

# A Study of Tourist Satisfaction in Shimla City (H.P) -An Empirical Evaluation

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**Abstract:** Tourism is playing very important role in India these days. India is the world's 7th largest tourism economy in terms of GDP. Indian economy is growing at a rapid pace and service sector constitutes the largest chunk of India's GDP, therefore there are ample development opportunities for tourism sector. One of the most obvious options available is to develop new sites and provide better services at existing ones. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the satisfaction level of tourists in Shimla the capital city of Himachal Pradesh. For this purpose the following objectives was spelt out: - 1) To evaluate the level of tourists' satisfaction with regards to existing tourism facilities in Shimla, 2) To identify the problems experienced by the tourists and to advance the suggestions for tackling the problems. To achieve these objectives a well structured questionnaire was prepared and data were collected through direct personal interview. Several tests like Chi-square and descriptive statistics were used to get more accurate results. It was found that majority of tourists are not highly satisfied with public transportation, parking and banking and medical facilities in Shimla.

**Keywords:** tourism economy, tourism sector, tourists' satisfaction, public transportation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The growing phenomenon of globalization, liberalization and privatization has been influencing the Tourism industry. Tourism industry plays a very important role in our economy. Today tourism related infrastructure in various regions of the country has improved the standard of living of the local people and helped to promote local arts and crafts. Tourism has also contributed to increase awareness about conservation of the environment and the cultural heritage. It is the fastest growing industry in modern world. People have always travelled to distant parts of the world to see monuments, arts and culture, taste new cuisine etc. **International Union of Official Travel Organization (IUOTO)**, now called as **World Tourism Organization (WTO)**, has defined tourist as a temporary visitor staying for at least 24 hours in a country visited when the purpose of the journey can be classified under one of the following headings - a) Leisure: - recreation, holiday, health, study of religion and sports. b) Business, family, mission meetings. WTO has classified three types of tourism: - a) **Domestic Tourism:** It consists of residents visiting within their own country. No formalities are required in this kind of travel. b) **Inbound Tourism:** Comprises non-residents travelling into a country of their choice. c) **Outbound Tourism:** Comprises residents of a nation travelling out to foreign country.

In Himachal Pradesh there are ample opportunities for the development of tourism industry. Specifically, in Shimla the capital city of Himachal Pradesh various tourist destinations have been developed and there are further requirement of developing new destinations to attract more and more tourists from across the world. In Shimla City the main attractions of the tourists are: - Jakhu Temple, Tara Devi Temple, The ridge and Mall road, Kufri, Potter Hill, Chadwick's Fall, Narkanda, Tanu Jubbal Lake, Chansal Peak and ChandraNahan lake, St. Mary's church, Kali Bari temple, Sankat mochan, Seven hills, Annandale, Himalayan bird park, Gaiety heritage cultural complex, Indian institute of advanced studies, Lakkar bazaar, Kalka to Shimla railway track, Mashobra, Fagu and Chail

It is fact that in the age of LPG, the tourism is gaining popularity at the global level. So it is imperative to undertake and evaluate the different work conducted so far and works published in academic and non-academic journals, reference books and various other research need to be reviewed and acknowledged. The following is a review of some recent research work done in the field of tourism.

Thomas (2007) emphasis that regulated tourism has always been an important part of the protected area management to generate valuable revenue and also to raise the awareness levels of the people visiting these areas towards the conservation of these resources. Bhartari (2008) found that ecotourism development has entered an exciting phase in North India. However, there is tremendous scope for sharing experience and scaling up of activities through well planned collaborative projects both amongst Himalayan States of India and with bordering nations of Nepal and Bhutan. Karar (2010) discussed the impact of pilgrimage on tourism in Haridwar. A number of Hindu religious fairs and festivals are held annually, several of which are the bathing fairs held on the banks of the Ganga at Haridwar. One of the most important factors of the fame of Haridwar has been the Kumbha and Ardha Kumbha, world famous fairs celebrated every 12<sup>th</sup> year and 6<sup>th</sup> year respectively. Nag (2013) focused on Ecotourism and its importance in the economy. As ecotourism is a tourist destination and most of tourist visit the Himalayan region to spend their time to have a look at the beauty of tourist spots and to have a feel of the beautiful and natural environment. He further stated the threats or bottlenecks which have to be taken care of like infrastructure; accessibility and quality of local service along with several steps to overcome the threats have been studied. Murdia (2015) in her study on “Scenario of Domestic Tourism in Rajasthan” found the present scenario on domestic tourism being capable to gear the country’s economy by generating the revenues and opportunities for the employment. Domestic tourism helps in exploitation of the available resources at optimum level. She added that 14% contribution in total revenue generation in Rajasthan is directly or indirectly from tourism industry. Rodriguez and Fernandez (2016) highlighted that there was no one single conception or theoretical – methodological approach to studying relationships and propose a classification of the literature on the basis of six major research lines, with a view to identifying and analyzing the main advances and gaps presented by each of the research lines. In short, the article identifies the main lines of research developed in this field analyzing main contribution and making the series of proposals to guide the research agenda regarding the analyses of relationships in tourism. Keeping in the view the above considerations, there is a need to undertake a study which could examine the level of tourist satisfaction in Shimla City.

### Objectives of the Study

- 1 To evaluate the level of tourists’ satisfaction with regards to existing tourists’ facilities in Shimla.
- 2 To identify the problems experienced by the tourists and to advance the suggestions for tackling the problems.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. Research is a process of collecting analyzing and interpreting information to answer question. Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods of principles associated with a branch of knowledge. In Himachal Pradesh tourism is the main source of revenue, after agriculture. Tourism is a major source of generating employment and income avenues in the state. Himachal Pradesh Government has declared tourism as an industry and provided subsidy along with some financial aid. Himachal Pradesh has great tourism potential with tourist resorts of different cultural background in all of its twelve districts. So, there is an urgent need to undertake a careful planning for the development of tourism industry in the state. After going through many texts on this matter, it was discussed that bulk of studies conducted so far analyze the performance of tourism development but no serious attempt has been made to explore the causes hampering the pace of tourism development in the state of Himachal Pradesh. Moreover there are certain basic questions which are unanswered in these studies. What is the satisfaction level of tourists? What are the problems faced by the tourists? What are the opinions of tourists regarding the development of Shimla on the basis of tourism? The development of tourism industry is the vital need at present, for this the facilities like accommodation, lodging, food and hoarding should be improved in much better way. Shimla is one of the most beautiful places to visit and also an important tourist destination from tourist point of view. Shimla has all facilities for tourist but sometimes there are problem during tourist peak season. Keeping in the view factor discussed above, the study of tourism, its role in the development of Shimla is essential. To study the satisfaction level of tourists in Shimla City the need of the present study has been raised. This study makes the effective contribution in achieving the objectives to improve the resources for the promotion of tourism in Shimla City. The study is based on both primary as well as secondary sources. On the basis of literature review a pilot survey was conducted. A total of 40 respondents were strategically selected to conduct the pilot survey in different destinations in Shimla the capital city of Himachal Pradesh. A reliability test has been done. The reason of the pilot study was to refine the test instrument. On the basis of factors identified in the pilot study stage, a structured questionnaire has been constructed on

Likert 3-point scale to conduct a survey. Besides, the secondary sources including various publications, research papers in journals, magazines and periodicals have been consulted for the present study. The data collected from different sources has been classified and arranged in tables in one or more forms according to the requirement of analysis. For the analysis of results, the mathematical tools viz. percentage has been used to analyze the collected data. Chi-square test has also been applied to study the relationship between the quantity variables and for analyzing the opinion of the respondents regarding different factors.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following paras present the analysis and interpretation of primary data which is collected with the help of questionnaire. The study is based on the sample of 134. Apart from simple analysis, advanced statistical tools such as chi-square test have been applied. Interpretation is based on the rigorous exercise aiming at the achievement of study objectives. Himachal Pradesh is very rich from the tourist point of view with all the basic resources necessary for promoting tourism activities. Shimla and its nearby areas have been main attractions for the tourists. Both domestic and foreign tourists come here. Shimla district has been made to cover demographic feature of tourists, purpose of their visit, accommodation facilities, transport facilities, the attitude of tourist towards these facilities, the problem faced by tourist during their stay, impact of tourism on general public and so on.

#### a) Demographic profile of the study area:

The study was conducted in Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh. The following section mainly focuses on the demographic characteristics of the study area in terms of age, sex, marital status and income.

**Table 1: Profile of respondents on the basis of age**

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below25	27	20.1
25 to 35	39	29.1
35 to 45	28	20.9
Above 45	40	29.9
Total	134	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

**Table 2: Profile of respondents on the basis of age**

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	66	49.3
Female	68	50.7
Total	134	100

Source: Field Survey.

**Table 3: Profile of respondents on the basis of marital status**

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Married	84	62.7
Unmarried	50	37.3
Total	134	100

Source: Field Survey.

Table 4: Profile of respondents on the basis of Income

Yearly Income	Frequency	Percent
100,000 to 300,000	26	19.4
300,000 to 600,000	42	31.3
600,000 to 900,000	38	28.4
900,000 and above	28	20.9
Total	134	100

Source: Field Survey.

#### b) Relation of dependent variables with independent variables

Table 5: Classification of tourist on the basis of income and dislike the most during visit to Shimla

Yearly Income of Tourists	Dislike the Most During Visit to Shimla					Total
	pollution	traffic	crowd	lack of facilities	poor road conditions	
1,00,000 to 3,00,000	4 (3.0)	7 (5.2)	6 (4.5)	6 (4.5)	3 (2.2)	26 (19.4)
3,00,000 to 6,00,000	10 (7.5)	22 (16.4)	1 (0.7)	2 (1.5)	7 (5.2)	42 (31.3)
6,00,000 to 9,00,000	4 (3.0)	13 (9.7)	5 (3.7)	10 (7.5)	6 (4.5)	38 (28.4)
Above 9,00,000	2 (1.5)	12 (9.0)	8 (6.0)	3 (2.2)	3(2.2)	28 (20.9)
Total	20 (14.9)	54 (40.3)	20 (14.9)	21 (15.7)	19 (14.2)	134 (100.0)

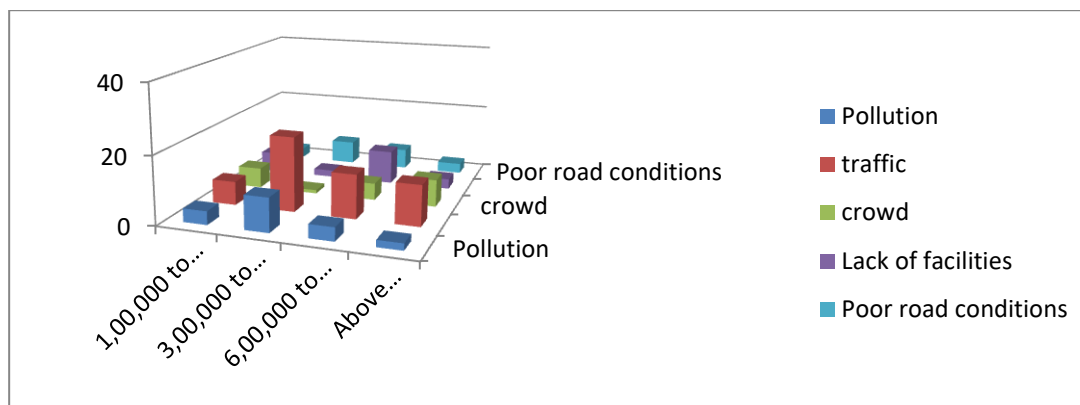
Source: Data collected through questionnaire.

Note: - Figure in parenthesis indicates percentage.

$\chi^2$ : -23.987

P: - 0.020

DF: - 12



It has been observed from the table no 5 that among the income group 100,000 to 300,000; 3.0% tourists dislike the pollution they experience during their visit to Shimla, 5.2% tourists dislike the traffic they experience during their visit to Shimla.4.5% tourists dislike the crowd they experience during their visit to Shimla, 4.5% tourists dislike the lack of facilities they experience during their visit to shimla.2.2 % tourists dislike the poor road conditions the experience during their visit to Shimla. Among the income group 300,000 to 600,000; 7.5% tourists dislike the pollution they experience during their visit to Shimla, 16.4% tourists dislike the traffic they experience during their visit to Shimla.0.7% tourists dislike the crowd they experience during their visit to Shimla, 1.5% tourists dislike the lack of facilities they experience during their visit to shimla,5.2 % tourists dislike the poor road conditions the experience during their visit to Shimla. Among the income group 600,000 to 900,000; 3.0% tourists dislike the pollution they experience during their visit to Shimla, 9.7% tourists dislike the traffic they experience during their visit to Shimla.3.7% tourists dislike the crowd they experience during their visit to Shimla, 7.5% tourists dislike the lack of facilities they experience during their visit to shimla.4.5 % tourists dislike the poor road conditions the experience during their visit to Shimla. Income Above 900,000; 1.5% tourists dislike the pollution they experience during their visit to Shimla, 9.0% tourists dislike the traffic they experience during their visit to Shimla6.0% tourists dislike the crowd they experience during their visit to Shimla, 2.2% tourists dislike the lack of facilities they experience during their visit to shimla.2.2 % tourists dislike the poor road conditions the experience during their visit to Shimla.

The calculated value of Chi-square is 23.987 at 5% level of significance which is more than the table value 19.7. The results are significant it rejects the null hypothesis. There is significant relationship between dislike the most and income of the respondents. It can be concluded that majority of tourists with different income level dislike the traffic problem in Shimla.

**Table 6: Relationship between yearly income of tourists and challenging problems faced during their visit to Shimla**

Yearly income of tourist	Challenging Problems Faced During Visit To Shimla					Total
	Quality of services	reliability	Language difficulties	price	other	
1,00,000 to 3,00,000	9 (6.7)	6 (4.5)	5 (3.7)	4 (3.0)	2 (1.5)	26 (19.4)
3,00,000 to 6,00,000	15 (11.2)	7 (5.2)	3 (2.2)	7 (5.2)	10 (7.5)	42 (31.3)
6,00,000 to 9,00,000	5 (3.7)	4 (3.0)	4 (3.0)	11 (8.2)	14 (10.4)	38 (28.4)
Above 9,00,000	4 (3.0)	8 (6.0)	3 (2.2)	3 (2.2)	10 (7.5)	28 (20.9)
<i>Total</i>	<i>33 (24.6)</i>	<i>25 (18.7)</i>	<i>15 (11.2)</i>	<i>25 (18.7)</i>	<i>36 (26.9)</i>	<i>134 (100.)</i>

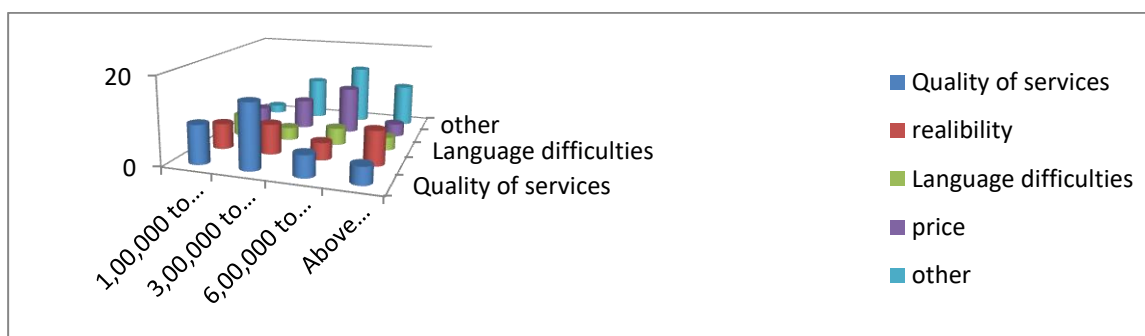
Source: Data collected through questionnaire.

Note: - Figure in parenthesis indicates percentage.

$X^2$ : - 20.985

P: - 0.051

Df: - 12



The classification of tourists on the basis of income and challenging problems faced during visit to Shimla has been given in the table no 6. It has been observed from the table that among the income level 1,00,000 to 3,00,000 ; 6.7% tourists faced quality of services as a challenging problem during their visit to Shimla, 4.5 %tourists faced reliability as a challenging problem during their visit to Shimla, 3.7% tourists faced language as a challenging problem during their visit to Shimla , 3.0% tourists faced price as a challenging problem and 1.5% tourists faced any other problem as a challenging problem during their visit to Shimla. Among the income level 3, 00,000 to 6, 00,000; 11.2% tourists faced quality of services as a challenging problem, 5.2% tourists faced reliability as a challenging problem, 2.2% tourists faced language as a challenging, 5.2% tourists faced price as a challenging problem and 7.5% tourists faced any other problem as a challenging problem during their visit to Shimla. Similarly, among the income level 6,00,000 to 9,00,000; 3.7% tourists faced quality of services as a challenging problem, 3.0% tourists faced reliability as a challenging problem, 3.0% tourists faced language as a challenging, 8.2% tourists faced price as a challenging problem and 10.4% tourists faced any other problem as a challenging problem during their visit to Shimla. Under category above 9, 00,000; 3.0% tourists faced quality of services as a challenging problem, 6.0% tourists faced reliability as a challenging problem, 2.2% tourists faced language as a challenging, 2.2% tourists faced price as a challenging problem and 7.5% tourists faced any other problem as a challenging problem during their visit to Shimla.

The calculated value of Chi-square is 20.985 at 5% level of significance which is more than the table value 19.7 so it rejects the null hypothesis. It shows that here is significant relationship between income of the tourists and challenging problems. It is observed that tourists with different income level face quality of services, reliability, language and price as a challenging problem in Shimla. But majority of them faces some other problems.

Table 7: Classification of tourist on the basis of sex of tourist and purpose of visit

Sex Of Tourist	Purpose of visit						Total
	family vacation	adventure	business	Spiritual	educational	any other	
Male	33 (24.6)	13 (9.7)	10 (7.5)	8 (6.0)	2 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	66 (49.3)
Female	21 (15.7)	15 (11.2)	3 (2.2)	12 (9.0)	11 (8.2)	6 (4.5)	68 (50.7)
Total	54 (40.3)	28 (20.9)	13 (9.7)	20 (14.9)	13 (9.7)	6 (4.5)	134 (100.0)

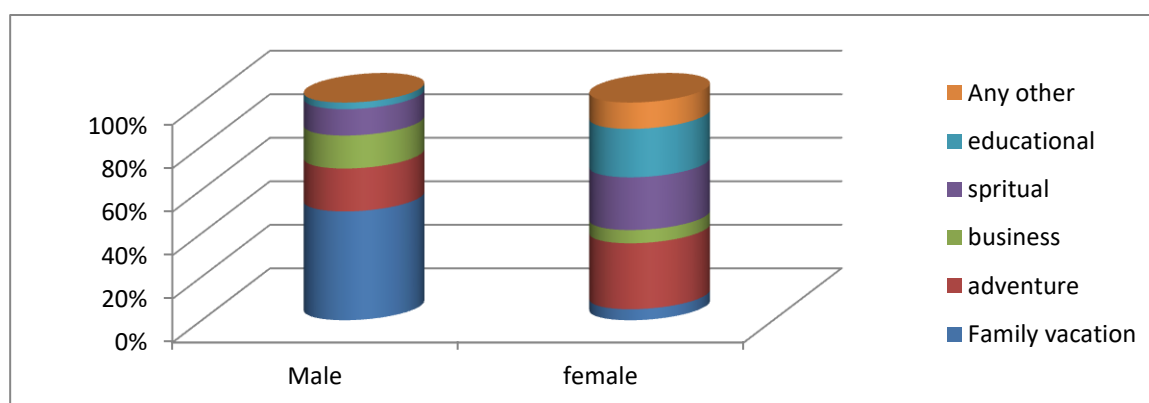
Source: - Data collected through questionnaire.

Note: - Figure in parenthesis indicates percentage.

$X^2$ : - 19.584

P: - 0.001

Df: - 5



The breakup of tourists on the basis of sex purpose of their visit to Shimla is given in the table 7. The table reveals that 24.6% male tourists and 15.7% female tourist came for family vacation to Shimla, 9.7% male tourists and 11.2% female tourist came for adventure to Shimla, 7.5% male tourists and 2.2% female tourist came for business purpose to Shimla, 6.0% male tourists and 9.0% female tourist came for spiritual purpose to Shimla. The purpose of visit to Shimla of 1.5% male tourists and 8.2% female tourists was educational and 4.5% female tourist also came for any other purpose.

The calculated value of Chi-square is 19.584 at 5% significance level which is more than the table value 11.1 and it rejects the null hypothesis. So, there is significant relationship between these two variables i.e. sex of the tourists and purpose of visit to Shimla. It can be concluded that majority of male and female tourists came Shimla for family vacation.

Table 8: Views regarding tourism promotional facilities in Shimla

Particular	High	Moderate	Low	Total	Mean	S.D.
tourism promotional facility like entertainment facility in Shimla	50	68	16	134	2.2537	.65679
tourism promotional facility like tourism information facility in Shimla	54	63	17	134	2.2761	.67603
tourism promotional facility like telecommunication facility	41	67	26	134	2.1119	.70081
tourism promotional facility like maintenance of tourist spot	51	41	42	134	2.0672	.83349

Source: Data collected through questionnaire

**Entertainment Facilities:** Entertainment facilities like cinema hall, picnic spot and tourist destinations are accessible in Shimla district. 50 respondents are highly satisfied while 68 respondents are moderate and 16 respondents do not satisfy at all with the entertainment facilities. The mean value is 2.2537 and standard deviation is .65679.

**Tourism Information Facilities:** Tourism facilities in Shimla are moderate as there is tourism department office in Shimla district. As 54 respondents agree to large extent that tourism facilities are very good in Shimla while 63 respondents agree to some extent with the statement and 17 respondents do not agree with the statement. The Mean value is 2.2761 and Standard deviation is .67603.

**Telecommunication Facilities:** Different respondents have different views about the telecommunication facilities in Shimla. As 41 respondents say there is very good telecommunication facilities while 67 respondents agree to some extent and 26 respondents do not agree with the statement. The mean value is 2.1119 and S.D. is .70081.

**Maintenance of Tourist Spots:** It is observed from the table 8 that respondents have different views about maintenance of tourist spot in Shimla. As 51 respondents say there is very good maintenance of tourist spots while 41 respondents agree to some extent and 41 respondents do not agree with the statement. The mean value is 2.0672 and S.D. is .83349.

#### 4. FINDINGS

- The study found that 81.5% domestic tourists and 18.5% foreign tourists visited Himachal Pradesh for family vacations. There is no significant difference in the opinion of domestic and foreign visitors with regard to their purpose of visit.
- The study reveals that 19.4% tourists falls under the income level 1 to 3 lac. And 31.3 % falls under category 3 to 6 lac, 28.4% falls under category 6 to 9 lack and 20.9% falls under category above 9 lacks. It is found that majority of tourists those come to Shimla falls under the income category 6 to 9 lac.
- It is observed from the study that majority of married tourists visited to Shimla as 62.7% of respondents were married and 37.3% were unmarried.
- The study also reveals that majority of tourists are not highly satisfied with public transportation, parking and banking and medical facilities in Shimla as majority of respondents found it average.
- From the study, it is observed that out of 134 respondents, 47 respondents are highly satisfied with restaurants, bars and cafes of Shimla, 56 respondents are satisfied with restaurants, bars and cafes of Shimla and 31 respondents are not satisfied. So, It can be concluded that majority of respondents are satisfied with restaurants, bars and cafes of Shimla.
- The study reveals that tourists with different age groups are highly satisfied with behavior of shopkeepers in Shimla as 42.5% respondents strongly agree with it.
- From the study, it can be concluded that hotels in Shimla are business minded as majority of respondents strongly agree with it.
- It is observed from the study that majority of female tourists dislike the traffic problem in Shimla as 20.9% female respondents agree with it.
- The study also reveals that tourists with age group above 45 found no crime and cheating in Shimla as from all the age group of respondents, majority of respondents with age group above 45 do not agree with it.

#### 5. SUGGESTIONS

- Some festivals should be organized by the Department of Tourism, Himachal Pradesh and the local, in which the main attraction should be to promote local culture among themselves as well as among outsiders.
- Himachal Pradesh must be able to provide hotels to cater to all segments of the society. It must market its camping facilities more and ensure that they are safe to use.
- Railways must be given a boost so that long distance travel becomes easy. Low cost airlines and helicopter services can also be used to reach the inaccessible regions depending on climatic conditions.
- Entertainment facilities must be provided in order to ensure a longer stay by the tourists. They must have a unique thing to take back with them. Family entertainment facilities must be developed. More playgrounds and parks must be made.
- Create new planned tourist destinations from the unexplored regions which must be opened up at least in the peak months.
- Basic necessities must be provided. Water availability has to be catered to.
- Pollution should also be controlled as it affects the society in large therefore several steps must be taken in order to control the pollution.
- There is also need for the improvement of parking facilities in Shimla.

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