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## **A Study on Challenges of Tourism Industry in Jammu and Kashmir: A Northern state of India**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

Tourism is considered as one sector that can propel growth, contribute foreign exchange, and provide employment that too to low skilled persons. One of the important dimensions of tourism is the cultural exchange among various nationalities and also among the people of different states. As on one hand tourism is seen as an economic option and on the other side the greater social and human effect. Turmoil in the state, particularly of last two decades, hindered the smooth growth of the tourism and has discouraged most of the travelers from visiting India's most popular tourist destination. Add to this it also not only tourism but also indirectly the economic activities related to tourism.

Keywords: Tourism, Foreign Exchange, Tourist Destination, Cultural Exchange, Turmoil

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### **1. INTRODUCTION:**

Tourism around the globe is considered as a major tool of development and in the recent past it has proved its potential by emerging as the fastest growing Industry contributing about 9% to global Gross Domestic Product 8.7% of total employment. Tourism is travel for leisure, recreational, or business purposes. The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people "travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". International tourist arrivals globally have increased from 25 million in 1950 to 278 million in 1980, 674 million in 2000, and 1186 million in 2015. Tourism in India has a wider impact on other economic sectors through both backward and forward linkages such as on agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts, transport, construction, etc. It also leads to additional income generation, generation of employment and poverty eradication. An important aspect of tourism industry in India is that it contributes to national integration and preservation of natural as well as cultural environments and enrichment of the social and cultural lives of people. More than 450 million domestic tourists every year visit different parts of the country which helps in better understanding of the people living in different parts of the country. Jammu and Kashmir also known as, "paradise on earth" because of its unmatched scenic beauty, attractive landscapes and is one among the most important tourist destinations of the world. Singh (1993) laid stress on planning for sustainable tourism development by providing and maintaining high quality tourist facilities, service attractions and activities, resorts, adequate transportation, enough infrastructure and employee training and facilities should be included in resort development. Huh (2002) observes significant relationship between overall tourists' satisfaction and gender only. There was no significant difference within age, state of origin, educational level, and total household income. In terms of behavioral characteristics, Huh (2002) found significance dependence between overall satisfaction and tourists' past experience. No significant difference was found with length of stay, membership of group and distance to destination. Kendell (1993) observed that the role of the government in the tourism sector should be „laissez faire“ "non-interfering" approach.

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### **2. Objectives:**

The paper will explore the brief phenomenon of tourism industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

- ❖ To analyze the performance of tourism in India.
- ❖ To make people aware about different types of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ To explore which type of tourism is most famous among tourists who visit Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ To find out the impact of tourism in the economic development of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ To provide suggestions for the full exploitation and development of Tourism Industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

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### 3. Methodology:

In the present study mostly, secondary data has been used. Secondary data have been collected from various interim and annual reports presented to the ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India. In addition to this, data have been collected from various journals, articles, magazines, newspaper archives. The research is also based on the referred sources- published, unpublished and electronic.

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### 4. Review of literature:

Economist Intelligence Unit (1973) revealed that tourism is the sector which earns foreign exchange and contributes positively to the balance of payments, generates employment, increase standards of living of people and also provide linkage effects with other sectors of the economy. Charles, William and Var (1973) laid stress that among developing countries tourism industries should be developed in order to increase the purchasing power of the people. According to Kumar (1992) tourism play significant role as a medium for social and cultural development and is also the promoter of employment. Tourism also promotes peaceful relations among nations. Today Indian government is trying to exploit its tourism resources by private sector participation and also providing them different incentives. Anand (1976) highlighted the reason for poor traffic in India and that problem is highlighted through tourist interactions, international communications, and consumer preferences. The nature of tourism plant requires marketing efforts. Kapoor (1976) in his study on tourism as an instrument of economic development observed that the tourism presents a vast potential and is considered the industry whose development ensures the simultaneous development of other related industries. Ferrario (1978) pointed out that the ultimate test of what constitutes a tourist resource and the degree of its appeal largely depends on preferences, interests and requirements of the tourists themselves. Laxman (1980) observed that Indians charge more from tourists than other developing countries. India's share in foreign exchange is only 0.5 to 0.7 per cent which is a proof of an overcharging. Laxman (1980) also observed that tourism is the second largest industry in the world today next to oil. It is a multibillion-dollar industry which received US \$ 70 billion annually involving 300 million people in 1980 alone. Bitner and Hubbert (1994) describe customer satisfaction as a feeling or an attitude of a customer towards a service after it has been used. Studies have also confirmed that there is a relationship between service quality, satisfaction and behavioral intention and then service quality and behavioral intention.

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### 5. Tourism in India:

Tourism industry in India has seen tremendous growth in the recent years. India is one among the most preferred destinations for international travelers. Tourism enables the international traveler to understand and experience India's cultural diversity at the first hand. According to official estimates the Indian tourism industry has outperformed the global tourism industry in terms of growth in the volume of foreign tourists as well as in terms of revenue.

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### 6. Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir:

Jammu and Kashmir are known for its scenic landscape, beautiful valley, lakes, snowcapped mountains, cool climate, skiing, trekking opportunities and religious places all over the world. The state of Jammu and Kashmir has three distinct regions viz., Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. All the three regions have immense potential for tourism from both domestic as well as international tourists. Its impact is visible in the service industry sectors, such as transport, hospitality, horticulture, handicraft and small-scale Industry. Tourism and Kashmir protect both as they are not mutually exclusive. Both have an indissoluble relationship that has an age. Some notable tourist places in Kashmir Valley are Dal Lake, Mugalgargens, Nishat Bagh, Gulmarg, Yousmarg, Phalgam, etc. Kashmiri's natural landscape has made it one of the popular destinations for adventure tourism in South Asia. Marked by four distinct seasons, ski enthusiasts can enjoy the exotic Himalayan powder during winters. Jammu is also known for its ancient temples, Hindu shrines, gardens and forts. The Hindu holy shrine of Amarnath in Kashmir attracts millions of Hindu devotees every year and Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu region also attract tens of thousands of Hindu devotees every year. Jammu's historic monuments feature a unique blend of Islamic and Hindu architecture styles. Ladakh the third and important region of the State has emerged as a major hub for adventure tourism. This part of Greater Himalaya called 'Moon on Earth' comprising of naked peaks and deep gorges was once known for the slick route to Asia from subcontinent. Tourism in Kashmir depends greatly on the natural resources that this place has to offer for economic profitability.

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### 7. Various types of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir:

- ❖ **Adventure tourism:** Jammu and Kashmir's different geographical and climatic conditions offer excellent opportunities for adventure tourism. In this present age the popularity of adventure tourism has increased. Different adventurous sports like river rafting, rock climbing, mountaineering, trekking, skiing and snow climbing can be undertaken in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the state offers multiple locations to choose from. Being the northern state of India, it is blessed with great Himalayan Mountains which gave a great scope for adventure tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. Zaskar river and Indus River for river rafting, Great Karakoram Range and Nun-Kun mountains for trekking, Gulmarg for skiing and snow climbing. The endless scope of adventure tourism in Jammu and Kashmir is largely because of its diverse topography and climate. The forests and the desert region have their own distinct place in providing scope for adventure tourism in Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ **Cultural Tourism:** Jammu and Kashmir are also regarded as the land of ancient history, heritage, and culture. Jammu and Kashmir have had

many rulers over the centuries and all of them made a significant impact on Jammu and Kashmir's culture. One can see the influence of various cultures in dance, music, festivities, architecture, traditional customs, food, and languages. It is because of the influence of these various cultures that the culture of Jammu and Kashmir is so vast and colorful. This richness and vastness in culture helps in making Jammu and Kashmir as the ultimate cultural tourism destination. Culture of Jammu and Kashmir is therefore an interesting reflection of color, zest and harmony which makes Jammu and Kashmir to stand quite different from other cultural destinations because it is having distinct features of age-old tradition and deep ethnicity.

- ❖ **Eco-Tourism:** Eco tourism involves visiting natural areas without disturbing its untouched ecosystem. Eco tourism generates different means to earn wealth for the local people, who in turn make different measures to conserve and protect the environment and natural resources of that place. Jammu and Kashmir with its natural diversity is one of the unsplit places of the country for eco-tourism. Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonmarg, Kokarnag are some of the best spots which are visited by tourists for eco-tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. Eco-tourism is much more than a phrase for those who love nature for travel and recreation. Eco-tourism also endeavors to encourage and support the diversity of local economies for which the tourism-related income is important. Local families and service providers can support themselves and their families by participating in this type of tourism. Besides all these, the revenue produced from tourism helps and encourages governments to fund conservation projects and training programs. Saving the environment around you and preserving the natural luxuries and forest life, that's what eco-tourism is all about.
- ❖ **Heritage Tourism:** Heritage tourism is one among the profitable segment of Jammu and Kashmir tourism. It is extensively believed that heritage tourism will emerge as the most important type of tourism in terms of tourist's attraction to the state. Jammu and Kashmir have a glorious past which is still visible in its numerous Heritage monuments like Hari Parbat Fort, Mamleshwar Temple, Bohu Fort, Martand Sun Temple, and Fort at Akhnoor etc. The Jammu and Kashmir government must show keen interest in preserving the heritage sites as for as the progress of tourism industry is concerned.
- ❖ **Pilgrimage Tourism:** Jammu and Kashmir being a state of pious places and is blessed with many sacred pilgrimage centers. Thus, pilgrimage tourism in Jammu and Kashmir is extremely popular and is increasing most rapidly. Pilgrimage is recognized as widespread religious practice based on the belief that certain places are more powerful than others. Mata Vaishnav Devi is one of the rare places in India where people gather in great number, from various parts of the country and of the world. Shri Amarnath cave is the holy place of Hindus, which is visited by pilgrims just for 30-50 days in a year, usually in the month of July. Another sacred place which is highly popular among tourists is Hazratbal Shrine.
- ❖ **Others:** Besides these types of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir, there are other types of tourism which are quite famous among not only among domestic tourists but also among foreign tourists. Noteworthy among them are Leisure tourism, wild life tourism, wellness tourism and cruise tourism.

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## 8. Economic, Employment and Tourism:

Jammu and Kashmir have tremendous potential in tourism sector. Importance of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir economy is known for decades now and its role in economic development has been an area of great interest from policy perspective, which placed Jammu and Kashmir on 17th position where as Andhra Pradesh is ranked no 1 in the list of major destinations of India (Ministry of Tourism, GOI). Tourism being a labor-intensive industry provides a very vast scope for employment opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir. Tourism is regarded multi-segmental industry; therefore, it provides different types of jobs like hotel managers, receptionists, accountants, clerks, guides, travel agents, chefs, transport operators etc. Therefore, the policy makers, non-governmental organizations and other stake holders must work in coordination to create opportunities that centre on local communities promote conservation efforts and link with enterprise development.

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## 9. Need to review Tourism:

Tourism is perhaps the only sector which starts paying off immediately as it has no gestation period. The other developmental activities like roads, railways, construction, mega projects etc. take time to complete function and payoff. Sometimes these projects are delayed due to displacement, land acquisition, environmental problem etc. The Central and State governments have to form special groups to generate employment and prospects of tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir and has to work tirelessly to capitalize on this potential sector.

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## 10. Suggestions:

From the above finding its clear that tourism is an important sector of development for Jammu and Kashmir economy. Following are some suggestions with regard to future development of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir.

- ❖ Development of a strong network among government and various agencies, which would work towards remarketing Kashmir tourism on modern basis.
- ❖ Identifying new tourist spots will go a long way in enhancing tourism potential of the valley.
- ❖ Jammu and Kashmir tourism needs enough measures to provide proper security to tourists so that a sense of safeness will be felt by the tourists.

- ❖ Jammu and Kashmir are one of the best destinations with regard to some new areas which include Adventure tourism, medical tourism, polo tourism etc., which needs to be explored and thus giving a new sense of hope to tourism.
- ❖ Tourism should be shifted from being a seasonal commotion to all year around activity. Proper tourism marketing of each season can increase the tourist activity manifold.

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## 11. Conclusion:

Tourism is the life line of Jammu and Kashmir and all possible efforts need to be undertaking for retaining, maintaining and sustaining it. Tourism can play an effective role in integrating the entire universe. The above analysis reveals that the Tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir suffered a sudden downfall due to the massive political disturbance which stuck the state in late 1980's. The rail-road mix of transport in the state is very low. There is dire need to build alternative roads in some places to ensure better connectivity. Steps should be taken to restore the ancient splendor of the monuments. All it requires is intelligent planning and iron will. It must be also taken into consideration that these various types of tourism are more or less linked to each other. Although the tourists visiting Jammu and Kashmir are familiar with many destinations that this state possess. However, there were many tourists who were not aware about many possibilities that this state can offer. If this problem is addressed properly and enough publicity is given to all forms of tourism that this beautiful state possesses, only then the fruitful gains can be reaped from this sector of an economy. It is useful to take into account these suggestions, Jammu and Kashmir can be made a top tourist destination spot. However, government cannot do it alone, the local community should also join in hands with the government and work for the tourism development in the state.

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