



Prospects of Tourism and its Infrastructural Gaps in Dhauladhar Circuit

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ABSTRACT: Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the hilly state of Himachal Pradesh. The State has immense potential for religious, cultural, adventures, leisure and heritage tourism. The major tourist destinations are Shimla, Kullu, Manali, Dharamshala, McLeod Gang and Dalhousie. People from all over the world attracted with charming beauty of Himalayan ranges. Tourism is the third largest industry after hydropower and agriculture. This paper deals with tourism in Dhauladhar travel circuit. This circuit starts from Dalhousie, Khajjiar, Chamba, Bharmour, Dharamshala, Kangra and Palampur. This paper deals with the prospects of tourism in Dhauladhar circuit and availability of infrastructural facilities to the tourists in this region. It also examines the Tourism Infrastructure Gaps in Dhauladhar Travel Circuit.

Keywords: Tourist circuit, heritage Tourism, infrastructural gap.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the country. In recent time tourism industry one of the important sector contributing to the economy for the future growth of the nation. In the vibrant Socio-Economic and Political situation, international and national government considering travel and tourism as a tool of progress as per data released by United Nation World Tourism Organization. International Tourism has grown above, at around 4% per year. In advanced Economies, 5% growth rate exceeded that of emerging Economies (+2%) in 2016. Asia, Africa, and Pacific Regions have revealed a massive growth in this sector.

The Tourism sector has a lot of opportunities for employment earning revenue understanding of socio-cultural perspectives of diverse communities and Socio-Economic pattern of the world and Cross-cultural understandings (UNWTO, 2016). Travel and tourism is the third largest earner for India. According to World Travel & Tourism Council tourism industry generated 14.02 lakh crore (US\$220 billion) or 9.6% of the nation's GDP in 2016 and supported 40.343 million jobs, 9.3% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 6.8% to 28.49 lakh crore (US\$440 billion) by 2027 (10% of GDP). The Ministry of tourism Government (MOT) of India is also push up the tourism sector. Recently the Ministry of Tourism Government of India shown a great emphasize on circuit tourism, and recently Ministry of Tourism has identified 50 new tourist circuits for the development of tourism in the country covering a mix of mix of culture, heritage, spiritualism, and ecotourism. Most of the circuits are categorized by state wise on the basis of terrain. The central Tourism Ministry has been funded 100% for the Tourist Circuit development. Recently Government of India spending Rs.25 crore for destination development and Rs. 50 crore for Circuit development for recognized main tourist destinations and Circuit based on tourist traffic. (Ministry of Tourism, 2015-2016).

The concept of circuit tourism is new. It is originated in late 1980 circuit tourism involve a visit at least three or more tourist destination throughout a trip away from home. Tourist circuit should have defined entry and exit point. Circuit tourism depends, for its existence on the identification of new destination and development of infrastructure in tourist circuit. That inspires the tourist to visit all the sites once they enter the entry point. The

theme-based tourist Circuit is defined as a tourist circuit around specific themes, such as religion, cultural, niche, ethnicity, etc. (Chowdhary, 2014).

A. Defining the Concept

Cullinan *et al.* (1977) outlined the concept of “central America Panama circuit Tourism study’ as a pleasure trip which includes two or more countries by a resident of a third country”.

MOT (2008) defined Tourist circuit is as a route on which at least three major tourist destinations are located in different areas but within such distance that tourist can and would like to cover them in a sequence.

Hotelmule.com. (2011), Tourism circuit involves visits to three or more than one destination during a trip away from home pleasure trip

B. Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

Himachal (literally "Snow-abode") is a State situated in Northern India. It is bordered by Jammu and Kashmir on the north, Punjab on the west, Haryana on the south-west, Uttarakhand on the south-east and by the Tibet Autonomous Region on the east. The name was coined from Sanskrit him 'snow' and achal 'mountain', by Acharya Diwakar Dutt (Balokhra, 2016).

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh is a major contributor to the state's economy and growth. Tourism industry contributes nearly 8% of the state domestic products which is nearly the same as horticulture sector and it is expected to grow 15% by the year of 2020. The hilly state with its diverse and attractive Himalayan landscapes attracts the huge number of tourists from all over the world. Tourism is the third largest industry of the state after hydropower and agriculture. Hill stations like Shimla, Kullu, Manali, Palampur, Dharamshala, McLeod Gang, Dalhousie, Chamba, are popular tourist destinations for both domestic and foreigner. The state has numerous important religious centers with famous Hindu temples like Jwalaji Devi Temple, Vajreshwari Devi Temple, Chintpurni, Chamunda Devi Temple, Baijnath Temple, Bhimakali Temple, Bijli Mahadev, Renuka Lake and Jakhoo Temple. Like Uttarakhand, the state is also referred to as "Dev Bhoomi" (literally meaning The land of Gods) due to its mention in ancient sacred texts and happening of huge number of historical temples in Himachal Pradesh. (Department of Tourism, Himachal Pradesh 2016-2017).

The state is also known for its adventure tourism activities like ice skating in Shimla, Manali paragliding in Bir-billing in Kangra and Solang valley, rafting in Kullu, skiing in Manali boating in Bilaspur and trekking in Sirmour, Kangra, Chamba horse riding in Shimla and Khajjiar at Chamba and fishing in different parts in the state. Spiti Valley in Lahaul known for its charming landscapes is an important destination for adventure seekers. The Great Himalayan national park is a UNESCO World Heritage site has the variety of species of wildlife. Kangra and Chamba areas have a very good tracking route; McLeod Gang is a very beautiful destination in Kangra district. The region also has some of the oldest Buddhist Monasteries. Himachal is known as “A Destination for All and all reason (Department of Tourism, Government of HP, 2015-2016).

The Dhauladhar range (the white range) is a southern branch of the main outer Himalaya chain of the mountain. It rises from the Indian plains to the north Kangra, Dharamshala and Chamba region it divides Kangra to Chamba. The highest peak in the range is the Hanuman Ji ka tibba or ‘White mountain’ about 5639 meter or 18500 ft high. There are several peaks which are close to 17000 feet high. Himachal Pradesh has all the major Himalayan ranges represent in it. The elevation of the Dhauladhar ranges widely from 3,500 m to nearly 6,000 m. From the banks of the Beas River in Kullu, the range curves towards the town of Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, India. Then, running north, it passes through Barabhangal, joins the Pir Panjal range and moves into Himachal Pradesh. This region is extremely suitable for tracking and mountaineering activities. The top of the crest is covered under vast expanses of thick snow. Triund approached from the hill station of McLeod Gang, is the nearest and most reachable snow line in the Indian Himalaya (Balokhra, 2016).

C. Objectives of the Study

The present study is centered on “Prospectus of Tourism and its Infrastructural gap in Dhauladhar Travel circuit”. This travel circuit starts from Dalhousie-Khajjiar-Chamba-Bharmour-Dharamshala-Kangra, and Palampur. The main objective of the study is to analyze the development and pattern circuit tourism in Dhauladhar circuit. (I.e. Chamba and Kangra, Himachal Pradesh).

1. To identify the prospects of tourism in Dhauladhar travel circuit.
2. To generate detail about available infrastructural facilities at the prime tourist destination in Dhauladhar travel circuit.

3. To find out the Tourism Infrastructural Gaps in Dhauladhar Travel Circuit

D. Data Collection

Secondary data has constructed for the paper. Data on the Tourist circuit has been collected from different sources i.e. Research articles, newspapers, research journals, books, internet, and different travel magazines.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

A. Approaches and Methodology used for identification of Tourism circuit

The initial stage of identification of Tourist Circuit is purely based on secondary research, with the identification of Tourism potential, Population, and Connectivity. The short listing of this Tourist Circuit is done with the discussion with Himachal Pradesh State Tourism Department, representative, and expert of the Tourism industry. The descriptive approach is used to identify the Prospectus of Tourism in Dhauladhar Circuit. Infrastructural gap assessment is based on the parameters of management of tourist attraction, asses to modes of transportation road conditions and available tourism infrastructure i.e. Hotels, Guest Houses, and Travel Agencies.

III. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

A. *Prospective of Tourism in Dhauladhar Travel Circuit*

Travel circuit in Dhauladhar ranges is very important in tourism point of view. The circuit is enriched with all aspects of tourism like religious, adventure, leisure, cultural and heritage. In this paper, we have divided this circuit into two sections one is Chamba and second is Kangra. This travel circuit starts from Dalhousie-Khajjiar-Chamba-Bharmour-Kangra- Dharamshala-Palampur. This Circuit covers a distance of approximately 280 kilometers. And can be covered in the duration of 3to 5 days. This circuit is well connected by road.

There are so many unexplored tourist destinations in this region like Trilokpur, Dharamkot, Nurpur, and Bharmour the tribal land these areas are unique by geographically and has rich cultural heritage, we can say this circuit is a perfect place for tourism point of view. The Dhauladhar region has rich flora and fauna. The Dhauladhar region has four Wildlife sanctuaries. The first is Dhauladhar wildlife sanctuary situated in the most scenic sanctuaries in Himachal Pradesh. Spread over an area of 944 sq km, Dhauladhar Wildlife Sanctuary was established in1994. It is bounded by snow-capped mountains on the three sides and the beautiful green valley lies in the front. It has very rich flora and fauna and has facilities for tracking, paragliding; trout fishing makes their stay memorable. The vegetation in this region includes Deodar, oak, pine and mixed conifer forests. Next is Maharana Pratap Sagar sanctuary located in the district Kangra spread across 450 sq km, the sanctuary is known as Pong Dam, named after honor Hindu Rajput rural Maharana Pratap. The sanctuary is renowned for migratory ducks from Siberia and bird-like surkhabs, plover, terns, ducks, and waterfowl. Third is Kalatop wildlife sanctuary in Chamba and Kugti Sanctuary.

Tourism in Chamba District. The beautiful town of Chamba was founded in the 9th century and is situated on the riverbanks of Ravi. Once the erstwhile Pahari capital, Chamba is a popular stopover in the holy town of Bharmour. It has a spectacular place sandwiched between the Zanskar and Dhauladhar ranges, and many renowned treks also start from here. The town has numerous temples and palaces and hosts two popular (fairs), the "Suhi Mata Mela" and the "Minjar Mela", which last for several days of dancing, music, and different cultural activities. Chamba is also well-known for its arts and crafts, mainly its Pahari Paintings which originated in the Hill Kingdoms of North India between the 17th and 19th century, and its handicrafts and textiles. Chamba has so many tourist detonations for historical and religious perspective.

Laxmi Narayan Temple - The Lakshmi Narayan temple complex, dedicated to the Vaishnavite sect, including the main Lakshmi Narayan temple, built in the 10th century by Raja Sahil Verma. It has been built to suit the local climatic conditions with wooden charities and has a Shikhara and a sanctum sanctorum, with an antarala and a mandapa. A metallic image of Garuda the vahana (mount) of Vishnu is installed on the dwajastamba pillar at the main gate of the temple. In 1678, Raja Chhatra Singh adorned the temple roof with gold plated pinnacles as a riposte to Aurangzeb, who had ordered demolition of this Temple.

Bhuri Singh Museum - The Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba was established on 14 September 1908 in honors of the raja at the time, Raja Bhuri Singh, who ruled Chamba from 1904 to 1919. Ph. Vogel, an eminent Indologist, and expert on the history of Chamba, proposed the museum to preserve a number of precious inscriptions, typically in Sarda script, which contained some rare information about the medieval history of Chamba; the prashastis (inscriptions) of Sarahan. Devi-Ri-Kothi and mul Kihara (fountain inscription) are still conserved in the museum.

Bhuri Singh donated his family collection of paintings to the museum, including royal portraits which ranged from Basohli to Guler-Kangra in style, and embroidered Pahari miniatures.

Numerous artifacts, important to the heritage of Chamba were added, including coins, hill jewelry and royal and traditional costumes, arms and armor, musical instruments and other items.

Dalhousie - Dalhousie is a beautiful hill station situated 54 kilometers from dist. Chamba. It is located on five hills. This hill station is located at the western end of the Dhuladhar range of mountain and Surrounded by beautiful snow-covered Mountains. Dalhousie town is named after Lord Dalhousie. Who was the British governor general in India while establishing this place as a summer retreat? Dalhousie is a popular destination for leisure tourist. This enchanting destination has several beautiful places like Kalatop, Dainkund, Bakrota hills and Tibetan market. Dalhousie is the gateway to the ancient Chamba hills. It is well connected by road.

Bharmour – Bharmour is an attractive town surrounded by lush- green Mountains. Bharmour is well connected by road with main cities of the state like Chamba, Kangra, and Dharamshala. It is located 60 kilometers from the city of Chamba. Bharmour is also referred as the land of Lord Shiva because of a belief that Lord Shiva resides at Mountain Kailash which is also located in this area. Bharmour has numerous tourist destination and ancient Temples.

Chaurasi Temple – Chaurasi temple complex is situated in the heart of the Bharmour town and it holds a great religious importance because of Temples built around 1400 years ago. Chaurasi is Hindi word for number eighty-four. It is believed that when 84 Siddhas, who had come from Kurukshetra, were passing through Bharmour to visit Manimahesh, they attract the glory and calmness of Bharmour and reconciled to meditate here. Chaurasi complex was built approximately 7th century.

Table 1: Tourists visited district Chamba during the period from 2009 to 2016.

Years	Domestic	Foreigner	% age change Domestic	% age change Foreigner	Total	% age total
2009	686136	3353	6.491760	-15.1783	689489	6.359620
2010	786163	3253	14.57831	-2.9824	789416	14.49291
2011	817477	2191	3.983143	-32.6864	819668	3.49291
2012	954518	974	16.7639	-55.5454	955492	16.57061
2013	994023	663	4.138738	-31.9302	994686	4.101971
2014	1090874	970	9.743336	46.30468	1091844	9.767706
2015	1122894	1197	2.935261	23.40206	1124091	2.953444
2016	1162267	823	3.506336	-31.2448	1163090	3.469381

Source: Department of Tourism, Government of Himachal Pradesh

Table 1 indicates the growth rate of the Total numbers of tourists visited in District Chamba during the period of 2009-2016. It shows a significant growth rate in a number of tourists visited in District Chamba. It indicates that growth rate of Domestic Tourists is positive comparatively than the Foreign Tourist. It reveals a fluctuating growth rate in term of a total number of Tourist arrivals. In the year 2009, 689489 Tourists visited in district Chamba. The Tourist flow is increased in the year of 2016, 1163090 Tourist visited in District Chamba. Data revealed that a fluctuating growth rate and no doubt it shows positively increasing trends in term of Tourists visited during the period in District Chamba.

Tourism in Kangra District. Kangra Valley is situated in the western Himalaya of Punjab. Administratively; it primarily lies in the state of Himachal Pradesh. It is a popular tourist destination, with the peak season around March and April. It lies on the southern spur of Dhauladhar mountain ranges.

Kangra valley Known as one of the most picturesque valleys of the lower Himalayas, the Kangra Valley is full of greenery and provides a wonderful distinction in the nature of places.

McLeod Ganj - is a suburb tourist destination of Dharamshala in Kangra Valley. It is known as "Little Lhasa" "Dhasa" (a short form of Dharamshala used mainly by Tibetans) because of its large population of Tibetans. The Tibetan government-in-exile is headquartered in McLeod Ganj. It has an average elevation of 2,082 meters. It is located on the Dhauladhar Range whose highest peak, "Hanuman Ka Tibba", at about 5,639 meters, lies just behind.

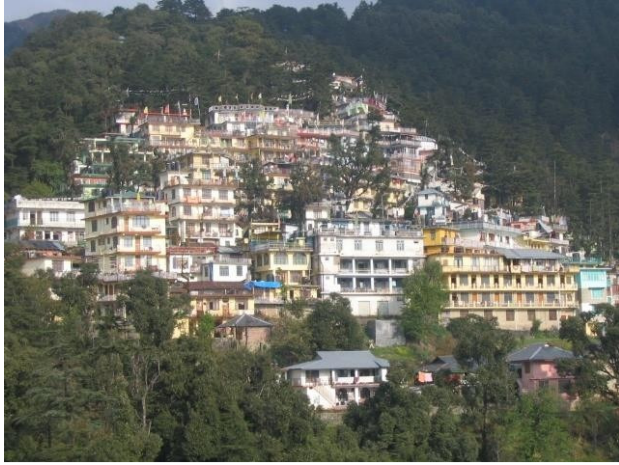


Fig.1. Mc Leod Gang Town.



Fig.2. Mc Leod Gang Main Street.

Namgyal Monastery- Four kilometers from city centers situated within the Tsuglagkhang complex. The complex is also the proud home to the residence of Dalai Lama.

Tibetan Museum – Tibetan museum is situated within the Tsuglagkhang complex and has a varied collection of superb Tibetan art which consist Pottery, History documents, Painting, and Handicraft etc. It reflects Tibetan art and culture.



Fig. 3. Tibetan Museum.



Fig. 4. Triund trek route.

Bhasunag Temple – This Temple is located at a height of 1770 meter above sea level and attracts a large number of pilgrimage tourists throughout the year. It surrounded by lush green fields and a beautiful pool.

Triund – Triund is popular trek located approximately 30 kilometers from Dharamshala. It is located at a great height provide a wonderful view of the moon peak Indra Pass. It is a perfect destination for trekking. The trek from McLeod Ganj to Triund is a sharp one of over 1100 meters and it is completely worth it because of the revitalizing walks amongst the Rhododendron and Oak forest. Town of McLeod Ganj invites you to experience the vibrant Tibetan culture which is enjoyed by tourists from all over the world.

Dal Lake – Located just three kilometers from McLeod Gang named after the Dal Lake of Srinagar this is a wonderful small Lake surrounded by green deodar trees and has a Temple here Dedicated.

Dharamkot – Dharamkot is a beautiful place which presents a wide picturesque view of Kangra valley and the Dhauladhar range.

Kangra Fort – Kangra fort one of the ancient forts in the country, this fort is located 20 kilometers from Dharamshala. The fort is known to have existed during the 4th century B.C. and it mentioned in the war record of Alexander the Great. It shows of Kangra rich traditions heritage and glorious it's past.

Brajeshwari Devi Temple – Temple situated in city center. This Temple is one of the most important pilgrimage tourist attractions in Kangra, as it is also among of the 51 Shakti Peeths of India.



Fig.5. Panoramic view of Triund Campsite during night at a height of approximately 2800 meters.

Palampur- Palampur is situated northwestern part of the state of Himachal Pradesh, at Kangra valley, in Dhauladhar ranges. Palampur is the tea capital of North India. This hill station is known for its numerous tea gardens as well as known for its majestic architecture and Temples. Palampur is very famous for adventure sports and trekking. Palampur is well connected by a network. It is located by 113 kilometers from Pathankot. The Nearest airport of Palampur is Gaggal airport Dharamshala, which is located at a distance of 40 kilometers. And Palampur has its own railway station connected it to other important cities of Himachal Pradesh.

Bir Billing – Bir is 35 kilometers from Palampur while willing is situated 14 kilometers from Bir. Bir Billing is a famous center for paragliding, spiritual studies, and meditation. Bir is also the host of international Paragliding world cup; the flying season is from September to October with some fly also done in November December.



Fig. 6. Andretta Art Gallery.



Fig. 7. Famous Sohni Mahiwal’s Painting by Sobha Singh.

Andretta Art Gallery – Sobha sing was a famous artist from the Sikh community. He was expert in western classical techniques of oil painting. Sobha sing art gallery in Andretta has become an art center which visited by a

large number of tourist all round the year. The Paintings of Sri Krishna Sri Rama Jesus Christ and Shaikh Farid are also displayed there.

Table 2 indicates the growth rate of the Total numbers of tourists visited in District Kangra during the period of 2009-2016. It shows a significant growth rate in a number of tourists visited in District Kangra. It reveals a fluctuating growth rate in term of a total number of Tourist arrivals. In the year 2009, 1479512 Tourists visited in district Kangra. The Tourist flow is significantly increased in the year of 2016, 2642732 Tourist visited in District Kangra.

Table 2: Tourists visited district Kangra during the period from 2009 to 2016.

Year	Domestic	Foreigner	% change domestic	% age change foreigner	Total Visitors	% age change total
2009	1403963	75549	10.101360	6.678998	1479512	9.92129119
2010	1631232	91709	16.187677	21.39009	1722941	16.45333055
2011	1813686	98962	11.18504	7.908711	1912648	11.01064981
2012	2190302	115109	20.76523	16.31636	2305411	20.53503833
2013	2098028	102595	-4.21284	-10.8714	2200623	-4.54530667
2014	2230888	102479	6.332613	-0.11307	2333367	6.03210999
2015	2396970	112843	7.444659	10.11329	2509813	12.37799251
2016	2528837	113895	5.561404	9.794139	2642732	5.29597224

Source: Department of Tourism, Government of Himachal Pradesh

Available Infrastructure Facilities at the Prime Tourist Destination in Dhauladhar Travel Circuit

A. Available Infrastructure Facilities at the Prime Tourist Destination in District Chamba

Statistics relating to number of Hotels, Guest Houses, Restaurants, Home Stay units, Travel Agencies, Guides and Photographers in district Chamba as on 31.12.2016

Table 3.

No. of Hotels/Guest Houses and Home stay	No. of Restaurants	Travel Agencies	Tourist Guides	Photographers
184	32	34	90	13

Source: Department of Tourism, Government of Himachal Pradesh

B. Available Infrastructure Facilities at the Prime Tourist Destination in District Kangra

Statistics relating number of Hotels, Guest Houses, Restaurants, Home Stays, Tourist guides, and Travel agencies in district Kangra as on 31.12.2016.

Table 4.

No of Hotels/Guest Houses	No. of Restaurants	Travel Agencies	Tourist Guides	Photographers
481	98	340	82	3

Source: Department of Tourism, Government of Himachal Pradesh

Tourism Infrastructure Gaps in Dhauladhar Travel Circuit

A. Tourism infrastructure gaps in District Kangra

-Needs better infrastructure facilities for unexplored tourist destinations, and better overall management needed to promote these destinations.

-Up gradation of Temples needed. And need to special attention on Religious tourism destinations like Brajeshwari Devi Temple and Jwalaji Temple needs more amenities for Pilgrims.

-Better quality accommodation facilities and quality restaurant and eateries needed for tourist.

B. Tourism infrastructure gaps in district Chamba

- Better tourism products needed to cater to the existing flow and enhance their stay.
- Better transportation and communication facilities needed.
- Need better quality accommodation facilities for tourists at destinations.
- Overall management and Government initiatives require for tourism development in the region.
- Better infrastructure facilities needed for the unexplored tourist destination.
- Better arrangements need to be put in place for the International Minjar festivals and Manimahesh yatra.

CONCLUSION

Tourism promotion can be compared to selling dreams to tourist. Dhauladhar as a tourist circuit has immense potential for tourism growth and has many unexplored tourist destinations need to be developed. The challenges are to face this region lack of tourism infrastructures like transportation, communication, and accommodation problem faced by the tourist in peak season in this region. The opportunities for different aspects of tourism to this tourist circuit are quite evident. It is the prime responsibility of both private as well as private stakeholders to come forward for development for this tourist circuit. The development of tourism will provide an opportunity for various sources of income and employment for local populations as well as provide the major source of income for the State.

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