
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECT OF TOURISM IN BHADERWAH

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Abstract:

Bhaderwah is a small valley-town in Doda 210 km away from Jammu. Bhaderwah valley is predominantly a mountainous torrid town situated 80 km from Batote. The festive mood in the district begins with the melting of snow in April and the sprouting of greenery all round. Kailash Yatra is another famous pilgrimage of the area which is considered an important Hindu pilgrimage. Bhaderwah offers to the tourist a variety of beautiful landscape, colourful local fairs, important festival mood and unique mosaic culture, extremely and pleasant summer temperature ranges from 18 degrees to 32 degrees. Popularly called Chhota-Kashmir, has bewitching natural beauty which enralls any visitor. Kashmir is always a festinating tourist destination and motivates people from all over the world to come to this place as it is known as heaven on earth. Since lot of efforts are done by government to promote Kashmir as a tourist destination but Jammu is still not gain popularity in the tourist map of Jammu and Kashmir State. There are lots of unexplored destinations in the Jammu which are remains unaware from the knowledge of tourists in the state, Bhaderwah is one of them. The present study is an empirical investigation to find the various constraints in the way of tourism promotion in the Bhaderwah. The study further focused on the various tourist spots availability and suggests various policies for the promotion of tourism in the Bhaderwah.

KEYWORDS: Tourism, Bhaderwah, Problems.

Introduction:

Kashmir is always a festinating tourist destination and motivates people from all over the world to come to this place as it is known as heaven on earth. Since lot of efforts are done by government to promote Kashmir as a tourist destination but Jammu is still not gain popularity in the tourist map of Jammu and Kashmir State. There are lots of unexplored destinations in the Jammu which are remains unaware from the knowledge of tourists in the state, Bhaderwah is one of them.

The Tourism Potential in Bhaderwah is vast and it includes the following types of Tourism:

- a) Pilgrimage Tourism
- b) Eco – Tourism
- c) Adventure Tourism
- d) Cultural Tourism

Pilgrimage Tourism:

Temples:

- Gupt Ganga
- Vasuki Nag
- Atalgarh
- Bhadrakali
- Chinot
- Laxminarayan and Durga Devi
- Shantan Dehra
- Seetla Mata Temple, Rehoshra
- Subar Nag Temple
- Thubu Nag Temple
- Nagni Mata Temple
- Alalbani Temple

And many more temples

Various Pilgrimage Yatras in Bhaderwah:

- Mani Mahesh Yatra: This yatra starts from Baderwah with Chari and goes to Mani Mahesh. The Yatra starts in the month of August.
- Kailash yatra: This Yatra follows Mani Mahesh Yatra and starts with Chari from Gatha in Baderwah and then goes to Vasu ki Nag, Ramtund where it stays for the night and then to Kailash. The Yatra takes place in August and ends on the Kailash Kund.
- Machail Yatra: The route of the Yatra is Baderwah-Pul Doda-Thatri-Machail. The Yatra started as a family tradition by Thakurs in 1980s has become a major Yatra in the District. The Yatra culminates in Chandi Mata ka Mandir in Machail.

Eco-Tourism:

Some of the beautiful Tourist Spots are:

- Chinta Valley
- Soej Meadow
- Padri

- Sartingal
- Jai Valley

Bhaderwah The Adventure Paradise:

Bhaderwah being a mountainous valley possesses tremendous potential for adventure seekers. The destination is identified as ideal paragliding spots, snow skiing slopes, Mountaineering and trekking expeditions besides cross country car & motorbike rallies also provide opportunities for sports like mountain biking are ample on the high altitude meadows on the periphery of Bhaderwah.

Paragliding

- 1) Seoj meadow (11000 fts) for Basic and intermediate flyers.
- 2) Padri and Bal Padri (10000 fts)
- 3) Gurdanda , Sonbain (7000, 8000 fts) Khanitop , Thuba, for advance and cross country flyers.
- 4) Chinta and Jai valley (6000fts) for basic and training all these spots have a favorable climate and ambience for paragliding and are easily accessible and convenient for making the logistic arrangement. Paragliding is the special attraction of the hilly tourist destination & feasible through out the year except wet season.

Snow skiing

Bhaderwah is endowed with spots like Sonbain glacier on Ashapati mountain at an elevation of 7000-8000 fts where snow never melts and is adjoining the habitation of "Thanalla" village .The high altitude meadows of Padri & Padri Gali is connected by morrtable Bhaderwah Chamba road and is 30 km from the main town. The slopes of Padri remain covered with snow from Nov. to June and are most suitable for snow skiing for beginners as well as experts. These are equivalent to competition slopes of Gulmarg Kashmir and are easily accessible. Another tourism spot namely 'Chinta' is fit for conducting training courses in Snow Skiing.

Mountaineering, trekking and camping

The mountains surrounding Bhaderwah town have gentle slopes and are covered with Deodar trees, interspersed with large meadows. The treks are easy and do not require any special health qualification for undertaking trekking activity. Some of the favourite and fascinating trekking routes are:

- (i) Bhaderwah to Seoj to Kailash Kund to Nalthi Village via Ramtund. The route is 30 Km to be completed in 3 days and 2 nights requiring night halt at Seoj and Ramtund.

- (ii) Hanga or Manthala village to Dev- Chattar – Chilli (Kelaar) to Khillanni village (75 Km) to be completed in 4 Days & 3 Nights & Passes through thick forest unexplored virgin flora of Pir panjal ranges Camping to be at Dev Chattar . meadow & Chilli Village .
- (iii) Jai – Bach Dhar to Padri to Thanalla village (30 Km) 2 days and 2 nights with camping at Bach Dhar & Padri meadow. Murmuring streams draining thick black forests routes in endemic flora and fauna.
- (iv) Chinta- Roushera to Sbardhar to Ghati Moar (25-30 km) to be complete in 2 days and one night with halt at Sbardhar meadow .
- (v) Sarithal- (on Bhaderwah – Basoli road) to Padri via Ashapati mountain two days and one night poses challenges to rock climbers and expert trekkers. Besides above world famous ‘sapphire trek’ taking off from Paddar to Zanskar in Ladakh in the historical route used by military General Zorawar Singh to invade Ladakh and Tibet.

Other Adventure activities are:

- Rock Craft: Being a mountainous, region with texture of ‘Pir Panjal’ range of Himalayas, Bhaderwah has many ideal sites for beginners and experts rock climber.
- River & White Water Rafting: The snow clad mountains provide sufficient water in the month of May to September to carry out activity of kayaking & white water rafting in the ‘Neeru’ and ‘Dondi’ streams.
- Mountain Biking: The easy mountainous treks hill roads and undulating meadows are quite suitable for performing the adventure sport of mountain biking. This is one of the new introductions to Bhaderwah destination and is poised to gain instant popularity in this new virgin hill tourist resort.
- Angling: One of the favoured activities of the visitor from plains is ‘fishing’. The cold water streams on the gentle slopes of hills of Bhaderwah contains tasty ‘Trout’ fish and the activity can be supported at all the tourist spots of Bhaderwah

Cultural Tourism

Mela Patt:

Bhaderwah is one of the hilly places that is deep-rooted in custom and tradition and has centuries old rich culture of hospitality, fairs and festivals. Fairs hold a unique place in the cultural history of the region here. August, September and October are three months when the major crops ripen and people celebrate and rejoice of all the fairs that Bhaderwah celebrates; ‘Mela Patt’ is the one that is

celebrated with the most fervour. It is traditionally believed, that Raja Nagpal of Bhadarwah started this festival some time in the 16th century with the blessings of Lord Nag Vasuki.

Festivals

- **Dander Kundhu:** This festival is celebrated by the children at the advent of spring season.
- **Kanchoth:** This is the most famous festival of married ladies. On this day they keep fast and during the day they make-up themselves with their best dresses and ornament and then they worship Lord Shiva for the long life of their husbands. They sing and dance to please the Lord Shiva. They sing a typical song called “Ghurahi” in Bhadarwahi language (A ballad) and dance in a circle.

Dances

- **DHAKKU:** Dhakku is performed on a special occasion called ‘Kood’ which signifies the annual religious festival of the people, some how similar to the ‘Mel’ gathering of other places in Jammu. Kood is celebrated once but on different dates at different places. There is a central camp fire in the night, around which the Dhakku is performed. Both cultural assests: DHAKKU and KOOD find its religious importance in vast areas from Lahul-Spiti, Pangi of Himachal Pardesh to Duddu, Basant Garh and Ramnagar area of Udhampur including Bhaderwah, Doda, Kelar, Padar and others.
- **GHURAI:** The other major Dance is ‘Ghurai’ in which only women participate. The name of the dance Ghurai is because of the fact that this particular dance is performed with the accompaniment of particular song ‘Ghurai’ sung by the participants. Some view that the dance name is named after Gori Mata consort of Shiva. Women observe a fast on Gauri Tritya worship Gori Mata and seek blessing for their continued marital status. This is called Konchowth Fast and the occasion is termed as Konchowth.

Inspite of this rich Tourism Potential of Bhaderwah, the region is remain unaware from the knowledge of tourists. Although the State Government and Tourism Department are taking initiatives to promote tourism in the region but more serious efforts are required to be taken. Take the examples of Punjab; Punjab has promoted their culture through out the world. Punjabi Bhangra, Gida, Punjabi Music, Punjabi Food and lot of other things are famous through out the world. There are more states like Rajasthan, Uttranchal etc. That has promoted their culture. Same efforts are required in the Bhaderwah.

Research Methodology:

Justification of the Study:

Jammu and Kashmir is famous all over the world for its beauty. The development of tourism at the destination depends upon cater the need of the tourists and development of infrastructure as per their preferences. Bhaderwah is an unexplored tourist destination situated in the hills of Jammu and Kashmir State. There is a vast tourism potential in the Bhaderwah. There are many tourist places in the Bhaderwah which are more beautiful than the places situated in the Kashmir valley, but due to lack of publicity by government and private tourism agencies, the Bhaderwah is still not popular among the tourists visiting Jammu and Kashmir State. The proposed study is an attempt to find the prospects and constraints of tourism in Bhaderwah.

Objectives:

1. To study the various tourist spots available in the Bhaderwah
2. To study the various constraints in the way of tourism promotion in the Bhaderwah
3. To suggest the various policies for the promotion of tourism in the Bhaderwah.

Data Collection:

The proposed study is based on both primary data and secondary data. Primary data has been collected with the help of questionnaire filled by the tourists and personal interview of various resource persons like academicians, Government employees of Bhaderwah Development Authority, Travel agents, Hotels, Local ethnic people of the Bhaderwah etc. For secondary data various books, journals, PhD. thesis, magazines, internet were referred.

Sample Units: Sample units are Tourists

Sample Size: 100 Tourists

Sampling Technique: Simple Random Sampling

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data has been collected with the help of questionnaire filled from 100 tourists. After analyzing the data, the research findings reveal that there are enormous tourism prospects available in Bhaderwah which if properly utilized can not only result in prosperity of Bhaderwah but can also result in making Bhaderwah as a tourist hub.

The following research findings have been drawn from 100 questionnaires filled by tourists visiting Bhaderwah:

Age group:	16% are below 20 Years. 24% are between 21 to 30 years. 26% are between 31 to 40 years. 23% are between 41 to 50 years. 11% are above 50 years
Education Qualification :	18% are 10th class diploma holder or less. 12% are having 10+2 diploma. 48% are graduates in different streams 22% are post graduate.
Gender :	84% are male 16% are female.
Profession	18% are students. 37% are Govt. Employees. 16% are Private Employees. 29% are businessmen.

Source of Information: The tourists were asked to fill the information from where you got information about Bhaderwah and the various options available in the questionnaire are:

- a. Television
- b. Newspapers
- c. Internet
- d. Magazines
- e. Tourist information centre
- f. Word of mouth publicity
- g. Printed brochures
- h. Others

The most astonishing replies from the tourists are:

Not a single person was there who surfed internet & got the name of Bhaderwah. Even televisions & Newspapers which are considered as a very powerful medium of communication, failed to communicate with the tourists about Bhaderwah. Even magazines didn't project Bhaderwah as tourist hub. All the persons tick at others option, This others again consists of 78% who came there to meet their relatives who are living there & rest of 22% are Government employees who have no other option yet to stay there. The research findings reveal that 78% of the respondents visit Bhaderwah to meet their relatives and friends & during their stay if they get time they undertake trips to various tourist places in the region.

Table – 3.6

S. No	Statements for various problems in Bhaderwah	←—————┐		┌—————→		←—————┐		┌—————→	
		1 Strongly Disagree %age	2 Disagree %age	(1+2) Total %age	3 Can- not say %age	4 Agree %age	5 Strongly Agree %age	(4+5) Total %age	
1	There is quality of transport availability	58	17	75	3	17	5	22	
2	There is lack of information & awareness about various tourist places	5	12	17	2	45	36	81	
3	Accommodation facility is not satisfactory	2	7	9	4	43	44	87	
4	Local people are not friendly towards tourists.	43	26	69	18	4	9	13	
5	Markets of Bhaderwah are well established	26	35	61	4	22	13	35	
6	There is quality food outlets in Bhaderwah	48	27	75	0	10	15	25	
7	Qualitative Hygienic food is available in Bhaderwah.	29	32	61	18	11	10	21	
8	Economical food stuff is available in Bhaderwah	54	21	75	5	14	6	20	
9	Communications facility are not available at major tourist places	11	8	19	5	30	46	76	
10	Information centre set up by Govt. are available at major places	57	18	75	6	11	8	19	
11	There are sufficient travel agencies available in Bhaderwah for providing services to tourists	35	29	64	16	8	12	20	
12	Various tour operators are available in Bhaderwah	35	29	64	16	8	12	20	
13	Tourist guides are easily available	43	28	71	14	3	12	15	
14	Medical facilities are available at major places	17	33	50	14	21	15	36	
15	The roads are not well developed for connecting various tourist places in Bhaderwah	5	14	19	4	44	33	77	
16	ATMs facilities are available at major places	45	41	86	1	9	4	13	
17	Tourism in Bhaderwah is strongly affected by Terrorism	6	16	22	20	13	45	58	
18	There is lack of shopping facilities in Bhaderwah	13	21	34	6	36	24	60	

Table 3.6 represent the statements for various problems in Bhaderwah.

1. Transportation: Statement one represents 75% of the tourists says that there is lack of good transportation facility available in the Bhaderwah, which shows there is a need to improve transportation facilities in the Bhaderwah.
2. Information about Tourist Places in Bhaderwah: Statement two represents 81% of the tourists says that there is lack of information & awareness about various tourist places available in Bhaderwah. This shows there is a need for publicity of the Bhaderwah through print and electric media.
3. Accommodation: Statement three reveals 87% of the tourists says that there is lack of good accommodation facilities available in the Bhaderwah, which depict that there is a need to construct quality of accommodation facilities in the Bhaderwah.
4. Attitude of local people: Statement four reveals that 69% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagrees sides that local people are not friendly towards tourists, which shows there is need to organize awareness programme to motivate the local people to be friendly with the tourists to get the maximum long term economic benefits from the tourism.
5. Bhaderwah Market: Statement five shows that 61% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagrees sides that markets of the Bhaderwah are well established. So there is need that government should take various initiatives to develop the local market of Bhaderwah by giving various financial aids to the local people in the form of loans and incentives schemes.
6. Food outlets: In table 3.6 Statement six shows that 75% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagrees sides that there is quality of food outlets available in the Bhaderwah. So it is the duty of Government to take appropriate initiatives to develop quality of food outlets in Bhaderwah to promote the tourism.
7. Qualitative Hygienic food: Statement seven shows that 61% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagrees sides that there is Qualitative Hygienic food available in Bhaderwah. So there is a need to give awareness to the local food outlets that if they want to survive in the market. They have to prepare quality and hygienic food for the tourists and they should not compromise with the quality of the food for the short run profit.
8. Economical Food: Statement eight shows that 75% of the tourists are on the strongly disagree and disagree sides that there is economical food available in the Bhaderwah. So there is need to give awareness to the local people involved in food business that they should not increase the cost of the food for short run profit. If they want to gain profit for long run they have to provide the food at genuine cost.
9. Communications facility: Statement nine reveals that 76% of the tourists are on strongly agree and agree sides that Communications facility are not available at major tourist places which is also a major hurdle in the way of tourism.

10. Information centre: In Table 3.6 statement ten represents 75% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagree sides that Information centre set up by the Government are available at major places. This is also a major hurdle in the way of tourism.
11. Travel agencies and Tour operators: In Table 3.6 statements eleven and twelve represents 64% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagree sides that there are sufficient travel agencies and tour operators available in Bhaderwah for providing services to tourists which is also a major hurdle in the way of tourism.
12. Tourist Guide: In Table 3.6 statement thirteen represents 71% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagree sides that Tourist guides are easily available in the Bhaderwah, which is a major hurdle in the promotion of tourism in Bhaderwah.
13. Medical Facilities: Statement fourteen says that 36% of the tourists are on strongly agree and agree sides that Medical facilities are available at major places while 50% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagree sides which shows there is need to provide medical facilities at major tourists places.
14. Roads: Statement fifteen says that 77% of the tourists are on strongly agree and agree sides that The roads are not well developed for connecting various tourist places in Bhaderwah which is also a major hurdle in the way of tourism.
15. ATM Facilities : In Table 3.6 statement sixteen represents 86% of the tourists are on strongly disagree and disagree sides that ATMs facilities are available at major places which is also a major problem in the way of tourism and there is need to establish ATM facilities at major tourists places in the Bhaderwah.
16. Terrorism: Statement seventeen says that 58% of the tourists are on strongly agree and agree sides that Tourism in Bhaderwah is strongly affected by Terrorism which is a major hurdle in the way of tourism.
17. Shopping Facilities: Statement Eighteen says that 60% of the tourists are on strongly agree and agree sides that there is lack of shopping facilities in Bhaderwah which is also a major problem to enhance the tourism in the Bhaderwah.

Summery, Conclusion and Recommendation

The success of the tourist destination depends upon the management and development of the following facilities:

- Access Facility to Destination
- Accommodation Facility
- Attraction at the destination

The following results have been drawn from the interaction with Academicians, Government Employees of Bhaderwah Development Authority, Travel agents, Hotels, Local ethnic people of the Bhaderwah and Tourists:

1. **Access Facility:** The research finding reveals that there is lack of good quality transportation facilities available from Jammu to Bhaderwah and within Bhaderwah to various tourist spots available in the Bhaderwah. Since the success of the destination depends upon the access facility to the destination. Destination may be very beautiful, attractive and have all the facilities but if tourists are not able to reach there it is of no use. So it is the duty of Jammu and Kashmir State government and all the private tourism agencies that they should provide good quality of transportation facilities in the Bhaderwah.
2. **Poor Roads:** The roads to Bhaderwah route are not well developed so tourists have to face a lot of problems during their visit to Bhaderwah and this is a major hurdle in the tourism promotion in the region.
3. **Accommodation:** The research findings reveal that there is lack of good quality accommodation available in the Bhaderwah. There are only a few hotels in the region which lack quality of services for the tourists.
4. **Attraction:** The research findings reveal that there are lots of beautiful tourist places available in the Bhaderwah but they are not easily accessible by the tourists. As they are located on hills and roads are not well developed. More over the basic facilities like food, medical facility, communication facility etc are not available at the major tourist places in Bhaderwah this is also the major hurdle in the way of tourism promotion in Bhaderwah.
5. **Safety and Security:** The Bhaderwah is affected from terrorism from past many years so tourists hesitate to visit the place as there are no safety and security arrangements for the tourists during their visit to the region.
6. **Initiatives taken by Government:** Although state government is doing their best to promote tourism in the region they have established Bhaderwah Development Authority (BDA) for the development of tourism in the region and there are so many places that have been identified by BDA for the tourism promotion in the region. The various projects to develop tourist circuits in the region are under process. The most popular and natural beautiful places identified are Kalash, Suyoj, Kancer Domuhanda etc. Recently the government has taken initiatives and started a tourism festival in the region for the development of tourism in the region. But more serious efforts are required if state government wants to promote Bhaderwah as a major tourist destination on the map of J&K and India. This can be possible with the joint efforts of local people, government and private sector.

Suggestions:

1. There should be 24 hours active information centre at a central place for tourists about various tourist places available in the Bhaderwah.
2. There should be arrangements for the tourists stay during the peak season when there is lot of rush due to Kalash yatra and Machal yatra.
3. There should be safety and security arrangements for the tourists at major tourist places in the region.
4. Advertisement should be given through print and electronic media for the publicity of Bhaderwah so that every one should be well informed about the various tourist places in Bhaderwah.
5. Government should take efforts to develop roads from Bhaderwah to Himachal which can be used as entry point for the tourist to come to Bhaderwah. Till date tourist visit Bhaderwah from Jammu or Srinagar route.

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