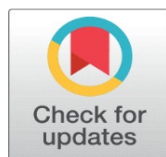
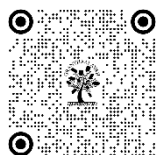


# THE IMPACT OF TOURISM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DISTRICT NAINITAL

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## ABSTRACT

Travel has always been an important part of human life. Tourism development brings socio-economic benefits like income generation and job creation but also poses challenges such as environmental degradation and cultural commodification. This paper reviews the impacts of tourism growth, highlighting its positive contributions to local livelihoods alongside concerns over problems arising from it. This study seeks to assess the effects of tourism in Nainital District, also known as the 'Lake City of India' and a popular tourist destination. The major focus is on Nainital town and its surrounding tourist attractions. Findings are based on both primary and secondary data sources.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Typology of Tourism, Benefits of Tourism, Sustainable Development

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism, a dynamic global industry, intertwines exploration, leisure, and cultural exchange. It transcends borders, fostering understanding and driving economic growth. According to UNWTO (1995), defined tourism as comprising 'the activities of person travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purpose.' McIntosh and Goeldner (1984) defined tourism as the sum of the phenomena and relationship arising from the interaction of tourist, business, host governments, and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors. Tourism consists of three basic elements, viz. man, space and time (Wahab, 1975). There is a variation in these elements according to the distance visited by the tourist, means of transport and the length of stay in the area visited. Country like India has huge potential to attract thousands of tourists every year bestowed with its natural and manmade attractions.

Nainital, the lake city of India is gifted with natural as well as pleasant weather providing all types of recreational activities to the tourist of different taste. Recent decades have witnessed exponential expansion, propelled by advancements in transportation and technology.

## 2. TYPES OF TOURISM

**Natural Tourism:** Visitors flock to Nainital to experience its iconic Naini Lake, offering activities like boating, paddle boating, and lakeside picnics. Tourists enjoy the scenic beauty and pleasant climate of Nainital while exploring attractions like Snow View Point, Tiffin Top, and Eco Cave Gardens. Tourist also visit nearby attractions like Mukteshwar, Kaichidham etc.

**Ecotourism:** Uttarakhand's abundant natural beauty and diverse ecosystems attract eco tourists interested in activities like wildlife watching, birding, and nature walks, promoting conservation and sustainable development.

**Adventure Tourism:** The rugged terrain of Uttarakhand offers opportunities for adventure sports such as trekking, river rafting, paragliding, and skiing, catering to thrill-seekers and adrenaline enthusiasts. Adventure enthusiasts can indulge in activities like trekking to places like Naina Peak or enjoying paragliding at nearby spots such as Bhimtal.

**Pilgrimage Tourism:** Pilgrimage is one of the earliest reasons of travel and has continued to be a major one even in the modern world. Traditionally, it applies to journeys with a religious purpose, but it can also refer to secular travel with particular importance for the pilgrim

(Morinis, 1992). Uttarakhand is renowned for its sacred sites, including the Char Dham pilgrimage circuit, comprising Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath, attracting millions of devout pilgrims annually. Cultural Tourism: Nainital and other parts of Uttarakhand boast rich cultural heritage, with traditional festivals, folk music, dance, and local cuisine providing immersive experiences for cultural tourists. Pilgrims seek spiritual solace at revered sites like Naina Devi Temple or Mukteshwar Temple, experiencing the region's religious significance firsthand.

**Wellness Tourism:** Uttarakhand's serene environment and Ayurvedic traditions attract wellness tourists seeking rejuvenation through yoga retreats, meditation centers, and holistic wellness resorts.

**Cultural and Heritage Tourism:** cultural tourism is defined as “the movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experience to satisfy their cultural needs” ( Richards, 1996). Nainital's colonial-era architecture and historic landmarks, along with ancient temples and heritage villages scattered across Uttarakhand, draw heritage enthusiasts keen on exploring the region's rich history and architecture. Nainital's Mall Road and Tibetan Market provide cultural immersion through local crafts, cuisine, and traditional performances like Nanda Devi Mela.

**Rural Tourism:** Uttarakhand's remote villages offer authentic rural experiences, allowing tourists to engage with local communities, participate in agricultural activities, and learn about traditional lifestyles firsthand.

**Wildlife Tourism:** Uttarakhand's national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, such as Jim Corbett National Park and Rajaji National Park, attract wildlife enthusiasts interested in spotting iconic species like tigers, elephants, and Himalayan birds. Wildlife enthusiasts visit Kilbury Bird Sanctuary to spot Himalayan bird species or venture to Jim Corbett National Park for thrilling wildlife safaris.

## 3. STUDY AREA

Nainital, one of the thirteen districts in the state of Uttarakhand, is renowned for its thriving tourism industry. The district Nainital lies between 29°00'N to 29°05' N latitude and 78°80' E to 80°14' E longitude with total area of 4,251 square km. It has earned the title of 'Lake District of India' due to its picturesque landscape. The city presents a captivating amalgamation of nature's vibrant hues, as described by the Department of Tourism. Nainital enjoys a strategic location, situated in close proximity to several lesser-known hill stations, all connected through well-maintained, all-season motorable roads. This accessibility makes Nainital an ideal destination for tourists seeking a comprehensive experience of the region's natural beauty. The city's surroundings are adorned with a harmonious blend of lakes, hills, and verdant forests, creating a visually stunning environment that attracts visitors from far and wide. The combination of Nainital's natural splendor, well-developed infrastructure, and convenient access to neighboring hill stations has solidified its position as a premier tourist hotspot.

#### 4. OBJECTIVES

Nainital District, located in Uttarakhand's Kumaon area, is well-known for its stunning scenery, calm lakes, and vibrant culture, attracting a large number of tourists every year. However, the fast expansion of tourism has sparked worries about environmental damage, cultural erosion, and socioeconomic disparities.

- It will highlight arrivals of Foreign Tourist Arrivals and Non-Residents Indian arrival in the country.
- Source countries for Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India during 2022.
- Foreign exchange earnings from tourists visiting India.
- The purpose of this article is also to examine the benefits of tourism in Nainital district.
- Identify problems and finding solution for the future development of tourism in the district.

#### 5. METHODOLOGY

The present study will be based on both primary and secondary data analysis collected by the researcher during field visit. Primary data was collected by the researcher through questionnaire and interviews with the locals. The researcher personal observation was also included. Secondary data was collected from different sources like Department of Tourism Office, Nainital, Reports published by government, media reports, official website, Google and interviews with the officials helped to complete the study.

Today tourism is one of the fast growing industries in the country. It benefits not only in generating revenue for the government but also provides huge employment opportunities for all sorts of people in the vicinity of tourist destination. It consumes all types of workers whether they are skilled, semi skilled or unskilled. India, is a developing country having lots of potential for the growth and development of tourism industry in its territorial boundary. India is gifted with all sorts of resources which can take tourism industry at next level. There are several tourist destinations in different part of the country which attracts millions of domestic and as well as foreign tourist towards itself. Whether it be snow clad lofty mountains and hills in the north or beautiful beaches in the south, or beautiful islands to Thar desert, every natural and man-made attraction have their unique quality to attract large number of tourist not only from within the country but also from foreign countries every year. The arrival of tourist from foreign country not only helps in growth and development of tourism in country but also the bring foreign exchange with them. This helps developing countries like India, to check balance of payments of the country. Along with foreign exchange, tourism also provides large number of employment to all sorts of workers. The activities related to tourism helps in the growths and development of the region where tourism develop. The data related to foreign tourist arrivals and arrivals of NRIs along with foreign exchange earning of the country are given in table 1 and table 2 respectively. The impact of tourism could be seen in the form of economic growth, socio-cultural changes or its effect on the environment of the destination.

**Table 1 Foreign Tourist Arrivals and Arrivals of Non-Residents Indians in the country (2011 to 2022)**

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) (in Millions)	Non-Resident Indian (NRIs) (in Millions)	Percentage change over previous years	
			FTAs	NRIs
2011	6.31	-	11.8	-
2012	6.58	-	4.3	-
2013	6.97	-	5.9	-
2014	7.68	5.43	10.2	-
2015	8.03	5.74	4.5	5.7
2016	8.80	6.22	9.7	8.5
2017	10.04	6.77	14.0	8.8
2018	10.56	6.87	5.2	1.4
2019	10.93	6.98	3.5	1.7

2020	2.17	3.59	-74.9	-48.6
2021	1.52	5.48	-44.5	52.6
2022	6.19	-	305.4	-

Source: India Tourism Statistics, 2022

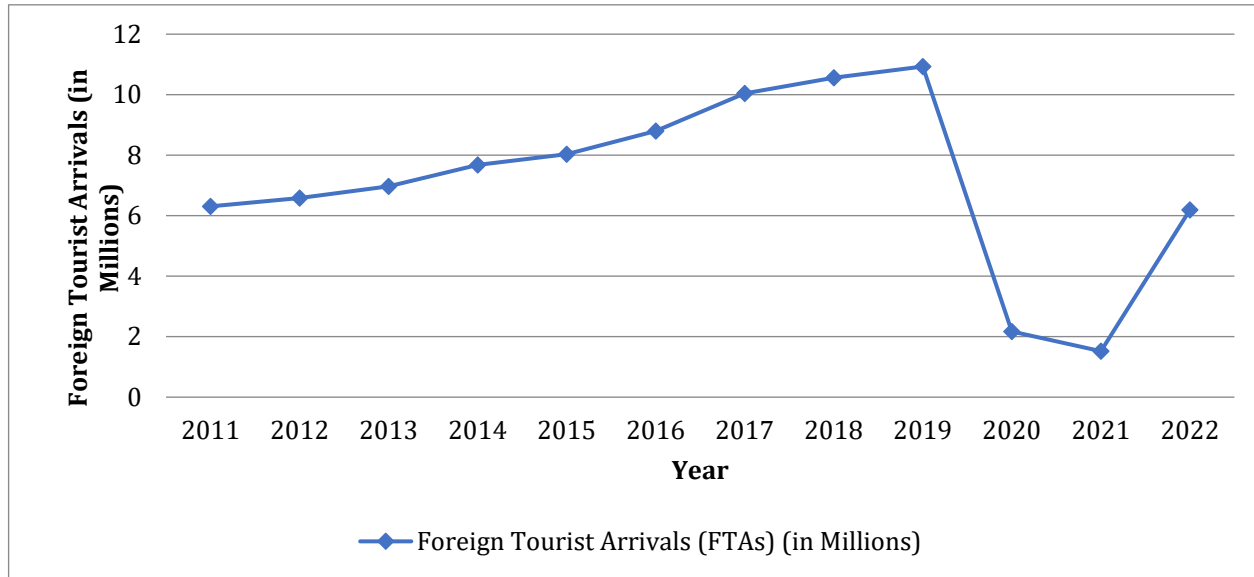


Fig: 1

This table presents valuable data on foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) and non-resident Indian (NRI) arrivals in India from 2011 to 2022. The data shows a steady growth in both FTAs and NRI arrivals from 2011 to 2019, with FTAs reaching a peak of 10.93 million in 2019. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a dramatic decline in 2020, with FTAs dropping by 74.9% to 2.17 million. The impact on NRI arrivals was less severe but still significant, decreasing by 48.6%. Interestingly, while FTAs continued to decline in 2021, NRI arrivals rebounded strongly, increasing by 52.6%. This suggests different travel patterns or motivations between foreign tourists and NRIs during the pandemic. The year 2022 saw a substantial recovery in FTAs, with a 305.4% increase, though still below pre-pandemic levels. The data highlights the tourism industry's vulnerability to global crises and the potential for different recovery rates among various traveler segments.

Table 2 Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism in India (1991 & 2001-2022)

Year	Foreign Exchange Earnings in US\$ and Rupees			
	FEEs from tourism in India ( in US\$ million)	%change over previous year (In US\$)	FEEs from tourism in India (in Rs. Crore )	%change over previous year (In Rupees)
1991	1861	-	4318	-
2001	3198	-7.6	15083	-3.5
2011	17707	22.20	83037	25.49
2012	17972	1.50	95606	15.14
2013	18396	2.36	107563	12.51
2014	19699	7.08	120366	11.90
2015	21012	6.67	134843	12.03
2016	22428	6.74	150750	11.80

2017	27365	22.01	178189	18.20
2018	28565	4.40	195312	9.61
2019	30721	7.54	216467	10.83
2020	6958	-77.35	50136	-76.84
2021#2	8797	26.43	65070	29.79
2022#1	16926	92.41	1,34,543	106.77

Source – India Tourism Statistics, 2021-2022

# 1: Provisional estimates, # 2: Revised estimates, Source: (i) Reserve Bank of India, for 2011 – 2019 (ii) Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, for 2020-2022



Fig: 2

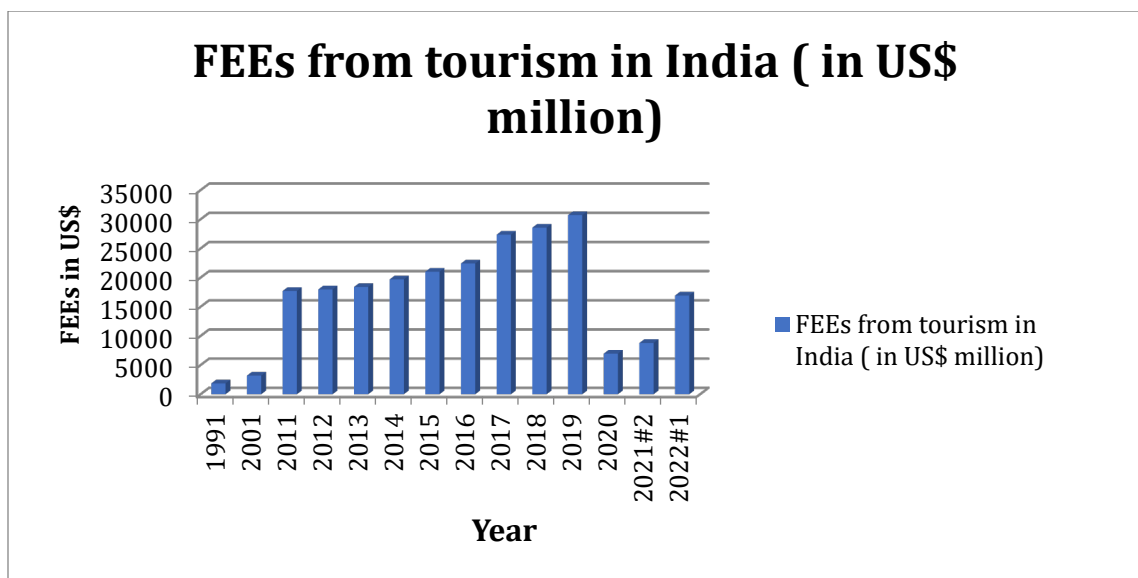


Fig: 3

The table 2 and Figure 2, 3 shows the data on Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from tourism in India reveals a compelling narrative of growth, resilience, and volatility in the sector from 1991 to 2022. Over this three-decade period, India's tourism industry demonstrated remarkable expansion, with FEEs growing from a modest \$1,861 million in 1991 to a peak of \$30,721 million in 2019, representing a more than 16-fold increase. This growth trajectory was particularly strong and consistent from 2011 to 2019, with annual increases ranging from 1.50% to 22.01% in US dollar terms. However, the data also highlights the industry's vulnerability to global events. The year 2001 saw a slight decline, possibly due to the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, while 2020 experienced a dramatic 77.35% decrease in earnings, undoubtedly a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on international travel. Encouragingly, the sector showed signs of rapid recovery in the following years, with a 26.43% increase in 2021 and a substantial 92.41% rebound in 2022, although not yet returning to pre-pandemic levels. The consistent difference between percentage changes in US dollar and Indian rupee terms points to the influence of currency fluctuations on the sector's financial performance. This comprehensive dataset not only illustrates the significant economic contribution of tourism to India's foreign exchange reserves but also underscores the industry's resilience and its capacity for swift recovery following global disruptions, making it a crucial area for economic policy consideration.

### Benefits of tourism related to economic, socio-cultural and environment

#### Positive benefits of Tourism

Economic benefits	Socio-cultural benefits	Environmental benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism helps generation of government revenue.</li> <li>• It helps in maintaining balance of payments of a country.</li> <li>• Tourism provides employment to local people</li> <li>• It helps in investment and acceleration effect</li> <li>• Tourism form a source of income for the persons providing goods and services</li> <li>• Multiplier effect in tourism industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It leads to better set of amenities and facilities</li> <li>• Helps in regional or local development</li> <li>• Helps in promoting peace</li> <li>• Reduction of poverty from the region</li> <li>• Boost for poor and non industrialized regions</li> <li>• Increase in broadened outlook of community</li> <li>• Promotes preservation and restoration of arts and art forms</li> <li>• Maintenance and preservation of historical, cultural, religious and natural sites</li> <li>• Exchange of culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest maintenance and restoration</li> <li>• Enhances environmental awareness</li> <li>• Preservation and protection of forest</li> <li>• Creation of national parks and wildlife sanctuary</li> </ul>

#### Negative Impacts of Tourism

Economic impacts	Socio-cultural impacts	Environmental impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism brings inflation</li> <li>• Most of the jobs are seasonal in nature</li> <li>• Rise in inflation</li> <li>• Overdependence on tourism</li> <li>• Migration of labour towards tourism affects other sectors</li> <li>• Leads to economic inequality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring changes in attitudes of local people</li> <li>• Increase in social evils like drugs trafficking, robbery and violence</li> <li>• Displacement of host population</li> <li>• Overcrowding</li> <li>• Commercialization and commoditization</li> <li>• Diminish in homogenization of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in pollutions like air, water, noise pollution etc</li> <li>• Growth in waste disposal and sewage</li> <li>• Reduction of natural resources</li> <li>• Deforestation and disturbance to animals</li> <li>• Increase in erosion</li> <li>• Physical damage to both natural and</li> </ul>

	culture and cultural diversity • Brings cultural change among community Cultural clashes among different groups	manmade environments
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The impact of tourism could be better understood by knowing the perception of the local residents dwelling in the vicinity of the study area. The locals are affected by the growth of tourism as they are directly or indirectly providing different services to the tourist visiting in the area. As tourism generates both income and employment for all types of workers, it helps them to find jobs and earn their living resulting in the increase in their living standard. The below table show the perception of locals about the impact of tourism in their life are follows:

**Table 3 Perception of Locals About the Impact of Tourism in the Study Area**

Respondents ( 50 )	Highly Satisfied %	Satisfied %	Neutral %	Dissatisfied %	Strongly Dissatisfied %	Total %
Increased in income	20	60	10	08	02	100
Creation of employment	26	44	08	16	06	100
Improvement of infrastructure	20	52	12	14	02	100
Preservation of local culture and values etc	18	48	16	14	04	100
Diffusion of culture	14	46	24	16	-	100
Increased standard of living	30	50	06	14	-	100
Lead to conservation of natural beauty	16	44	24	12	04	100
Increase in air and water pollution	32	46	14	08	04	100
Increase in solid waste and sewage	38	48	04	10	-	100
Disturbed the peace of the Area	24	38	12	16	10	100
Helps in region development	22	50	10	18	-	100

**Source: Field Work, 2022**

The data reveals a mixed perception of locals regarding the impact of tourism in their area. While economic benefits like increased income (80% satisfied), employment creation (70%), and infrastructure improvement (72%) were viewed positively, environmental concerns such as air and water pollution (78% dissatisfied) and solid waste management (86% dissatisfied) emerged as significant drawbacks. Socially, there is a divergence, with 62% expressing discontent regarding disturbances to peace in the area, likely stemming from issues such as overcrowding or noise pollution. Nevertheless, for many locals, the economic benefits outweigh these concerns and 72% believed tourism aids



regional development. The preservation of local culture and values received varied responses. These findings highlight the need for sustainable tourism practices that balance economic gains with environmental conservation and social harmony.

Tourism plays an important role in the development of the region specially areas like mountain with rugged topography. Interacting with tourist and locals during field visit in the month of March and April 2023, the data was analyzed and presented.

#### **Advantages of tourism in Nainital district.**

- It is found that tourism generates employment opportunities in hotels, restaurants, transportation, and handicrafts, which benefits the skilled, semi skilled and unskilled locals.
- It acts as a income source for locals which increases their standard of living.
- Tourist spending stimulates the local economy, fostering entrepreneurial ventures like homestays and souvenir shops
- Cultural exchange between tourists and locals promotes cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of local traditions.
- Tourism supports local art, music, dance, and handicrafts, preserving cultural heritage.
- It helps in conservation efforts and promoting environmental awareness through sustainable tourism.
- It is found that tourism helps in mitigating the problem of migration of the locals to extent.

#### **Problem of tourism in Nainital district**

Though tourism is an important factor of income and employment generation for the locals, however there are certain points of concern.

- After discussion with locals, it was found that most of the person employed were seasonal in nature. They have to search other jobs during off season.
- Due to increase in number of tourist during peak season locals had to face the burden of high prices and demand-supply of basic goods gets disturbed.
- Places of tourist interest nearby Nainital were less visited by the tourist due to lack of knowledge and poor infrastructure facilities.
- Lack of government transport facilities and limited private convenience to places like Mukteshwar, hinders the tourism development in that area.
- Increase in tourist numbers during peak season leads to pollution like air, water and noise pollution and huge compilation of solid waste material and sewage.

As there is no more scope of physical expansion of this town famous for its pristine lake, there is an urgent need for an alternative space to be developed in the planned manner. To overcome the upcoming more and more tourist in the near future, the town should be developed in the planed way to combat the crowding scenario especially during peak season. The government with other stakeholders should come forward with appropriate plans and polices so that the pressure on the peril town could be minimized. The impact of tourism in terms of economic gains and job creation should be checked by the other issues related to socio-cultural and environmental terms. The town of Nainital becomes mostly overcrowded during peak season in comparison to other places of tourist interest in the nearby surrounding region. Some of the reasons behind this crowding and congestion could be due to:

- Huge number of visitors by at the time
- Hundreds of vehicles entering during season
- Too much physical and recreational impact on the lake
- Uneven divergence of tourists
- Overloaded infrastructure
- Low carrying capacity of the lake region
- Highly limited scope of road network and volume



- Easily approachable through Kathgoadam, Bhowali, Haldwani highways
- Limited Parking areas and unauthorised parking
- Easily accessible from plain region

Nainital district has huge potential of tourism development and a source of income and employment opportunities for the locals by providing them training by the government. Areas which are lagging behind or less visited by the tourist should be well developed and awareness should be generated among tourist about the same. Activities in field of adventure tourism should be increased and temple visit and local cultural programs should be promoted by the local authority to attract more and more tourist. Local handicraft works should be given incentive. Other tourism types should be promoted having rich source of natural flora and fauna with pleasant weather condition.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Tourism plays a vital role in the economy of Nainital District, renowned as the "Lake District of India." While it generates substantial income and employment opportunities, boosting the standard of living for locals, the rapid expansion of tourism has also brought about significant challenges. Environmental issues like air and water pollution, solid waste management, and noise disturbances have emerged as pressing concerns. Moreover, the industry's seasonal nature and strain on local resources during peak periods create additional obstacles. To harness the full potential of tourism in Nainital District, a sustainable and well-planned approach is crucial. Efforts should be made to promote lesser-known attractions, such as Mukteshwar and Kaichidham, through improved infrastructure and transportation facilities. Adventure tourism activities like trekking and paragliding should be expanded to cater to thrill-seekers. Simultaneously, the preservation of local cultural heritage, through initiatives like handicraft promotion and traditional festivals, can enrich the tourist experience while safeguarding the region's unique identity. Implementing eco-friendly practices, such as waste management systems and awareness campaigns, is essential to mitigate the environmental impact of tourism. Collaboration between local communities, government agencies, and tourism stakeholders is vital to strike a balance between economic development and environmental conservation. By addressing these challenges through strategic planning and sustainable practices, Nainital District can unlock its full potential as a premier tourist destination, providing enriching experiences while ensuring the well-being of its residents and the preservation of its natural and cultural treasures.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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