

Tourist Satisfaction Level among Adventure Tourists: A Comparative Study Between Garhwal and Kumaun Region, Uttarakhand

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Abstract

Objective- The major objective of this study is to measure the Satisfaction Level among tourists regarding Adventure Tourism in Garhwal and Kumaun Region of Uttarakhand.

Design/methodology/approach- A cross-sectional study was conducted between August to October 2018 in Garhwal and Kumaun Region. The study sample includes 100 respondents selected through convenience sampling and Data was analyzed through Independent Sample T test.

Result- Result of the study revealed that though level of total satisfaction among tourists is more in Garhwal region as compared to Kumaun region but that difference is not significant.

Research limitations/implications- The study is confined only to tourist satisfaction regarding selective variables of adventure tourism in selective districts of Garhwal and Kumaun region. A further empirical research can be done to see the difference between perception and satisfaction among tourist regarding other forms of tourism in both the regions.

Keywords: Tourists, Adventure Tourism, Garhwal and Kumaun Region.

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1. INTRODUCTION

From the ancient times excursionists, explorers and discoverers have travelled around the world to explore new lands and cultures. Tourism as a modern industry has evolved out of this inner zest of human beings who wants to spend some of their time in exploring destinations other than their own in search of leisure, adventure, diverse cultures and so on. With the growth of Tourism industry in past six decades it has acquired a unique place in regional policy of almost all countries. Tourism as an economic activity contributes remarkably in economic and social growth of local community and sustainable development of the region which leads to overall development of local populace and nation economy. Tourism sector now have turned into a key driver of socio-economic progress through export revenues, creation of jobs and overall infrastructure development. Adventure tourism in the recent years have evolved out as one of the major niche market in tourism industry in Uttarakhand. Adventure Tourism in state has increased manifolds in last one decade. Either it is trekking or white river rafting activities state has seen a significant growth in the number of tourists. **Buckley** has defined "Adventure Tourism as an outdoor or recreation activity which bears a significant element of excitement". Collaborating it with the nature and leisure this kind of tourism has immense potential for growth. With mighty Himalayas and craggy mountainous landscape Uttarakhand offers a lot for development of this form of tourism. There are number of challenging heights, meadows and mysterious lakes in the area which lures a number of adventure seeking tourists to visit this place. The undulating down streams of Ganga, Tons, Kali and Saryu makes them favorite for white water rafting, kayaking, canoeing and other water sports. The snow laden slopes of Auli, Dayara and Khyali Top are the favorite spots for skiing and other than it other adventure sports like Bungee jumping, Mountain Jeep Safari, Paragliding and camping are being developed in the state.

Trekking: High Himalayan ranges filled with ecstatic beauty and adventure attracts a number of tourists round the year for trekking in Uttarakhand. There are number of trekking routes in both the regions of Uttarakhand where trekking activities go on round the year. However, the favorable months for trekking in most of the treks are from March to June and August to October but there are some treks which remain open round the year. There are number of service providers who offer special packages to the tourists for coming to these routes. Packages generally covers all the costs from camping facilities to food, pony, trekking equipments and guide. Some of the important treks in both the regions are Kunwari Pass Trek, PanwaliKatha Trek, Lohajang Aali-Bedini Roopkund Trek, Waan Bedini Roopkund Trek, Gangotri Trek, Khatling Glacier Trek, Valley of Flower Trek, Har Ki Dun Trek, Nanda Devi Trek, Kafni Glacier Trek, Sundardhunga Trek, Pindari Glacier Trek, Aadi Kailash Trek, Sahastra Tal Trek, Dodital Trek, Dayara Bugyaal Trek etc.

River Rafting: River Rafting activities in Ganga, Tons, Kali and Saryu river has emerged out as one of the most sought adventure activities in the state in few yester year. In comparison to other destinations white river rafting has attracted much more adventure loving tourists in Rishikesh area. Many private players along with government agencies GMVN and KMVN are providing the river rafting facilities in the major rivers in both Garhwal and Kumaun region. A number of tourists come for rafting in Ganges during the weekends and the months from April to June see

the highest amount of tourists flocking for river rafting activities. All budget packages are available due to presence of many service providers in the area.

Paragliding: Paragliding in state has emerged out as another activity for luring the prospective tourists in the leisure areas. The beautiful landscapes and serenity of the High Himalayas can best be experienced through mind blowing aerial experience. Paragliding in state is available in Rishikesh (NeelKanth), Almora and Pithoragarh District.

Skiing: Skiing on the thrilling slopes and heavy snow carpet is one of the adventurous and thrilling experience for the adventure enthusiasts. The beautiful slopes of Auli, Dayara, and Khyali Top provides ample opportunities for such enthusiasts.

This study would study the various dimension of Adventure tourism and level of satisfaction among tourist between Garhwal and Kumau region.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Shinde A. (2015) explored the ways in which religious tourism in India fosters religious tolerance. Tolerance, with the implicit meaning of diversity and pluralism, is examined at two levels - intra-religion and inter-religion - using field investigations from three Hindu pilgrimage sites, namely, Vrindavan, Tuljapur, Shegaon and review of one Muslim site called Ajmer Sharif. These sites exhibit a range of combinations, sectarian traditions within Hindu and their interactions with others, including Muslims and foreigners. It is found that tolerance within the Hindu sects and with non-Hindus from other religious faiths is a function of their engagement with cultural performances and participation in the religious tourism economy in a pilgrimage site.

Suthathip Suanmali (2014) identified the various affecting factors of tourist satisfaction in Thailand, Chiang Mai. This study used self administrated questionnaire and for the data analysis used factor analysis method (EFA) and multiple regression. On the basis of result revealed that most significant factor affecting the overall satisfaction is the cost of staying, and other significant factors are hospitality, attractions and accessibility, and infrastructure.

Bhattacharya, Debasis and Mitra, Asim (2013) examined the foreign tourists' perceptions of Darjeeling as a tourism destination and destination image of 'Darjeeling' among the foreign tourists. A descriptive nature of survey was conducted among the foreign tourists was conducted with a structured questionnaire. EPI (Latu and Everett, 1999) format (modified servqual) was used to get data from the respondents. The findings of the study implied that the tourists' satisfaction is revealed by the gap between expectation and perceived performance of destination attributes. If perceived performance exceeds the expectation, the visitor is satisfied.

Mukhles Al-Ababneh (2013) assessed tourists' perceptions towards quality tourism services provided at Petra historical site and also examined the impact of quality tourism product on overall tourist satisfaction. This study selected the 180 respondents and collected the data through questionnaires. Data are analysed through multiple regressions model. On the basis of result it concluded that service quality directly impacted tourist satisfaction throughout destination facilities, destination accessibility and destination attraction. As a result, this study argued that there is a significant impact of the service quality on tourist satisfaction, and therefore service quality plays an important role in tourism by increasing the level of tourist satisfaction.

Masarrat, Ghazal (2012) assessed the tourist's satisfaction towards tourism products and market. The study undertook sample size of 100 tourists from the study area that is pilgrimage places, hill

stations, wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, adventure spots of Uttarakhand is taken on convenient cum judgment basis. On the basis of the findings, the results may be concluded that tourist delight and an increase in tourist satisfaction at Uttarakhand and ultimately into socio-economic development of the state.

Mahapatra Parthsarathi, Vasistha H.B & Pandey, Rajiv (2011) observed that rafting contributes to the economic growth of the region. Further, it may play a role in promoting environmental awareness indirectly by experiencing first hand beauty of a river, individuals who would otherwise be indifferent to environmental issues may gain a desire to protect and preserve that area due to their positive outdoor experience. Moreover, the river rafting industry may contribute to the protection of rivers from hydroelectric power generation, diversion for irrigation, and other such developmental activities. The focused information was collected through questionnaire for primary data from randomly selected individual i.e. local people, primary (camp management) and secondary professionals (local shop owners, employees, etc.) of the industry likewise some other relevant data were assessed by collecting disclosure of population in groups. The study revealed that social disturbances in the region were increasing and promoting loss of traditional values. The effects may be low at present but if not checked, in due course of time the local identity and traditional values of this region may be challenged. However, the exposure experience and social progress may balance the impact, if not influenced rapidly. Similarly, pollution due to increased vehicular emissions, traffic congestion and unplanned constructions are adversely impacting the society and pose threat to change in local climate. Therefore, like all wilderness activities, rafting must balance its growth economically, culturally with the conservation of biodiversity and environment around it as a natural resource and habitat. Hence, a sustainable means of developmental approach should be undertaken by the government through implementation of some strict rules, making the raft and camp owners aware about their social responsibility towards the local people and making it perceivable to the villagers. It can, thus, rightly be argued that the expectations from the development of River Rafting and Camping industry on the banks of The Holy Ganga have not been up to the mark. The high inflow of tourists, passiveness towards social and environmental concerns accompanied with lack of proper implementation of rules and regulations have accounted for the same. Also the fast and sometimes uncontrolled growth is leading to the degradation of the environment and loss of local identity and change in traditional culture which threatens the social life of the people. Therefore, it's potential for a sustainable development in this Himalayan region is taking a negative path.

Dixit, S.K., (2005) in his study examined tourism pattern in Uttarakhand. He highlighted that religious tourists, pleasure tourists, and adventure and nature lovers preferred to visit Uttarakhand. Further these tourists had different behaviour patterns regarding food, transport and accommodation. The study revealed that adventure tourism was the fastest growing sector in Uttarakhand as compared to religious tourism. Moreover, religious tourism in Uttarakhand was affected adversely by seasonality syndrome. The author recommended that adventure tourism, yoga and meditation related tourism could help in overcoming seasonality syndrome of Uttarakhand. He also emphasized a close coordination of public, private and local government for expanding tourists' season in Uttarakhand.

Anbalagan, M., Amudha, R. & Selvam V. (2005) in their study highlighted tourism as India's third largest export industry after readymade garments, jams and jewellery. The authors suggested five point strategy i.e. strong sustained policies, private sector involvement, liberalization of aviation, elimination of red tape and investment in human resource development to achieve sustained growth rate in tourism industry in India.

Singh, R.B & Mishra, D.K. (2004) in their study highlighted social, economical and environmental dimensions of tourism in Manali. They observed an increase of 270 per cent in tourist arrivals in Manali from last three decades. The authors revealed that Manali was experiencing environmental problems like acute shortage of water, overcrowded roads, heavy traffic, excessive garbage, unplanned growth and illegal constructions and sanitation problems. They also examined several variables like tourist season, expenditure pattern, tourism taxes, accommodation, transport and carrying capacity of town which were essential for tourism industry in Manali. Besides this, they suggested different short and long-term strategies for accommodation, transportation, water, sewage, energy and finance. The study suggested that cautious steps must be taken by the state government to avoid mass tourism and create healthy eco-tourism in Manali.

Poria, Butler and Airey (2003) discussed the effect of religion and religiosity on tourism industry. They observed that religion had direct impact on tourists' consumption habits and their preference to choose any destination. The study highlighted that the tourists' preference to visit a particular site was directly dependent upon their religion and their strength of religious belief. Moreover, different religious sites represented different things with different meanings to different tourists and these different meanings determined the behavioural pattern of tourists towards particular religious sites.

Chattopadhyay, Kunal (1995) in his book focuses on economic aspects associated with tourism. He provided a comprehensive description of tourism development and its significance in context to third world countries. For the study, he used secondary data and attempted to highlight the importance of tourism development through case studies drawn from Asia, Africa, Europe, North America and the Caribbean Islands. In concluding part, he builds a model of international tourism demand for India.

Smith, Stephen L.J. (1994) argues that the tourism product do exists and presents a model that describes the product as consisting of five elements: the physical plant, service, hospitality, freedom of choice, and involvement. The generic production begins with raw inputs, progresses through intermediate inputs and outputs, to final outputs, or the tourist's experience. It also formalizes the intuitive notion of many authors that tourism products are fundamentally experiences.

3. RESEARCH GAP

By going through the review of literature there seems a research gap as there are many studies based on tourist satisfaction with different variables and different methodologies but no study has been found by the researcher in tourist satisfaction regarding adventure tourism comparing Garhwal and Kumaun Region in the state of Uttarakhand. So there remains a dearth of empirical study to ascertain the satisfaction among tourist regarding adventure tourism comparing garhwal

and kumaun region. This research work aims to address some of these gaps by testing the postulated relationship among the constructs.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Tourism as an industry, contributes heavily to the economic prospects of any region. As an economic activity tourism contributes remarkably in economic and social growth of local community and sustainable development of the region which leads to overall development of local populace and nation economy. Many of the researchers admit tourism to be the engine of economic growth and social development as it is booming industry with people expanding much more in tourist activities due to increase in households income. Uttarakhand as a tourist destination offers a lot to the prospective tourists as the land is bestowed with rich natural, cultural and religious ethnicity. Both the administrative regions Garhwal and Kumaun of Uttarakhand have their touristic positivity's which lure a number of tourists to various destinations situated in these regions. Though a majority of tourists flocking to Uttarakhand come here for religious purposes but there are other modes of tourism also like leisure, adventure, cultural and nature & wildlife which attracts number of tourists. The Master Tourism Plan (2007-2022) prepared by Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board also focuses on the need of developing other forms of tourism in the state so that the state can lure much more amount of domestic and foreign tourists thereby helping in creation of jobs and necessary infrastructural facilities and so on.

Keeping this in view present study aims on studying the tourist satisfaction regarding adventure tourism dimension in Garhwal and Kumaun Region, Uttarakhand state comparatively.

5. OBJECTIVE

The major objective of this study is to measure the Satisfaction Level among tourist regarding Adventure Tourism in Garhwal and Kumaun Region.

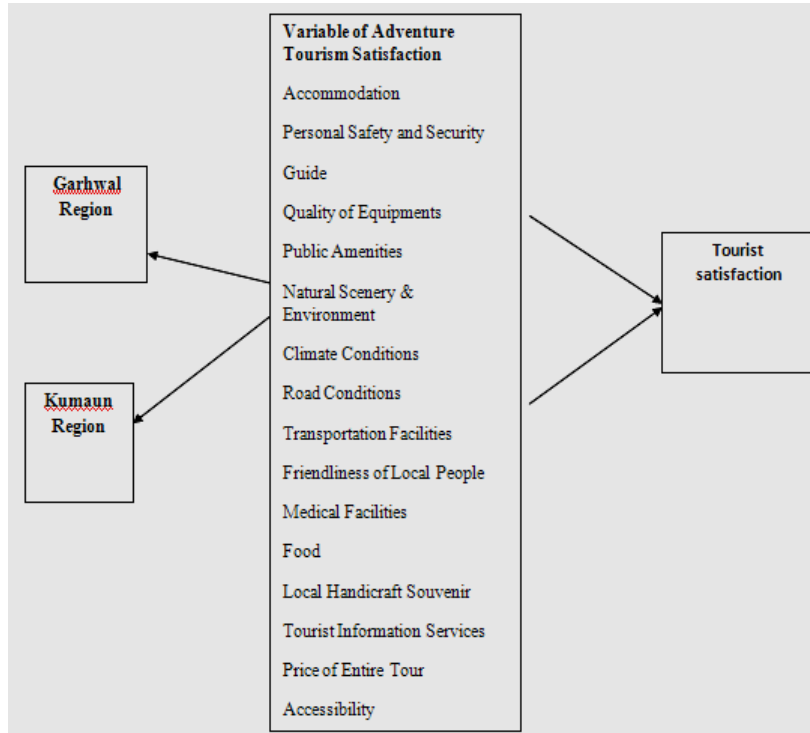
6. HYPOTHESIS

H₀. There is no significant difference between level of satisfaction among tourist in Garhwal and Kumaun Region.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was exploratory and empirical in nature. A sample of 100 respondents comprises 50 from Garhwal region and 50 from Kumaun region through convenience sampling method. For the present study data was collected through self administrated questionnaire which was divided into two sections, Part- A consisting question relating demographic profile of the respondents like Age, Gender, Place of Residents, Education, Marital Status, Income, Employment Status and Part- B consisting question relating Adventure Tourism Satisfaction on five Point Likert Scale.

7.1 Conceptual Model



7.2 Analysis of Data

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Tourists

Age (years)	Region					
	Garhwal		Kumaun		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
≤40	29	58.0	36	72.0	65	65.0
41-60	20	40.0	12	24.0	32	32.0
>60	1	2.0	2	4.0	3	3.0
Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%
Gender						
Male	30	60.0	33	66.0	63	63.0
Female	20	40.0	17	34.0	37	37.0
Place of Residence						
North	23	46.0	34	68.0	57	57.0
South	3	6.0	3	6.0	6	6.0
East	7	14.0	5	10.0	12	12.0
West	7	14.0	4	8.0	11	11.0
Foreign	10	10.0	4	8.0	14	14.0

Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%
Education						
Upto High School	6	12.0	7	14.0	13	13.0
Inter	15	30.0	11	22.0	26	26.0
UG	19	38.0	20	40.0	39	39.0
PG	10	20.0	12	24.0	22	22.0
Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%
Marital Status						
Married	30	60.0	29	58.0	59	59.0
Unmarried	20	40.0	21	42.0	41	41.0
Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%
Income						
<1L	9	18.0	12	24.0	21	21.0
1L to 3L	15	30.0	7	14.0	22	22.0
3L to 5L	19	38.0	19	38.0	38	38.0
>5L	7	14.0	12	24.0	19	19.0
Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%
Employment Status						
Employed	32	64.0	24	48.0	56	56.0
Student	7	14.0	12	24.0	19	19.0
Self Employed	10	20.0	12	24.0	22	22.0
Retired	1	2.0	2	4.0	3	3.0
Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the tourist sample according to region. As per the data shown in the table a total 58 percent of tourist belonged to age group up to 40 years followed by age group 41 to 60 which constituted 40 percent of total tourists and then followed by age group greater than 60 years which hailed 2 percent of the total tourist sample in the Garhwal region whereas on the other hand in Kumaun region 72 percent of the tourists hailed from age group up to 40 years, 24 percent from age group 41 to 60 and the remaining 4 percent hailed from age group greater than 60 years. Gender wise sample constituted of 60 percent male & 40 percent female in Garhwal region whereas in Kumaun region it was 66 percent male & 34 percent female. As far as the Place of residence was concerned 46 percent of the respondents were from North India, 6 percent were from South India, 14 percent from East India, 14 percent from West India and remaining 10 percent were foreign nationals in Garhwal Region. Talking about Kumaun region 68 percent of the respondents hailed from North India, 6 percent from the South India, 10 percent from the East India, 8 percent were from the West India and remaining 8 percent were foreign nationals. Educational Background of the respondents in Garhwal region constituted of 12 percent High-School, 30 percent Inter-mediate, 38 percent Undergraduates and 20 percent of Postgraduates whereas in Kumaun region 14 percent were High-School, 22 percent were Inter-mediate, 40 percent were Undergraduates and 24 percent were Postgraduates. 60 percent of the total respondents are married and remaining 40 percent are unmarried in Garhwal region

whereas in Kumaun region 58 percent are married and 42 percent are unmarried. As far as the income level of the respondents is concerned 18 percent of the respondents belonged to income group of less than 1 Lakh rupees, 30 percent belonged to income group 1-3 Lakh, 38 percent belonged to income group 3-5 Lakhs and 14 percent of the respondents belonged to income group more than 5 Lakhs rupees whereas in Kumaun region proportion is 24, 14, 38 and 24 percent respectively for the income groups less than 1 Lakhs, 1-3 Lakhs, 3-5 Lakhs and more than 5 lakhs. Employment status of the respondents in Garhwal region is 64 percent employed, 14 percent students, 20 percent are self employed and 2 percent of the respondents are retired. In Kumaun region 48 percent respondents are employed, 24 percent are students, 24 percent are self employed and 4 percent are retired.

Table 2: Overall Tourist Satisfaction (Descriptive Statistics)

Variable of adventure tourism	No of respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation
Accommodation	100	3.94	1.25
Personal Safety and Security	100	4.00	1.18
Guide	100	3.52	1.31
Quality of Equipments	100	3.65	1.20
Public Amenities	100	3.37	1.25
Natural Scenery & Environment	100	4.23	0.94
Climate Conditions	100	4.26	1.12
Road Conditions	100	3.46	1.29
Transportation Facilities	100	3.81	1.12
Friendliness of Local People	100	4.19	0.97
Medical Facilities	100	3.24	1.04
Food	100	3.52	1.20
Local Handicraft Souvenir	100	2.69	1.14
Tourist Information Services	100	2.79	1.06
Price of Entire Tour	100	4.25	1.13
Accessibility	100	3.41	1.04

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows Mean and Standard Deviation of tourist response towards various variables. More than 3.00 mean out of 5.00 mean implies positive satisfaction of the respondents regarding (adventure tourism). Result reveals; tourist satisfaction with the adventure tourism variables like Guide, Quality of Equipments, Public Amenities, Road Conditions, Transportation Facilities,

Medical Facilities, Food, Accessibility, Accommodation are approximately equal. So it concluded that they are satisfied but not highly satisfied as the mean is greater than 3 but less than 4 and satisfaction level regarding Local Handicraft Souvenir, Tourist Information Services are poor. Climate Conditions, Price of Entire Tour and Natural Scenery & Environment showed the highest level of satisfaction respectively (Mean=4.26, 4.25, 4.23).

H0. There is no significant difference between level of satisfaction among tourist in Garhwal and Kumaun Region.

Variable of adventure tourism	Garhwal		Kumaun		T value	P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Accommodation	3.90	1.33	3.98	1.17	.32	>0.05
Personal Safety and Security	4.10	1.22	3.90	1.15	.85	>0.05
Guide	3.58	1.21	3.46	1.40	.46	>0.05
Quality of Equipments	3.70	0.99	3.60	1.38	.41	>0.05
Public Amenities	3.24	1.33	3.50	1.16	1.04	>0.05
Natural Scenery & Environment	4.38	0.75	4.08	1.08	1.61	>0.05
Climate Conditions	4.36	0.90	4.16	1.30	.89	>0.05
Road Conditions	3.48	1.23	3.44	1.36	.15	>0.05
Transportation Facilities	3.84	1.20	3.78	1.04	.27	>0.05
Friendliness of Local People	4.30	3.89	4.08	1.05	1.13	>0.05
Medical Facilities	3.22	1.02	3.26	1.06	.19	>0.05
Food	3.44	1.21	3.60	1.19	.66	>0.05
Local Handicraft Souvenir	2.52	1.13	2.86	1.14	1.50	>0.05
Tourist Information Services	3.74	1.06	3.84	1.06	.47	>0.05
Price of Entire Tour	4.26	1.24	4.24	1.02	.09	>0.05
Accessibility	3.36	1.06	3.46	1.01	.48	>0.05
Total	59.42	8.50	59.24	9.02	0.10	>0.05

Source: Primary Data

Test of hypothesis: Table 3 shows that total satisfaction level of tourists regarding Adventure tourism in Garhwal and Kumaun region is 59.42 and 59.24 which shows that tourists in Garhwal region are slightly much more satisfied than tourists of Kumaun region. But the value of

Independent Sample T-Test shows that there is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of tourists visiting both the regions. Thus, null hypothesis has been accepted.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Adventure tourism has emerged as one of the potential sector in the tourism industry in Uttarakhand in past one decade. A number of service providers in both the regions offer the variety of packages to the potential tourists for their trips. A number of adventure related activities has been developed in the area for attracting the tourists. Whether it is white river rafting in Ganga, Tons and Kali River or trekking to the mountainous ridges and glaciers or paragliding and bungee jumping state offer a lot. Both the regions receive a significant amount of tourists which hail from North India. Garhwal region receives a majority of foreign tourists also who are much more interested in the trekking activities. Treks to Gomukh, Kunwari Pass, Roopkund, Har ki Doon and Doditaal are some of the prime trekking destinations for tourists in Garhwal region whereas for Kumaun region majority of trekkers takes the trek route to Pindari Glacier, Aadi Kailash, Sunderdhunga and Kafni. White River Rafting is most prevalent in down streams of Ganga from Byasi to Rishikesh in Garhwal region whereas in Kumaun region it is from Jauljibi to Tanakpur in down streams of Kali and Saryu River. Majority of tourists like to visit with their Friends and companions in both the regions. Cost of adventure activities in Garhwal region is less in comparison to Kumaun as the number of private service providers is more in Garhwal region leading to a price competition between them. Climate Conditions and Natural Scenery & Environment in both the regions is the major catalyst which lures tourists to these destinations and the respective satisfaction of the tourists towards these attributes is also high. However, the problem of less trained guides and road conditions especially in the interior rural areas is one of the concerns in both the regions.

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