

MOUNTAINEERING TOURISM PROSPECTS AND TRENDS: A CASE OF UTTARAKHAND HIMALAYA

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Abstract: Uttarakhand Himalayas cradles some of the richest assets of nature in terms of its vivid geodiversity and biodiversity. Uttarakhand abounds, some of the best and the richest Himalayan resources in it, as snow bound peaks, glaciers, rivers, valleys, alpine pasture, high mountain passes etc. which serves as a playground for the game called mountaineering. Mountaineering tourism among the varied types of tourism offerings in the state of Uttarakhand, in class of adventure tourism is key driver, which magnetizes adventure enthusiasts to visit Uttarakhand Himalayas. The very paper focuses on mountaineering tourism trends in Uttarakhand and further prospects and potential areas in Uttarakhand for mountaineering tourism operation and development.

Keywords: Uttarakhand Himalayas, Mountaineering Tourism, Trends, Prospects.



“Why do people climb mountains?”

Because they are there”

Answered G.L Mallory

1.0 Uttarakhand: An Introduction (Background And Physical Setup)

The Central Himalaya, popularly known as Uttarakhand (Khanduri & Saklani, 2003), carved off from Uttar Pradesh. Uttarakhand as a state, came into existence on 9 Nov, 2000 as the 27th state of India. The state is divided into two regions, Garhwal with seven districts and Kumaun with six districts. The geographical location of the state, lies between 28° 53' 24" and 31°27'50" N latitudes and between 77°34'27" and 81°02'22" longitudes. The state is strategically located and forms part of the northern boundary of the country sharing its border with China (Tibet) and Nepal. Himachal Pradesh and Haryana lie to its West and Uttar Pradesh to its South, forms its state boundaries. Uttarakhand Himalayas constitute around 17.04% of the total Himalayan region of India. The state encompassing an area of 53,119 Sq Km (Khanduri & Saklani, 2003) and about 64.7 % of the area is covered by forests and is rich with numerous species of plants, animals and birds. About 93 % area is hilly and the remaining 7 % is covered by plains. The elevation extends approximately from 300 m to over 7,000 m average mean sea level (Forest Works Manual and Schedule of Rates for Forestry Related Works in Uttarakhand).

The Central Himalaya, Uttarakhand serves as a source of some of the major drainage system of the country. The Ganga, the Yamuna, the Rāmgangā and the Kali are the major drainage system of the state (Khanduri & Saklani, 2003). Uttarakhand has that galaxy of peaks and glaciers, that vastness of meadows and jungles, and that wealth of colourful valleys and dales which have no parallel on earth (Fonia, 1987). The trekkers, mountaineers, skiers, botanists, ornithologists, thrill seekers, *Vaids and Hakims*, and seekers of eternal peace visited Himalayas from the times immemorial (Bisht P. S., 2008). Garhwal and Kumaun Himalaya, fall into three physiographic units (from south to north) as: Outer Himalayas or Siwalik, Lesser Himalayas or Lower Himalayas and Greater Himalayas or Main Himalayas (Negi, 1998).



Figure No: - I Location Map of Uttarakhand

Source: - Google maps & self-edited.

1.1 Overview: Mountaineering in Uttarakhand: A Brief Historical Profile

History of tourism in the Himalayas can be divided into three distinct phases or categories: the religious pilgrimages, the British hill stations of the 19th century and the modern mass tourism of the 20th century (Spaltenberger, 2003). With the British occupation of India, there came a concept of mountaineering in the country. However the local native used to cross the high mountain passes for the purpose of trade and strolling in the alpine pastures for the livestock. The exploration and climbing as we know today started with the arrival of the British. It was out of the necessities of the 'Great Game' in the Karakoram that explorers were first sent into the range. Then came the shoulders, the most famous being the Francis Young husband's expedition across

Sikkim to reach Lhasa. They were followed by the surveyors as the Survey of India under the British officers systematically drew maps of each area and this resulted in the discovery of the highest peak in the world-Everest. Finally came the climbers (Kapadia, 1999-2000). The concept of conquest in the Europe, also led the Europeans towards the mighty Himalayas. Especially the British had the upper hand as the Indian Sub-continent was under occupation of the British rule. With the establishment of 'The Himalayan Club' in 1928, opened the doors for mountain climbing, as the aim of the very club was to assist mountain climbers from Europe and more specifically the elite British. Some of the better-known early expedition to this range were that of Hugh Ruttledge, which explored Kumaun. In 1905 and 1907 Arnold Mumm and Charles Bruce spent five months in Garhwal and climbed several peaks. Trisul, 7120m was climbed in 1907 by Dr. Longstaff and it remained the highest climbed peak in the world for several years. Frank Smythe reached the summit of Kamet in 1931 to break the record. This was soon overtaken by the climb of Nanda Devi in 1936. The exploration of routes to Mt. Nanda Devi base by Eric Shipton and Bill Tilman in 1934, its ascent in 1936, and all other subsequent expedition are part of mountaineering history. After the war and Indian independence in 1947 there were serious doubts whether the sport would continue to flourish. Some of the people who 'stayed on', like Jack Gibson and John Martyn enthused Indians into climbing and the sport continued. One of their students, Gurdial Singh climbed Trisul in 1951, the first peak to be climbed by an Indian on an Indian expedition (Kapadia, 1999-2000). The Kumaun and Garhwal Himalayas have always drawn the attention and respect of the mountaineers around the world. In Garhwal, the glory of Gangotri valley and the Himalayan peaks around, makes it the best mountainous area in the world. These peaks are mostly over 6000 m. All along the 26 km length of the Gangotri glacier are other glaciers and peaks, some of which are not yet fully explored. The Arwa glacier region, Mukut, Kamet and Abi Gamin are other important mountaineering areas. In the far west of Garhwal, Har-Ki-Doon provides an enormous beautiful base for attempting on the Swargarohani group and Bandar Poonch group. From the Eastern corner the climbers can scale the Trishul group. Further eastwards in Kumaon, the Nanda Devi East, Changuch, Nanda Kot, Nanda Khat and Panchachuli group, etc. welcome the mountaineers to test their endurance to the fullest.

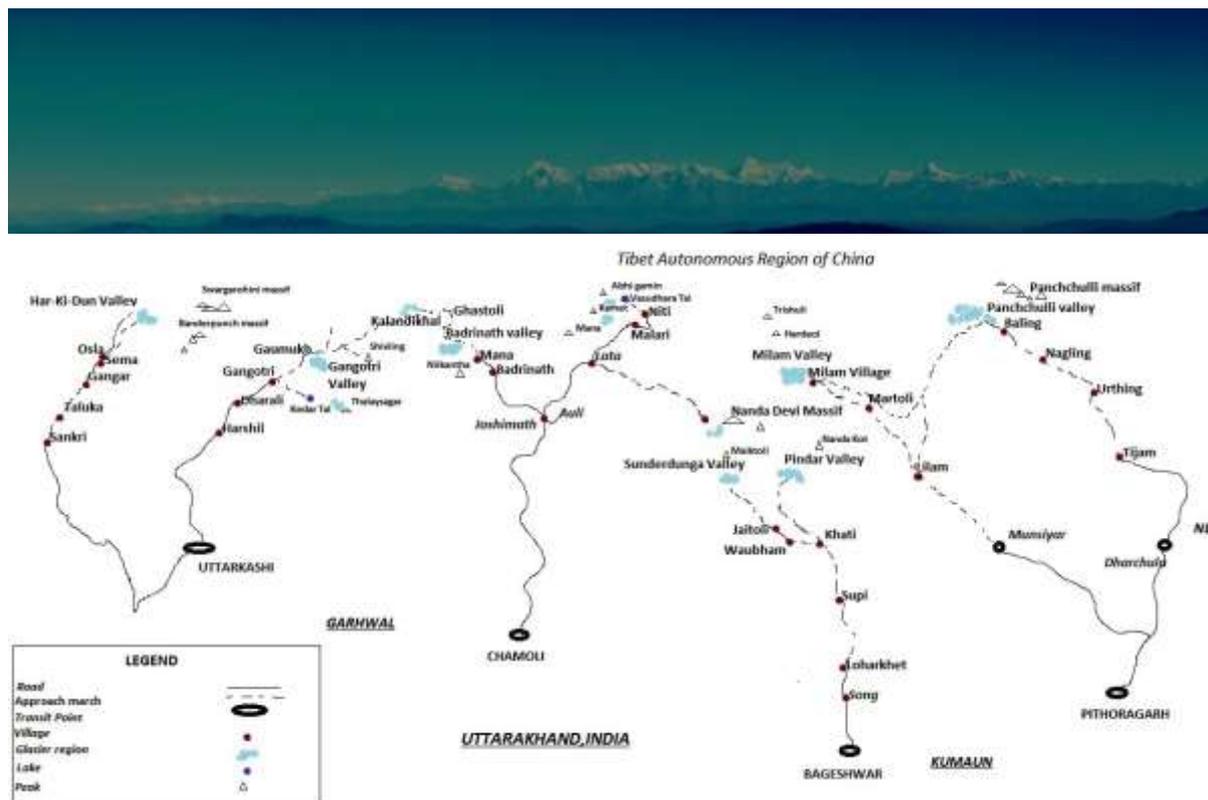
The table no. 1 shows some of the important landmark and year of mountaineering in Uttarakhand Himalayas and figure no. II represents the operational area for mountaineering in different Himalayan regions (Kumaun & Garhwal) of Uttarakhand Himalayas:

Table No. - 1

YEAR	Important landmark
1823-1847:	Era of exploration started and survey of this great mountain system was taken up. George Everest, Nain Singh, Hari Ram and Kishan Singh played a great part in it. Pandit Nain Singh and Pandit Kishan Singh were natives from a Milam village in the Kumaon Himalaya. They were called Pandits as both of them were school teachers. They were honoured with C.I.E. (Companion of Indian Empire)
1931:	Kamet Peak (7756m) in the Himalaya was climbed by English Party.
1936:	Nanda-Devi (7817m) in Garhwal Himalaya was climbed by Tilman and Odel. The oxygen was used by them at high altitude.
1942:	A party of three boys who were fifteen year old and two teachers of Doon School visited Arwa Valley Glacier above Badrinath and camped at the height of 5791m. One of them was N.D.Jayal.
1955:	Trainees of Himalayan Mountaineering Institute Advance Course, climbed Kamet (7756m) under the leadership of N.D.Jayal.
1959:	Nandakot (6861m) climbed by Comdr. M.S. Kohli and K.P. Sharma from Indian Navy. Chaukhamba (7138m) climbed by I.A.F. Bandertpunch (6316m) climbed by Army.
1964:	Nanda Devi (7817m) was climbed by Nawang Gombu and Dawa Norbu Under leadership of Col. N. Kumar. All women expeditions to Mrigthani (6855m) were successful.
1965	N.I.M. (Nehru Institute of Mountaineering) Uttarkashi was opened and Brig. Gian Singh took over as First Principal.
1981:	Indian women climbed Mount Nanda Devi. Miss Chandra Prabha Aitwal, Miss Harshawanti Bisht and Miss Rekha Sharma were the summiters.
1984:	Miss Bachendri Pal became the first Indian lady and 5th lady Everester in the world. She became a source of inspiration for the Indians, more specifically she made Uttarakhand region proud.

Source: - Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi & Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi.

Figure No: - II Map Showing Himalayan Valleys for Mountaineering Tourism in Uttarakhand



Source: - Self drawn, photographed & edited. (Not to Scale).

2.0 Literature Review

There is a dearth of researches in the field of mountaineering tourism and its bearing in terms of different impacts on the host community. Though, there are researches, research papers, and articles, etc. which talk about mountaineering in terms of expression of sport or more psychological determinants defining the factors which led to people Climb Mountains (Beedie & Hudson, Emergence of mountain-based adventure tourism, 2003) (Beedie, Mountain guiding and adventure tourism: Reflections on the choreography of experience, 2003) (Pomfret, 2006). Some of the researches do talk about the commercialized adventure and commodification process of mountaineering (Johnston & Edwards, 1994); (Elmes & Barry, 1999); (Holyfield, 1999); (Vause, 2000); (Palmer, Shit happens!: The selling of risk in extreme sport, 2002) (Palmer, Death, danger and the selling of risk in adventure sports, 2004); (Bisht H. , 1994), but most of the researches are diversified in general approach of adventure business, not specifically mountaineering tourism.

Adventure tourism is a growing subset of tourism (Beedie & Hudson, Emergence of mountain-based adventure tourism, 2003) is referred as a Niche Product for development and promotion of tourism. Under ‘Swadish Darshan scheme’ a project of the Ministry of Tourism, adventure tourism in Uttarakhand finds its place in the scheme (Annual Report, 2015-16).

Focusing on the prospects and development of trekking and mountaineering tourism in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, (Bisht H. , 1994) identifying, of all the development activities, mountaineering and trekking have the potential to usher in all-round development in Gahwal region. (Musa & et al, 2015), Presented an extensive work in terms of mountaineering literature. The key spheres related to mountaineering tourism incorporated in the book were geography of mountain trekking, history of mountaineering tourism, concept of wilderness tourism, guided mountaineering tourism, gender and mountaineering tourism mountaineering personality and risk, mountaineering commodification, mountaineering evolution, economy, ecology and ethics.

(Steering Committee on Tourism for the Formulation of the Eleventh Plan, 2007-2012) Clearly states that, in view of immense potential for nature and adventure tourism in India, it should be promoted vigorously during the 11th plan, particularly because the peak time for adventure tourism is during the so called ‘lean months’ of cultural tourism, which can make India around the year destination.

(Annual Report, 2010-11), talk about the initiatives to Promote Adventure Tourism. As per the policy for the diversification of tourism product of India, special attention is being given for the development of Adventure Tourism in the country. Mountaineering tourism finds its place, significantly in the mentioned report.

For the promotion of Tourism in the Indian Himalaya, mountaineering has a tremendous amount of potential. There are several important factors namely: The tourists, who come to climb the mountains, stay for a longer period than the general sightseeing tourist. These tourist are likely to come back rapidly to scale other peaks. Mountaineering provide employment to areas which don't otherwise benefit from tourism (Kumar, 1986).

3.0 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify Mountaineering Tourism trends, status and prospects in Uttarakhand.

4.0 Methodology Adopted

The study is primarily based on both secondary and primary data sources. Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi and Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand, are source of secondary data. For primary data source, the author framed unstructured qualitative questions based on mountaineering tourism prospects, problems and issues related to mountaineering tourism in Uttarakhand, with a sample size of 30. (6 Foreign mountaineers/ 10 Indian mountaineers/ 2 adventure tour operators, Uttarakashi based/ 4 mountain guide/ 4 porters- survey, covered in field survey and adventure tour operator surveyed by telephonic, one in each transit point- Bageshwar, Munshyari, Pithoragarh and Joshimath respectively). Out of the total sample, the respondents were chosen on the basis of judgement sampling. The survey was undertaken in the month of June 2017 in Gangotri valley in Garhwal Himalayas. The qualitative data which was collected is utilized in the paper in general and detailed in the recommendations specifically.

5.0 Limitation of the Study

The very paper explicitly focuses on mountaineering tourism in Uttarakhand. The trekking tourism is not included in the study to be more focused and specific to mountaineering tourism in the state of Uttarakhand.

6.0 Findings

Uttarakhand abound majestic aura of snow clad peaks for mountaineering tourism in the state. Mountaineering is emerging as one of the popular adventure sport in Uttarakhand and needs to be promoted in a regulated manner with adequate environmental safeguards (Guidelines for mountaineering expeditions in Uttaranchal, 2004-05). To achieve aforesaid goal, Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB), serves as a nodal agency and liaises with Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) and stake holders, related to mountaineering tourism offerings in state and outside state.

Indian Mountaineering foundation organize, support and provide a base for mountaineering expeditions (Kohli, 2008). The very foundation grant aid to Indian expeditions and at the same time promote joint expeditions with foreign team. Booking of Indian Himalayan peaks and clearances from Central and State Governments are core sphere of the foundation .This is the only sports organization in the country which enjoys regulatory control with the approval of government of India (Kohli, 2008).

Any application proposal (Indian or Foreign) for mountaineering expedition, at the first hand, to be done in Indian Mountaineering Foundation. However, foreign proposal takes longer time to be sanctioned, as once the application is done by foreign team, it has to go through various steps. IMF coordinate with Government of India, Ministry of Uttarakhand, Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttarakhand, regarding the permissions and the issues of out-of-bound areas, **inner line permits**¹. With it, IMF referral for consent is made to the Ministry of Home affairs, Ministry of Defense, Government of India and Government of Uttarakhand.

The proposal for the mountaineering expedition in the state of Uttarakhand, (Foreign or Indian) have to go through same criteria, however the foreign proposal go through deep scrutiny by IMF and the concerned authorities. Foreign expedition team need to insure whether they require Mountaineering X-Visa or not.

¹ Inner Line Permit is an official document issued by the Government of India, in reference to permission granted to travel in protected area for a limited period of time. In Uttarakhand, these areas are Himalayan boarder between India and Tibet Autonomous Region of China.

According to the Government order through Ministry of Home Affairs, Foreigners division, Order No. 25022/26/05- F IV dated 9th March 2007 it is clearly stated: Notification No. S.O 1881(E) has been issued in the Government Gazette on 01.11.2006 regarding liberalization of Mountaineering Visa regime (Liberalization of rules/ regulations for Mountaineering etc. Order No. 25022/26/05- F IV, 2007). According to the aforesaid notification the government listed 113 Mountaineering and Trekking Peaks for which the foreign team need not to hold Mountaineering X-Visa. The schedule Para 11 B of Order No. 25022/26/05- F IV dated 9th March 2007; listed 113 peaks in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand alike. However, the nationals of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and China; need to acquire Mountaineering X-Visa, even for the 113 peaks listed.

The number of peaks which do not fall in category of Mountaineering X-Visa are mentioned in table No: - 2 below:

Table No: - 2

S.No	STATE	TOTAL No. of peaks under 113 / list of peaks
1.	Himachal Pradesh	44 peaks + 3 Trekking peaks
2.	Jammu & Kashmir	14 peaks
3.	Uttarakhand	52 peaks

Source: - Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi & Ministry of Home Affairs, Foreigners division, Order No. 25022/26/05- F IV dated 9th March 2007

In reference to Uttarakhand 52 peaks are out of requirement of the Mountaineering X-Visa. The peaks in Uttarakhand which fall under the category of requirement of acquiring Mountaineering X visa are mentioned in Table: - 3. Apart from that if the peak location is in the inner-line, the foreign team also need to acquire inner-line permit from the Government of India. The foreign team are also not permitted to scale any peak in Nanda Devi National Park or the peaks which even have approach through this park. The highest peak of Uttarakhand, Mt. Nanda Devi 7817m, second highest in India is already out of bound area for both Foreigners and Indians alike.

Table No:- 3 Mountaineering Peak in Uttarakhand, outside the 113 Peak list of the Government

1.	Abigamin	17.	Lamkhaga
2.	Arwa spire	18.	Lampak
3.	Arwa Tower	19.	Little (Adi) Kailash
4.	Banderpunch West/White peak	20.	Mana
5.	Barmal	21.	Mandir Parbat
6.	Bhrigupanth	22.	Meru South
7.	Deoban	23.	Mukut Parbat
8.	Drongagiri	24.	Mukut Parbat East
9.	Ganesh Parbat	25.	Panch Chuli
10.	Gori Parbat	26.	Rataban
11.	Hardoel	27.	Sujtilla
12.	Hathi Parbat	28.	Swachhand
13.	Kalang/Black Peak	29.	Swargarohini III
14.	Kalanka	30.	Swargarohini IV
15.	Kamet	31.	Thelu
16.	Kunti Bandar	32.	Trisuli West

Source:- Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi.

7.0 Mountaineering Trends in India and Uttarakhand

A comparative data is presented in table no. 4 between Foreign and Indian mountaineering expeditions in different Himalayan states of India. (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Sikkim). It represents the total number of mountaineering expeditions been undertaken in Indian Himalayas in past ten years. In terms of foreign expeditions in India, the year 2008 remained the top year for highest number of foreign expeditions in the Indian Himalayas. However, the leanest year for foreign expedition in India was 2013. The major setback was the severe catastrophe hit to the Himalayan state, Uttarakhand. But compared to the Indian expedition, there is hardly any great variation in the number of expeditions in same year.

In terms of Indian expeditions, the number is comparatively higher to the foreign expeditions. In past ten years (2007 to 2016) the total of 635 Indian expeditions being undertaken, whereas the total of 436 foreign

expeditions were being undertaken by the foreign climbers. The year 2015 stand tall to any other years as per the ten year data is concerned. The year witnessed total number of 90 Indian expeditions in different Himalayan states of India.

Table 4:- Summary of Mountaineering Expeditions since 2007 to 2016 in Indian Himalayas.

Year	Mountaineering Expeditions	% of Change over Previous year	Mountaineering Expeditions	% of Change over Previous year
	Foreign (F)		Indian (I)	
2007	52	+44%	60	+11%
2008	65↑	+25%	57	-5%
2009	37	-43%	64	+12%
2010	40	+8%	60	-6%
2011	40	Nil	58	-3%
2012	37	-8%	66	14%
2013	30	-19%	64	-3%
2014	41	+37%	57	-11%
2015	50	+22%	90↑	+58%
2016	44	-12%	59	-34%
Total	436	-	635	-
Total number of mountaineering expeditions in Indian Himalayas			(F) + (I) = 436 + 635 = 1071	

Source: - Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi.

The account of Mountaineering Expeditions since 2007 to 2016 in Uttarakhand Himalayas, table no. 5, shows that in the base year i.e. 2007 shows dip, compared to previous year in both the foreign and Indian expeditions. Past ten year, the best year for foreign expedition was 2010, 2014 and 2018 respectively. However, in the year 2013 witnessed the drastic slump in foreign expedition because of the Uttarakhand 2013 disaster.

In terms of Indian expeditions in the Uttarakhand Himalayas, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2015 were the best years for the number of Indian expeditions. As we have seen the drastic slump for the mountaineering tourism season in Uttarakhand in the year 2013, but the year 2013 in terms of Indian expeditions in Uttarakhand Himalayas was satisfactory in terms of mountaineering expeditions by the Indian teams.

The total number of mountaineering expeditions in Uttarakhand Himalayas was 348, from which 141 was foreign expeditions and 207 Indian expeditions.

Table 5:- Summary of Mountaineering Expeditions since 2007 to 2016 in Uttarakhand Himalayas.

Year	Mountaineering Expeditions	% of Change over Previous year	Mountaineering Expeditions	% of Change over Previous year
	Foreign (F)		Indian (I)	
2007	15	-21%	20	-13%
2008	17	+20%	17	-15%
2009	13	-24%	25	+47%
2010	20↑	54%	22	-12%
2011	15	-25%	21	-5%
2012	8	-77%	24	+14%
2013	5	-38%	18	-25%
2014	17	+240%	14	-22%
2015	18	+6%	27↑	+93%
2016	13	-28%	19	-30%
Total	141	-	207	-
Total number of mountaineering expeditions in Uttarakhand Himalayas			(F) + (I) = 141 + 207 = 348	

Source: - Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi.

Comparative Analysis of Mountaineering Expeditions since 2007 to 2016 in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Sikkim

A comparative analysis of the data pertaining to number of expeditions in past ten years in different Himalayan states (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Sikkim) table 6 & chart no. 1, clearly shows that Uttarakhand as a mountaineering destination stand substantially in good position, though Himachal Pradesh stood at the top, compare to the other Himalayan states with total of 383 mountaineering expedition in past ten years (2007 to 2016). The total number of mountaineering expedition came to Uttarakhand was 348, with making Uttarakhand second in the list, followed by Jammu and Kashmir with total of 322 expeditions. Sikkim stood, almost in a diminished position.

In terms of foreign expeditions, Jammu and Kashmir stood at the top with total of 232 foreign expeditions, which is way ahead, compared to Uttarakhand with 141 foreign expeditions and Himachal at the third position in this criteria. The year 2009, 2010 & 2011 were the brighter year for Uttarakhand, where it surpass the other Himalayan states in terms of expedition in a year.

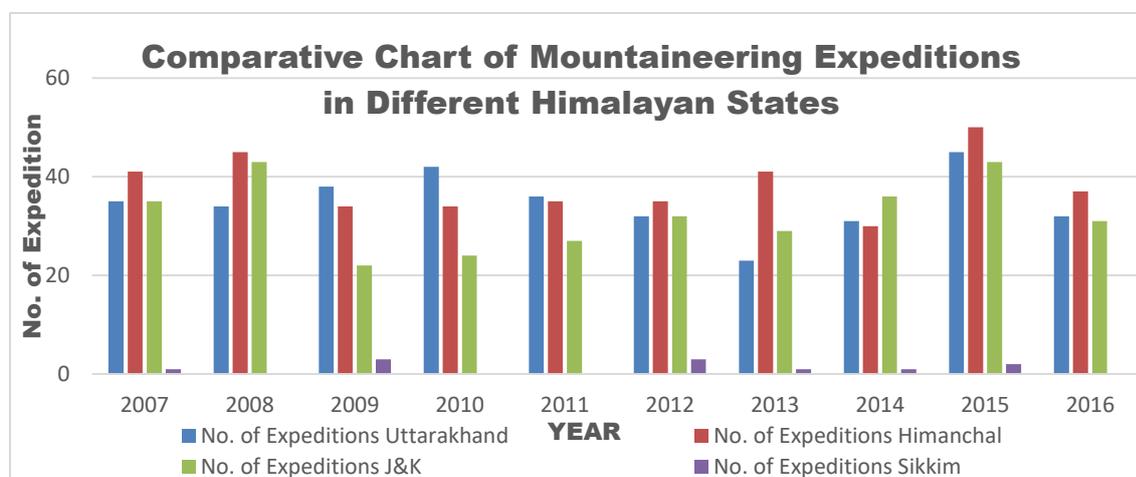
Table 6:- Comparative Summary of Mountaineering Expeditions since 2007 to 2016 in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Sikkim.

Year	No. of Expeditions Uttarakhand	No. of Expeditions Himachal	No. of Expeditions J&K	No. of Expeditions Sikkim
2007	35 [20(I) + 15(F)]	41 [36(I) + 5(F)]	35 [3(I) + 32(F)]	01
2008	34 [17(I) + 17(F)]	45 [33(I) + 12(F)]	43 [7(I) + 36(F)]	00
2009	38 [25(I) + 13(F)]	34 [30(I) + 4(F)]	22 [3(I) + 19(F)]	02(I) + 01(F)
2010	42 [22(I) + 20(F)]	34 [30(I) + 4(F)]	24 [8(I) + 16(F)]	00
2011	36 [21(I) + 15(F)]	35 [29(I) + 6(F)]	27 [8(I) + 19(F)]	00
2012	32 [24(I) + 8(F)]	36 [29(I) + 7(F)]	32 [10(I)+22(F)]	03
2013	23 [18(I) + 5(F)]	41 [36(I) + 5(F)]	29 [10(I)+19(F)]	01
2014	31 [14(I) + 17(F)]	30 [25(I) + 5(F)]	36 [16(I)+20(F)]	01
2015	45 [27(I) + 18(F)]	50 [46(I) + 4(F)]	43 [15(I)+28(F)]	02
2016	32 [19(I) + 13(F)]	37 [27(I) + 10(F)]	31 [10(I)+21(F)]	00
Total	348 [207(I) + 141(F)]	383 [321(I) + 62(F)]	322 [90(I) + 232(F)]	11 [10(I) + 1(F)]

Source: - Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi.

* I: Indian Expedition; F: Foreign Expedition.

Chart 1:- Comparative Chart of Mountaineering Expeditions since 2007 to 2016 in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Sikkim.



8.0 Mountaineering survey details

The survey was conducted in the Gangotri valley, Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. The questions in relation to the preferences to climbing options in Uttarakhand, majority of mountaineers preferred to come to Uttarakhand. The reasons they gave were its proximity and status of the peaks being challenging. The foreign climbers shared the views that if they will get an option to fly directly to Uttarakhand, would be preferred in terms of more disposable time. The foreign climbers also shared the similar views regarding, excessive paper work and formalities which in majority of cases the foreigners climbers always wanted to avoid. They knew before coming that, if required, rescue is hardly stand in the Himalayan zones. Majority of climbers, would like to come back to Uttarakhand Himalayas as in their view, Uttarakhand is unique, mesmerizing and hold some of the best peaks of the world and the religious and cultural aspect of the state, add charm to the mountaineering trip.

Indian mountaineers shared the views that there is lack of facilitation for Indian climbers. Low standard of mountaineering gear & foreign equipment are expensive. Lack of awareness in India regarding mountaineering tourism. There is no organized Search & Rescue Units, hence they find vulnerable in Himalayas in time of crises situation.

The survey to the local adventure tour operators’ reveals that, the business they get are usually from Delhi based adventure tour operator. The adventure tour operators outside Uttarakhand based charge huge sum of money from the foreign expeditions and when they outsource the services of Uttarakhand based adventure tour operators, they pay very marginally. This leads to the leakage in the revenue generated from the foreign expeditions for the local players. However, in case of Indian expeditions, the Indian expeditions usually contact Uttarakhand based adventure tour operators. The adventure tour operators, Uttarakhand based are very disappointed with the state government policies and procedure. They share that, the state need to be more serious for the development of the host community and the environmental concerns. Only policy statement on piece of paper will not strengthen the mountaineering tourism in Uttarakhand.

Survey to the mountain guides and the porters reveals that the mountaineering tourism is a great source of income (Both seasonal / regular basis). But usually they fail to get support from the government to get training or qualification of the skills of mountaineering as there is no exposure and subsidy for them to get trained for the field of mountaineering from the mountaineering Institute or other agencies operational in the state for the concerned job. They also share that, because of low quality mountaineering gear and clothing, many a times the mountain guide/ porters suffer serious consequences and even death in some cases. Many porters suffer from frost bites in the high altitude because of lack of standard quality clothing and snow boot.

9.0 Human Resource Development

Mountaineering tourism activities are critical and require high level of skills and expertise. The mountaineering institutes operational in India are doing substantial work, as far as training the youth to be future mountaineers, and also infusing the youth with the spirit of adventure to opt mountaineering tourism as a profession. The Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi, being not only a premier institution in the country but, it also provide platform for the community participation and training in the field of mountaineering, allied sports and adventure tourism industry. The community, as an integral component of the tourism product, plays a significant role in the success or failure of the tourism industry (Horochowksi & Moisey, 2008). Communities are the basic element of tourism. In recent times, communities have become conscious of their participation in the development process and have realized the need to be more proactive and responsive in their approach to tourism (Bhatia, 2007).The employment opportunities in Garhwal have increased manifold by the tourism entering as a trade as well as an industry, in the following areas, packages of trekking and camping, skiing Resorts (Nigam, 2002). More specifically talking about mountaineering tourism, the human resource developed by the Uttarakhand located, Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi has been always known to deliver best human resource. This also created a pool of opportunity for the Uttarakhand based communities in the field of tourism in general and in the mountaineering tourism specifically. The details of human resource development through various mountaineering courses run by the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering is shown in table no. 7. The details of number of Uttarakhand based trainees is shown in table no. 8 respectively.

Table No: - 7 Statistics on Human Resource Development for the field of mountaineering past 10-years by Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (2007 to 2016)

NUMBER OF TRAINEES IN VARIOUS MOUNTAINEERING COURSES					
YEAR	BMC*	AMC*	ADVT*	S & R*	MOI*
2007 to 2016	3555	970	2546	341	238
TOTAL	BMC* + AMC* + ADVT* +S & R* + MOI* = 7650				

Source: - Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi.

Table No: - 8 Statistics on Human Resource Development for the field of mountaineering past 10-years (2007 to 2016) (Uttarakhand based)

NUMBER OF TRAINEES IN VARIOUS MOUNTAINEERING COURSES					
UTTARAKHAND BASED					
YEAR	BMC*	AMC*	ADVT*	S & R*	MOI*
2007 to 2016			<u>2400</u>		

Source: - Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi.

* (BMC) Basic Mountaineering Course - (AMC) Advance Mountaineering Course

(ADVT) Adventure Course - (S&R) Search & Rescue - (MOI) Method of Instruction

10.0 DISCUSSION

When we talk about the resourcefulness of a place/destination in tourism terms, a destination possesses offerings which are natural or man-made. In case of Uttarakhand, amongst different types of tourism offered to the tourism market, its Himalayan biodiversity and geodiversity stood at the top to attract adventure tourist around the world. In case of mountaineering tourism, the state has around 89 open peaks of varying altitude, for the mountaineering expeditions in major valleys. The progression of mountaineering in the state, past ten years, especially in the year 2013 was shattered due to the natural calamity struck in the state. The main business which was affected by was the foreign expeditions. Foreign expeditions specifically is a big source of revenue generation, as on an average a single foreign expedition pay approximately \$ 2000/- per expedition for climbing in the Himalayas and additional fee is supposed to be paid if the number of climber increases. Apart from this the additional expenses in relation to transport, accommodation, local facilitation in terms of travel agent, guide and the porters etc. are to be bare by the foreign team. Altogether, even a single foreign expedition turns to be great source of revenue generation. The revenue generated from the mountaineering expeditions especially foreign expedition, is a good source of income for the host community, Government and the state in general.

The major setback for the state in relation to mountaineering tourism is the decline of number of expeditions, especially after the year 2011. Since 2012, Uttarakhand is standing behind Himachal Pradesh. Ministry of Tourism, Uttarakhand, failed to a certain extent to position Uttarakhand Himalayas, to the growing mountaineering potential market in the international scale. Among the most popular Himalayan peaks in Indian Himalayas, in terms of accents in past years, among the list, most of the peaks lies in Uttarakhand Himalayas, Naming few amongst them were Satopanth, Shivling, Changabang, Kedardome, Thaley Sagar, Kamet, Nanda Devi East etc. Conrad Anker climbs Meru (Shark's Fin), in the Garhwal Himalayas in India, gave the Uttarakhand Himalayas further boost in terms of promotion and publicity internationally. The documentary on accent of Meru won the audience award at the 2015 Sundance International Film Festival, USA (Bush, 2017).

In the year 2015, yet another landmark took place in Uttarakhand, with the opening of second mountaineering institute located at Munshyari, District Pithoragarh. The very institute is named after the great surveyor Pandit Nain Singh Rawat who played a major role in the Great Trigonometrical Survey (GTS) in mid nineteenth century (Pandit Nain Singh Surveyor Mountaineering Training Institute (PNSMTI), 2015-16). With the opening of mountaineering institute in the Kumaun region of Uttarakhand, the host community finding it, as great opportunity for the youth to be trained in mountaineering tourism.

10.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

It is eminent that Uttarakhand with hold of central Himalayan zone (Kumaun & Garhwal Himalayas) boosts some of the rarest natural resources. Uttarakhand Himalayas, in particular possess some of the best climbing Himalayan peaks to offer to the mountaineering tourist. The present study on mountaineering tourism envisages the brighter side of the coin for mountaineering tourism development in the state. Though the all Himalayan states endowed with breath taking beauty and awesome charm, but the proximity and accessibility of Uttarakhand from Delhi, makes it most suited destination for mountaineering. Some of the Himalayan peaks got the status and regards from the climbing community around the world. However, the findings also directs towards fluctuating frequency of Himalayan expeditions in Uttarakhand. There are number of factors leading to such situation as extra fees levied by state government of Uttarakhand. The efforts are also to be made, is to link mountaineering activity with the livelihood of the community to establish a mechanism for benefit sharing with the local community. It is need of an hour to link tourism to the local product system and community development (Kruk, 2009).

To harness the benefits from mountaineering tourism in Uttarakhand, the state need to pay impetus on the following recommendations which could prove to be beneficial for the policy maker and Ministry of Tourism, Uttarakhand for enhancing mountaineering tourism in the state.

- At first hand, the state need to develop the system of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the operation of mountaineering tourism in the state.
- Local community participation in mountaineering expeditions so that, it helps them for their economic uplift, while working in their local habitat. It shall not only help to check migration of the local population but also generate employment opportunities in their local settings.
- Preparation of extensive literature of different Himalayan valleys of Uttarakhand with detail of peaks, route maps and high resolution pictures.
- Mountaineering tourism facilitation center at each take-off destination/ major transit point for supporting mountaineering expeditions in terms of equipment, outdoor clothing, fuel etc.
- Ladakh model of direct registration of peak in the state itself. This will ease the expedition team to escape Delhi in general and can plan extra days in the state. In the process the state may liaison with the Indian Mountaineering Foundation accordingly.
- The revenue generated from the mountaineering expeditions should be utilized in the valley where the expedition takes place. The revenue could be deposited in cooperative fund account for development of host community livelihood and standard of living.
- Unnecessary *red tape*² and delays should be avoided, when the team start application procedure for expedition. Usually, it is the area of concern, as the majority of foreign teams wants to escape from lot of paper work.
- Environment levy on mountaineering expedition, which is refundable at the moment, should be refundable only half amount. The half amount may be utilized for gearing up the forest rangers to monitor the expeditions.
- The Uttarakhand resident should get subsidy in the mountaineering courses. This will help the local resident who belong to low economic background to pursue career in the field of mountaineering.
- Ministry of Tourism, Uttarakhand may initiate to organize Mountaineering/Adventure festival each year in different respective mountaineering destinations. This initiative will help the Uttarakhand tourism in terms of promotion of adventure tourism in national and international level.
- As at the moment, the state does not have an organized team for Himalayan rescue. The only agency, government look for is Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi or the defense forces for any rescue in the remote valleys of the Himalayas. The state should prepare a well-equipped mountain search & rescue team with facilitation of helicopter rescue system. This initiative will make the climbing teams more secure and confident to come for climbing in the state.
- Mountain tourism/ Adventure tourism can be added to the curriculum in school and college level. This will help the youth to look adventure tourism as one of the career options.
- Government run adventure outlet can be opened in different transit destinations. An outlet for adventure tourism will further support to popularize the adventure tourism, mountaineering tourism and allied sports in the state.
- Communication facilitation in the remote Himalayan valleys is always an area of concern for smooth operation of mountaineering expeditions. Moreover, satellite phones are not allowed to be carried to the Himalayas. The state government should device local communication system in each Himalayan valley of Uttarakhand for sound communication during mountaineering tourism operations.

² Official rules and processes that seem unnecessary and delay results. (Cambridge dictionary)

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