourists visiting Sikkim have a significant issue in transportation (56.7%). Aside from transport where a decent percent of tourists has no problem (30%) while their visit to Sikkim. These services and facilities were remembered during the time 0 of the review and were addressed to the tourists on their experience. After the information were gathered and arranged that practically all the respondents reacted emphatically for all the services and facilities given to them which are an incredible

accomplishment for Sikkim which is only a rising industry in the field of the tourism industry.

Conclusion

The study distinguishes that the appearance of tourists is expanding each year where both domestic and foreign tourists are expanding in which domestic visitors are a lot more noteworthy than foreign visitors. Tourists influx is lot more in summer season when contrasted with other season that is in the long stretch of March-June(see fig.3) as in this month climate seems to be pleasant and have a less amount of rainfall which decreases the chance of landslides but while in the months from (July-August- September) the quantity of tourists is less because of rainy season in which a high chance of road blockages is prevalent creating the problem in communication as the best way to arrive at Sikkim is the roadways. Foreign tourist's influx seems to be more in winter season (October-November-December) as a maximum number of travelers come for trekking purpose as the (4%) purpose of visit seems to be of foreign tourists (Fig.5). The major proportion of tourist's in Sikkim is mainly from northern states of India (54.2%). The foreign tourist flow is simply (9.2%) which is low. Large number of tourist's visit Sikkim for only pleasure (87.5%) which shows that the area attracts large number of tourists with its magnificent and charming atmosphere, nature's excellence and its culture and traditions. A large percentage of tourists to stay in Sikkim were below 5 days (60%) which reflects that Sikkim needs to improve its infrastructure and bring new attractions by which tourist stay increases. Large proportion of tourists opted for hotels for their accommodation (76.7%) while very few opted for homestays (16.7%) which indicates that rural tourism is not being properly explored by the tourists who are due to lack of advertisements and lack of involvement of local bodies and communities in tourism activities. The major problem faced by tourist during their visit to Sikkim is predominantly from transportation (56.7%) as Sikkim has not yet evolved with the transportation facilities of railways and airways due to its rugged geology and uneven weather patterns. However, a good extend of tourist additionally said that they didn't confront any problems (30%). Indeed, development in infrastructural and transportation would expand the tourist inflow of the state which would straightforwardly influence the improvement and development of the tourism industry of the state. Alongside with the development of the various sectors, more spotlights on advertisement on a wide scale would signify the development of the tourism industry in the state.

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