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Promoting Adventure Tourism and Developing an Adventure Product Program in India for the European Market



Bachelor's degree in Tourism

Autumn 2021



**KAMK • University
of Applied Sciences**

Abstract**Author: Harmanpreet Singh.****Title of the Publication: Promoting Adventure Tourism and Developing an Adventure Product Program in India for the European Market.****Degree Title: Bachelor's degree in Tourism.****Keywords: Adventure Tourism, Himalayas, Uttarakhand, India.**

The objective of the thesis was to promote adventure tourism in India, especially in the Himalayan region as there is considerable potential but a lack of partners who can promote and further develop a product program for the international market. The goals of the thesis are to gain a deeper understanding of adventure tourism, identify the supply and demand aspects of adventure tourism in the Himalayas and to identify target customers. Furthermore, the thesis investigates available resources and destinations in the Himalayan Region and which destinations/ activities/ products may be suitable for adventure tourism, particularly in the North Indian State of Uttarakhand. Using data gained from the research, a final product will be developed with the support of the commissioning party DB trekkers (Travel Company), which will add to and develop its services and products to gain more customers and expand its customer segments. The final objective is to develop an adventure product program targeting specifically, the Western-European customer segment using the Service Design Toolkit.

This is an exploratory desk research based on data collected from the secondary data sources. There were restrictions in place due to the pandemic making it difficult to conduct interviews or gather primary data because of which, the secondary data from verified and reliable sources is used to answer the research questions including the availability of resources and adventure tourism options in Uttarakhand, the preferences and the interests of the European travelers in terms of adventure tourism and what are their expectations from an appropriate adventure tourism program that can address all these needs and expectations.

It was concluded from the research that the European market has a high potential because there are millions of people from Europe who make adventure trips to other countries every year. Therefore, the developing nations like India can take advantage of this opportunity to cater to the needs of the European customers by offering both soft adventure activities like bird watching, fishing, cycling and eco-tourism and the hard adventure activities like rock climbing, river rafting, canoeing, bungee jumping, paragliding, skydiving and zip lining. The adventure tour named 'Your extreme life with Unique Adventure Travelers' is designed to address these needs of the European travelers by offering them a unique experience that can be enjoyed by both leisure travelers and adventure tourism enthusiasts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been the world's most rapidly increasing modern business (UNWTO, 2021). People have long travelled throughout the world to discover landmarks, arts, and culture, try new food, etc. In economic, social, and physical developments, the tourism has become a large and essential element. Tourism has helped to raise awareness of environmental and cultural conservation issues. It encompasses the whole of the nature, the cosmos, space, and galaxy, including the man and his work, the animals, the mountains or valleys, the forests and trees, the social and cultural systems, the flora and fauna, the sun as well as the sea, the weather, and the environment. World tourism can be defined to be an important economic element for many countries. Tourism infrastructure had enhanced local people's quality of life in many regions of the countries today, and it has contributed to the promotion of local arts and crafts. The beautiful traditions and rich cultural patrimony of India are strongly linked to tourism. These magnificent monuments draw many travelers from throughout the world. All of them are made into a tourist paradise by the natural environment, architectural marvels, music, dance, art, customs, and languages. The tourists are delighted by India's many geographical areas. Eyes may be enjoyed at monuments, museums, fortresses, sanctuaries, sites of religious concern, palaces, etc. With their crafts, festivals, folk dance, music and their people, every area is identifiable.

India is indeed unique and consists of a wide range of useful resources, each of which offers fantastic chances to create and refurbish a varied range of products and services that fulfil every need of travelers. It has goods centered on the contrast between the riches of nature, hard and soft spirituality, and the ultimate relaxation and very well. Several Indian states, notably northeast India, have ample cultural and natural resources which make for an ideal site for the growth of adventure tourism in the region. The scene of the developing field of tourism has been created by India's mountainous regions, rivers, rich wildness, historic, religious significance, and distinctive geography.

The problems which limit successful state marketing as an adventure tourist destination include Indian states' lack of knowledge of adventure, ineffectual state branding and lack of a marketing plan. An obstacle is the importance of establishing housing facilities and strengthening amenities in the Indian States for the good impacts of tourism development.

1.1 Commissioning Party: DB trekkers

Commissioning Party of my thesis is DBtrekkers. They are a travel company. With several years of experience in travel management, Devbhoomi Adventure and Trekker have served 1000+ clients throughout India. Their firm comprises of highly dedicated employees who work round the clock to ensure that they deliver timely and quality work (Devbhoomi Trekker, 2021). They hold expertise in organizing treks and mountaineering in the Himalayan regions. Since they are the local leaders of Himalayas, their company always enlightens the tourists with the knowledge about the city and take them to the best destinations in the region. Their team of professional guides will deliver the knowledge about Himalayas one could ever get from anywhere else. They ensure that all their clients take back optimistic and everlasting memories by the end of their trips.

1.2 Himalayas as a destination for Adventure Tourism

Himalayas have been the destination for adventure tourism for a long time, but most of this tourism was associated with the pilgrimage to the Hindu religious places in the past that are located all over the Himalayan high mountains. The summer resorts and hill stations across the Himalayan region in India for only established after the arrival of the British colonies in the 19th century. Some of the common foundations in the Himalayan region by the Britishers included those in Shimla, Mussoorie, Darjeeling and Nainital. Followed by the British reign, the Himalayan region became a popular tourism choice for the middle class Indian and Pakistani tourists and only in the last decade, it has emerged as a popular destination for adventure tourism activities like mountain climbing, winter sports, tracking and sightseeing. These activities have not only attracted tourists from all over the country, but also served western mass tourists enhancing the social structure of the Himalayan region and also have a huge impact on the environment and the infrastructure built across these locations. The mass tourism related to adventure sports only started in the Himalayan region after the 1950s. This was when the highest mountain in the world, Mount Everest was scaled by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. The Himalayan region was mostly ignored by the rest of the world till that time and the major reasons behind this were the lack of transportation and basic tourism related infrastructure. Soon after the war between India and China that took place in the year 1962, there was a lot of construction of infrastructure and

roads in this region. The underlying reason for the development going on in these regions was mostly military, but this led to the introduction of mass transportation in the remote Himalayan regions as well. Within a few years, the roads were declared open for foreign tourist as well and this led to a huge influx of foreign tourists in the regions like Ladakh, Himachal and Uttarakhand. This change not only observed across India, but in the neighboring countries like Nepal as well (Berger, 2020).

There are a range of possibilities offered by the Himalayas for the adventure tourism activities because of the unique cultural attractions resulting from the diverse culture and traditions of the people along with the low risk and even higher is adventure activities like skiing, hiking and river rafting. The Western sport activities have also gained popularity across the Himalayan region in the last decade with the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal offering activities like rock climbing, mountain biking, bungee jumping, canoeing, and kayaking. The trends of tourist arrival in the Himalayan region states of India from the year 2011 to 2015 are presented in the table below.

Indian Himalayan States	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	Five Years Average (Rounded off)
Arunachal Pradesh	237,980	322,378	136,307	341,178	357,772	1,395,615	279,123
Assam	4,355,885	4,528,950	4,702,165	4,848,239	5,516,565	23,951,804	4,790,361
Himachal Pradesh	15,089,406	16,146,332	15,129,835	16,314,400	17,531,153	80,211,126	16,042,225
Jammu & Kashmir	13,143,124	12,505,924	13,703,247	9,525,021	9,203,584	58,080,900	11,616,180
Manipur	135,083	135,290	142,581	118,268	149,429	680,651	136,130
Meghalaya	672,307	685,567	698,042	725,133	759,192	354,0241	708,048
Mizoram	62,832	64,993	64,177	69,124	67,403	328,529	65,705
Nagaland	27,471	38,404	38,942	61,092	67,385	233,294	46,658
Sikkim	576,055	585,027	608,447	611,593	743,502	3,124,624	624,924
Tripura	365,561	369,626	371,439	387,935	398,058	1,892,619	378,523
Uttarakhand	26,070,907	26,951,884	20,038,811	22,093,281	29,602,820	124,757,703	24,951,540
West Bengal	23,470,238	23,949,815	26,792,530	50,405,330	71,682,950	196,300,863	39,260,172
Total	84,206,849	86,284,190	82,426,523	105,500,594	136,079,813	494,497,969	98,899,593

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

Figure 1: Trends of tourist arrival in the Himalayan states of India from 2011 to 2015

(Gaur & Kotru, 2018)

The major components of adventure tourism identified for the Himalayan region include those of calculated risk, satisfaction, attraction, sense of unknown, nature and the surroundings, commercial viability and space. The calculated risk for the adventure tourist activities in the Himalayan region can be predicted on the basis of the gestures related to the activity and the past experience that the people have acquired by participating in them. The calculated risk estimation allows the organizers to deal with the

situations and prepare the participants in advance. The adventure activities also provide the participants with the higher level of satisfaction as they engage in the activities that not only rejuvenate them but also helped them in gaining self-confidence. Because of this, people often look forward to adventure Travel and engage in the activities that allowed them to spend time in groups and feel happier. Attraction towards the adventure activities in the Himalayan region is because of the community, monuments and terrains and this attraction helps in amplifying the entire experience of performance of the activity for the participants. There is a sense of unknown and unusualness in each of these activities which is also the core purpose adventure tourism. When the people perform the adventure activities, the experience excitement and thrill and with the changes of medium and several options for adventure tourism award in the Himalayan region, unusualness and the sense of unknown is further amplified (Batta, 2006).

The nature, surroundings and environment in Himalayas make the people choose the activities where they can closely experience it. The wild adventure activities like bird watching and forest walks along with the activities involving greater risk like trekking and kayaking allow the people to experience the natural surroundings and spend time there which has become a rare luxury in the urbanized lifestyles adopted by most people across the world. The commercial viability and the economic benefits of adventure tourist activities in the Himalayan region ensure that these activities are ongoing, and they continue to qualify and provide the region with opportunities for development while attracting more tourists (Singh, 2020).

The variety in the geographical extent of the Himalayan region makes it a very popular adventure tourism destination globally. The most common adventure destinations located in the Himalayan region include Ladakh which is located more than 10000 feet above the sea level. The climate in Ladakh is cold and dry, and the natural beauty of the region makes it a popular and an admirable destination for the adventure seekers.



Figure 2: Ladakh, India

(Shahi, 2021)

Rishikesh is another very popular adventure tourism spot located in the state of Uttarakhand. Several inducing adventure sports like rappelling, rock climbing, rafting, kayaking and river rafting. Because of the excellent weather conditions, Rishikesh is open to tourists throughout the year and has become a popular choice for the Western tourists.



Figure 3: Rishikesh, India

(Johanson, 2019)

Nainital is the judicial capital of the state of Uttarakhand and popular hill station in the country. It is blessed with very natural resources and scenic natural splendor dotted with lakes and blooming flowers that miraculously blend to create this charming hill station.



Figure 4: Nainital, India

(Incredible India, 2021)

1.3 Purpose and Aim

Due to the lack of a proper adventure tourism product in the Himalayan region for the international market, mainly the Western European target segment, and the region has not yet adopted any customized or tailor-made adventure activities program in Tourism. The thesis aims to gain a deeper understanding of adventure tourism and analyze the potentiality of adventure tourism in the Himalayan Region.

In addition, adventure tourism is the topic of interest for the author. Therefore, he wants to develop the idea of adventure tourism in various destinations in the Himalayan region in India. Recognizing the potential of adventure tourism in the country, the author chose the Himalayan region to research and develop the product.

With DB trekkers, a tour operating company in Uttarakhand-Northeast state in India, which also shares the same interests and vision, a collaboration has been made to conduct more profound research about

adventure tourism in the Himalayas, and thus, evaluate the possibility of developing an adventure tourism program for the European customers. This thesis will research the current situation of adventure tourism in the Himalayas and investigate potential products for adventure tourism in the region.

The specific research problem that the thesis project will resolve is:

What is an appropriate adventure program in Uttarakhand that can fulfill the European travelers' adventure tourism needs and promote tourism in the region?

1.4 Author's Background

The Author is a student at Kajaani University of Applied Sciences (KAMK) in Kajaani Finland. The Author is studying International Hospitality and Tourism Management majoring in Adventure Tourism. Adventure tourism is also the primary subject of the author while writing the thesis. By living abroad outside of Asia, the author recognized the potential future for adventure tourism in India and the Himalayan region. Therefore, the thesis will provide an excellent opportunity to learn about tourism practically, using and bringing previous studies into the practical world. By doing this thesis, the author also wants to grow a new network in the Adventure tourism business world in Finland and India, helping the destination and practicing needed skills in the future.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical background or model of thinking is the literature structure that defines and describes the theory used in the thesis. It further assists in investigating the problem by applying for an authentic and meaningful literature review. The theory used in this thesis describes Adventure tourism and its potential, Defining Adventure Tourism, facts and stats about the adventure travel segment and Factors affecting Adventure Tourism.

2.1. What is adventure tourism?

Adventure tourism is a fast-growing area within the tourist industry. This subgroup is becoming prominent including both local and foreign tourists displaying a strong preference for adrenaline thrill. Adventure

tourism "would be defined by its capacity to give tourists with reasonably high sensory stimulation, which can generally be done through the inclusion of physical components" (Muller & Cleaver, 2000). "A self-initiated recreational activity which generally involves a close connection with nature environment, includes components of perceived or real risk and danger, and an unknown result that really can impact the participant or even the scenario" (Ewert, 2000).

Adventure tourism is indeed a huge, yet scarce area (Buckley 2004). The adventure tourism definition has historically focused on adventure recreation (Hall & Weiler, 1992). Many studies affirm the integrity of adventure recreation (Christiansen 1990; hall 1989). Adventure is a reminder. Adventure is an activity that requires active involvement of the individuals and their participation. There is an internal human desire to experience what is unknown to them and what is hidden, and adventure allows them to do so by actively involving and participating in life (Quinn, 2003). Quinn believes that human desire or drive is indeed a source of adventures for what is unknown or hidden. Dufrene (1973) says along the same lines of thought: "We are attracted by a deep forest or lake because it gives the impression that there is some truth to discover, some secret to abduct from the heart of the object. It is the eternal seduction of the hidden". From of the preceding descriptions, the notion is whether adventure is usually supposed to depict an exciting and unexpected enterprise.

Adventure, by design, involves unknown consequences from the adventure "whatever comes" (Tweig, 1974). The problem and inherent risk add towards this uncertainty. Martin and Priest (1986) recommend an optimum amount of risk and skill that is highly satisfied with an adventure experience and has created a model dependent on the degrees of danger and expertise. Researchers thought that during adventure sports a high level of enjoyment is achieved that balances skill and danger. Adventure tourism research was greatly affected by Ewert's adventure concept (1989). He said that the difference between adventure and outdoors recreation is a conscious search for risk and ambiguity about outcomes, but the deliberate inclusion of activities which might threaten an individual's health or safety is only possible in outdoor adventure activities". His distinction of outdoor recreation with adventure recreation is made by associating with his delicate quest for danger and uncertainty of the results in adventure recreation. He suggested to the participants that the risk is desirable. They are actively seeking something and even if the danger is missing, a willingness to engage may decrease. Risk and hazard connect to harm and loss possibilities (Kane and Tucker, 2004). Badenoch has said (1991), Adventure is any activity carried out by the human beings that requires a certain degree of risk and challenge encouraging them to engage in it

and value it in the process. An action performed from this perspective would have been deemed an adventure if you choose to put some element of yourself at danger or to test this aspect of each other.

2.2. Tourism & adventure: an interface

The preceding criteria highlight the aspects of tourism, which adventure tourism incorporates. The relationship between the two is strong. In addition, towards the adventurous experience, adventure tourism demands excellent surroundings and activities. As Sung puts it (1996), adventure can be defined as the entire collection of relationships and phenomenon created as the various adventure tourism activities interact with the natural environment. These activities are generally carried out at a distance from the usual residence area of the participants and involves some degree of risk providing a unique experience and influenced by the setting in which the activities are carried out. Furthermore, the tight connection between both is shown by Honey (1999). Adventure tourism seems to be the totality of something like the adventure phenomena and its supporting elements (i.e., transportation, location, and activities). The practice of both the tourist, the element of danger (physical or otherwise) and uncertainty, as well as their inclination to occur in isolated or exotic locations are characteristic. Tourist of adventure is a rising part of the tourism market (Beedie & Hudson, 2003).

Cater (2000), comments that adventure tourism involves several recreational and participation activities involving touching, seeing, feeling, doing and being instead of simply watching the activities from a distance. The Canadian Tourism Committee defines adventure tourism as an outdoor leisure activity (cited in the Canadian Economic Planning Group 2005) normally taking place in such an unusual, exotic, remote or wild environment, sometimes including a certain form of unconventional moving means and lending that is related to low or high levels of physical activity.

The activity might have a risk component. Weiler and Lall (1992) characterized adventure tourism as an entire spectrum of activities that are carried out by the tourists out those that are generally commercialized and that involve the interaction between the natural environment and the participants away from the range of their homes. Adventure tourism also contains certain elements of risks and requires careful management of the experience because the outcome can be influenced by the activities of the participants. According to Bentley, Page and Laird 2001, adventure tourism is the activities that are operated commercially and combine the elements of excitement and adventure at the same time. The

activities that are a part of the adventure tourism can be typically classified on a continuum that ranges from soft adventure tourism activities to hard activities (Christiansen, 1990).

The concept of risk and uncertainty has therefore grown to adventure tourism. Mortlock (1987) described physiological and psychological adventure as: 'Adventure in natural environments is a task that requires our finest skills - physical, mental and emotional. It's an intellectual condition.'

Table1: Illustrates various adventure tourism activities in Uttarakhand

Adventure Tourism Activities in Uttarakhand		
Arctic trip	Backpacking	Ballooning
Bicycling	Bird watching	Bungee jumping
Camping	Canoeing	Diving (Scuba/Sky)
Dog sledding	Fishing	4-wheel drive
Hand gliding	Hiking	Horse riding
Hunting	Jungle exploring	Kayaking
Motorcycling	Mountain Biking	Mountain climbing
Rafting	Orienteering	Paragliding
Skiing	Rappelling	Regaining
Skydiving	Sailing	Snorkeling
Soaring	Snow shoeing	Survival and wilderness
Trekking	Spelunking	Windsurfing
Cliff jumping	Walking tours	
Waterfall Trekking		
Canoeing and Paddling		
Ziplining		
Air Safari		

Table 1: Adventure Tourism Activities in Uttarakhand

Lodi, S. (2013).

2.3. Factors affecting adventure tourism

Researchers (Brooker 1983; Cheron & Ritchie 1982; Jacoby & Kaplan. 1972 as cited in Schneider, Vogt & Smith, 2006) have recognized that there are both social and psychological dimensions of risk and the

adventure tourism studies have tried to focus on the behavior of the adventure tourists and their motivation to deliberately engage in activities involving a lot of thrill (Wickens, 1997). Adventure tourism is distinguished by the other tourism related activities because of the uncertainty of the outcomes associated with the adventure activity and the risk involved in the process (Ewert 1989, Page et al. 2003. Shephard and Evans, 2005. Sung et al. 1997 as cited in (Iajda, 2007). According to Priest and Carpenter (1993), risk is a possibility of losing something that is valuable to a person and even though it is a broad concept involving several different factors, it can be majorly classified into perceived risk and real risk. Ewert (1989 p.4) defines a real risk as something that increases exposure of the participant to any possibility of getting hurt or having a close call with an injury. On the other hand, perceived risk is simply the illusion of danger. Risk is an inherent and integral part of adventure tourism and all the people participating in these activities are ready to expose themselves to a certain degree of risk. A study conducted by Maker (2005) for 612 participants who were a part of three distinct adventure tourist activities and the resultant motivation indicate that there is a great variation in the amount of risk that each individual is willing to take. Therefore, the commercial operators of adventure tours understand how to effectively identify and manage both perceived and real risk and carry out the marketing, according to it by adopting the strategies that target the specific audience. Sung (2004) state several factors that can be taken into consideration as we begin classifying the different people participating in the adventure tourism activities. Of the common measures for it include the demographic profile, location, adventure activity, socio economic profile and individual perception of the people. The segmentation developed by Kotler (2000) has been discussed in detail by Schneider, Vogt & Smith (2006) stating that the demographic factors are at the heart of the modern-day adventure tourism marketing activities driving their sales.

2.4. Facts and statistics about the adventure travel segment

Some of the significant Trends and Statistics identified for the adventure tourism market are discussed. The total size of the global adventure tourism market as estimated in the year 2020 was \$112,227 million. The compounded annual growth rate for the industry is close to 20% and this trend is expected to continue in the coming years as well. It is expected that by the year 2028, the adventure tourism industry will grow up to \$380,687 million if it continues to follow the growth trend and the most prominent category in this sector is the land-based adventure tourist activities. The Other popular activities that are part of adventure tourism include climbing, caving, cycling, hunting, rafting, and hiking.

Despite the severe disruptions caused to the entire tourism industry because of covid-19, the adventure tourism market has revived itself and there are more and more people willing to experience attractive landscapes and indulge in outdoor activities of various kinds. The government initiatives combined with the strategic marketing activities carried out by the adventure tour organizer have also promoted and contributed to the growth of adventure tourism. However, there is some risk involved in adventure tourism and that combined with the reliance on weather conditions and their unpredictability are the major factors that can hinder the growth of the Global adventure tourism market. Conversely, social media marketing and networking along with the increasing popularity of video and travel blogging through the social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram has enhanced the interest of the travelers around the world to participate in these activities and because of this, the people interested in adventure tourism has also increased. The basic segmentation of the adventure tourism market is carried out on the basis of the age groups of the travelers, type of travelers, sales channels and the type of activity. In terms of the type of activity, the adventure tools can be classified as hard and soft tourism and the expected growth in each of these activities by the year 2028 is depicted in the figure below.

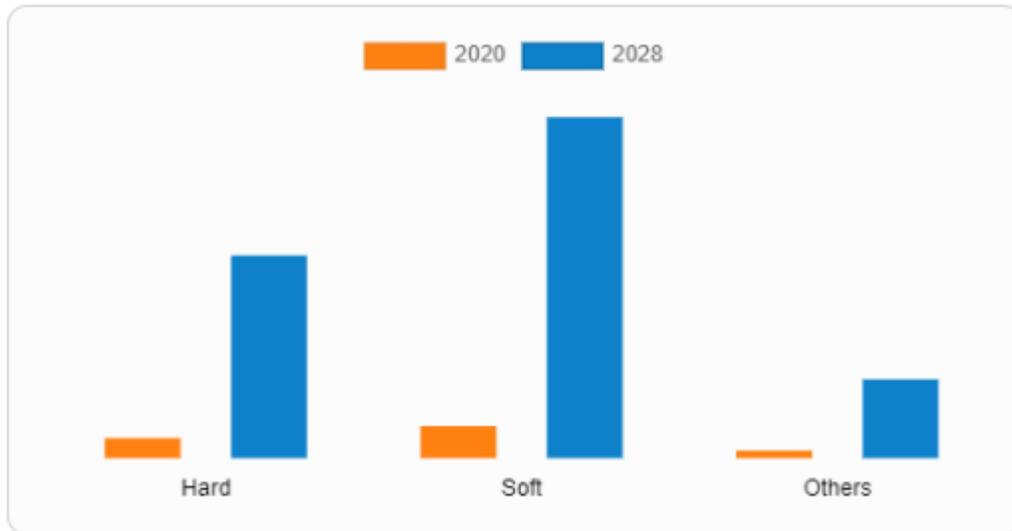


Figure 5: Expected growth in adventure tourism activities by the year 2028

(Kumar & Deshmukh, 2021)

The soft tourism segment is currently the largest contributor to the entire market, and it is expected to continue doing this in future as well. The increasing popularity of soft tourism sector can be attributed to the low-level risk involved in the soft adventure tourism activities. The type of adventure tourism activities are also classified into the categories of land based activities, water based activities and air based activities (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020). Currently, the land based, and water-based activities are marginally more popular as compared to the air based activities and they are expected to continue dominating the industry even though the air based activities will be the fastest growing segment by the year 2028 by following the trend lines depicted in the figure below.

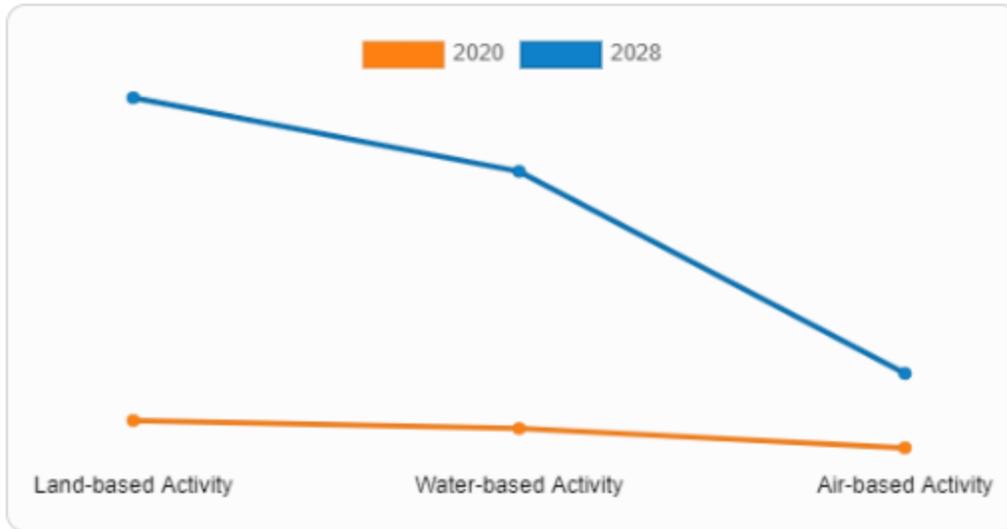


Figure 6: Type of adventure tourism activities and their expected growth by 2028

(Kumar & Deshmukh, 2021)

According to the annual industry snapshot report published by the Adventure Travel Trends Association (ATTA), the average trip filling rate across the world was 71% and the average rate for North America and South America was respectively 71% and 73%. The average trip fill rate for the Central American region was 70% and that for Africa was the lowest among all the regions at 63%. This rate for the European countries was 68% and in Asia, this percentage was reported to be 70% which is close to the global average (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020). The breakup of the percentage of type of guests for the adventure tour operators participating in the study for each of these regions, including groups, couples, families, and solo trips is depicted in the figure below.

In North America, South America, Africa, and Europe, most tour guests were couples. Groups were most popular in Asia, and families made up the highest percentage in Central America/Caribbean.

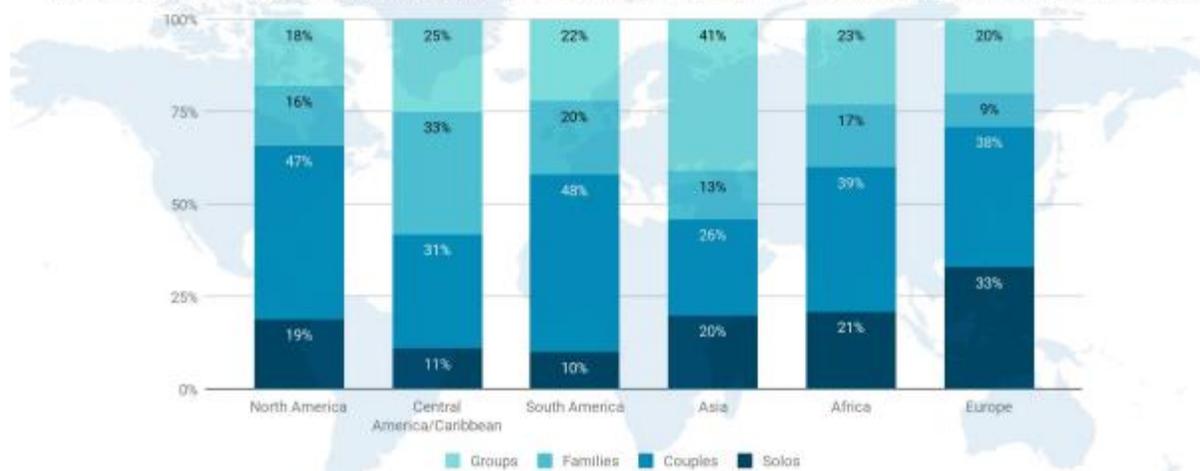


Figure 7: Type of guests for the adventure tours

(Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020)

Among the total guests reported across the world for adventure tourism, 53% were females and 47% were males. However, this percentage was different for the solo travelers with females accounting for 59% of the solo adventure travelers and only 41% men comprising the solo travelers participating in adventure tours. The people between the age groups of 41 to 50 years comprise the maximum percentage of adventure travelers in all the regions. This is also true for Asia, where 30% of the adventure travelers are in the age groups of 41 to 50 years and the next most common age group is of 29- to 40-year-olds constituting 27% of the adventure travelers in the region. The people in the age groups of less than 28 years comprise only 9% of the total adventure travelers in Asia and those between the ages 51 to 60 years 20% of the adventure travelers. The people beyond 61 years constitute only 15% of the total adventure traveler population (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020).

Some other interesting statistics related to the global adventure travel industry is that about 60% of all the tour organizations have an online system for reservation and accept credit cards as a form of payment. This is because of the increasing popularity of online bookings and use of credit card as the payment mode. For the year 2019, it was reported that 51 per cent of all the adventure tour bookings were completed online using either the online booking platforms for the company websites. Among the various distribution channels available in the world, Tour Radar is the most popular, accounting for 21% of all the

adventure tour bookings. TripAdvisor is the next most popular online adventure tour booking platform contributing to 17% of the total bookings. 13% of the bookings for the Adventure 2 were carried out online are done through Facebook and Evaneos accounts for 11% of these bookings (Kelly, 2020).

With the increase in the awareness about sustainability and the demand for sustainability certification by the people, only 32% of the adventure tour business is currently having a sustainability certification of any kind. However, 74% of these organizations have a documented plan for safety and risk management to keep the guests protected and covered for any risks associated with the adventure tours and the activities carried out by them. Among the itinerary trends identified for the adventure tourists before the covid-19 pandemic, customized itineraries, sustainable, green, and low impact tours, itineraries including the access to Electric bikes, trips that were guided by experts and specialists, remote trails and destinations, shelf guides and the mindfulness and Wellness itineraries for the most popular trends for the adventure tourists. Other than this, the mildly popular trends in adventure tourism included the women focused, culinary focused, long haul and Overseas trips, trips suitable for solo travelers and regional trips were highly in demand (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020).

Although the underlying motivation for different people participating in the adventure tourism activities is different, most of the people go on these trips looking for new experiences and like to pursue an offbeat location and track. People are looking for adventure towards where they get to travel and live like the local people and participate in cultural and counters getting to know the local culture activities and lifestyle. Some other goals set out by the individuals participating in the adventure travel activities include the last chance travel and wellness or self-improvement goals. Very few people pursue adventure travel as a status symbol and the other less popular motivations for participating in the adventure travel activities by the people included digital detox, adrenaline rush and luxury outings. The most popular activities in terms of Adventure Travel as reported globally included hiking, tracking, culinary activities, cultural intelligence, activities focused on wellness, electric bikes and cycling, wildlife viewing and safaris, cruise and expeditions, kayaking, photography and running. The relatively less popular trending activities in Adventure Travel reported by the survey include sailing, snorkeling, Snowshoeing, snowboarding, paddle boarding, bird watching and archaeological activities (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020).

In terms of the client breakdown, 48% of the people participating in the adventure tours and activities came from North America and the European tourists constitutes the second largest client percentage with 28% of the people belonging to this continent. Only 8% of the total adventure tour participants belong to Asia and this percentage for Australia, South America and Africa was 7%, 5% and 4% respectively (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020). Most of the people participating in the adventure trips go for the mid-range experiences and the percentage breakdown of the people going for backpacking and budget trips and high end or luxury adventure tours is also presented in the figure below.

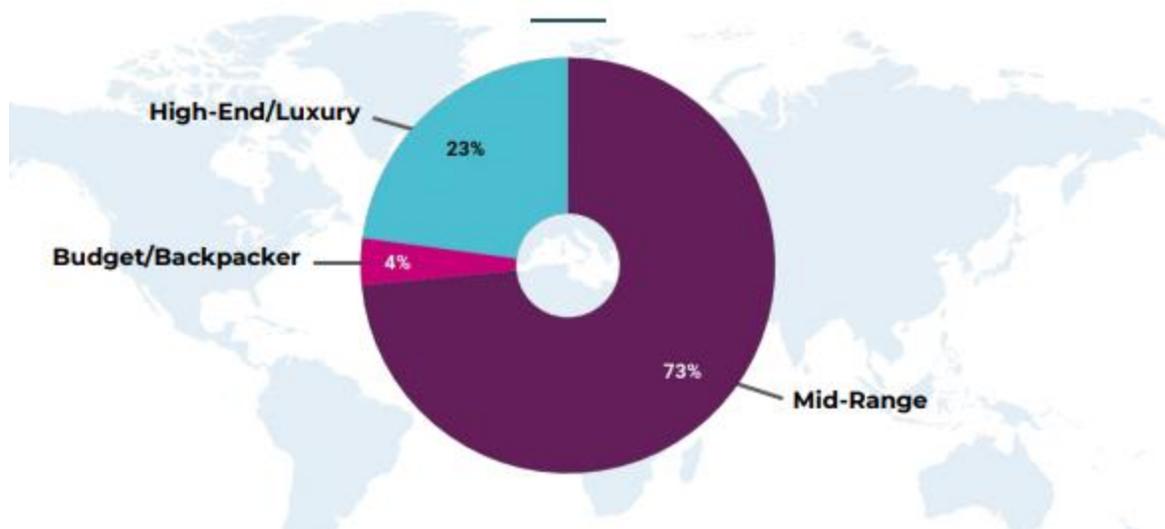


Figure 8: Percentage breakdown of the people going for budget trips, md range trips and luxury adventure tours

(Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020)

The adventure tourism trips benefit the local economy because the people spend on souvenirs and local handcrafts. 74% of the total cost of the trip goes to the local suppliers of the products and services and therefore, adventure tourism and travel contributes to the growth and development of the less developed regions as well (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2020).

3. RESEARCH PROBLEM/FOCUS OF DEVELOPMENT

It is evident from the literature review that Uttarakhand is the Indian state having immense adventure tourism potential. This research is specifically focused on coming up with an adventure program that is designed to address and fulfill the adventure tourism needs of the European travelers visiting India. The adventure program will be designed by closely evaluating the existing tourism related infrastructure present in Uttarakhand and combining it with the rich traditions and cultural heritage of the state to ensure that many tourists from the European nations can be attracted to boost the economy of India and to cater to their unique adventure and travel needs. The large variety of valuable resources available in Uttarakhand provides excellent opportunities for development and the diverse range of activities and facilities can satisfy the desires of the European travelers. The adventure program will be designed with the help of the service design toolkit which presents extensive guidance and support in the constant process of service development. This toolkit is used in this study to streamline the thoughts and ideas and develop an adventure service that is not only contributed to the development of the economy but also highly customer oriented. Therefore, the specific research problem that will be resolved through this project is:

What is an appropriate adventure program in Uttarakhand that can fulfill the adventure tourism needs of the European travelers and promote tourism in the region?

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROJECT/DEVELOPMENTAL TASK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This is an exploratory desk research that is based on developing an understanding of the adventure tourism resources available in Uttarakhand, India and exploring of the adventure tourism needs of the European population. After conducting this study, this research will involve the development of an adventure tourism program that will not only help in addressing all these needs but also contribute to increasing the influx of tourist in Uttarakhand. Exploratory studies are mainly based on data collected from the secondary data sources and are different from field research. Secondary data is gathered from the reliable journal articles, books, magazines, academic papers, and research and because of the incredible amount of information available on the internet, this is the chosen process for data collection. Because of the covid-19 pandemic there the restrictions in place making it difficult to conduct interviews or gather primary data because of which, the secondary data from verified and reliable sources is used to answer the research questions including the availability of resources and adventure tourism options in Uttarakhand, the preferences and the interests of the European travelers in terms of adventure tourism and what are their expectations from an appropriate adventure tourism program that can address all these needs and expectations. The final part will be based on developing a Tourism product program focusing on promoting Adventure tourism in the Northern part of India. The purpose of this study is to evaluate and identify the needs related to adventure tourism for the European population and identify the opportunities in India so that the designed tourism program can contribute to increasing the flow of tourists in Uttarakhand and so that the resources and opportunities in adventure tourism available in the region can be exploited.

5. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The concept of reliability in research is defined as the ability to replicate and repeat the observations or results established through it. There are several different types of reliability identified in the academic articles. Kirk and Miller (1986) have identified and classified reliability into the three categories of the ability to get the same measurements in the given time period, the ability to get stable measurements over a period of time for the same phenomenon and the degree to which the repeated measurements of the same thing provide the same results (Kirk & Miller, 2021). Reliability can also be defined as the notion of consistency with which the answers to the research questions are provided in the study. Any errors in the reliability of the study can reduce its consistency and its accuracy and therefore, it is the responsibility of the researchers to maintain the reliability throughout the process of the study.

The criteria of validity in research was introduced with the positivist tradition and the Systematic understanding of validity is a combination of the several other universal laws of objectivity, deduction, actuality, truth, evidence, reason and fact. Validity is used to determine if the findings from the study are actually measuring what they are intended to measure and also the truthfulness of the research. Validity is generally determined by developing a series of questions for the study and evaluating if they have been answered by the end of it.

Reliability and validity are vital when conducting a research as they make sure the effectiveness of the research method (Maximiano M. Rivera, Jr. and Roela Victoria Rivera, 2007). Reliability is defined as “the state of being reliable” (Webster Dictionary, 1980) and it is referred to the repeatability of the study (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D., 2018). However, it's difficult to ensure the reliability of this research as because of Covid-19, the tourism sector is changing a lot; customer behavioral characteristics are shifting (Zambito, 2020). On the other hand, validity will be used to measure the hypothesis before conducting the research. Another method for establishing the reliability and validity of the research is triangulation. This includes making use of multiple methods for data collection and analysis when conducting the study. This research is also based on triangulation where the information from multiple reliable and diverse sources is obtained and acquired for searching and gathering the data. The constructivist paradigm is followed with an open-ended perspective in the study to maintain its trustworthiness, quality, and rigor of the data despite the qualitative approach adopted for it. The multiple ways of establishing the truth has ensured that the findings and the conclusions drawn in the study are both reliable and valid (Golafshani, 2003).

6. MAIN RESULTS/EVALUATION OF THE THESIS

The key results, analysis and findings for the dissertation are presented in this section outlining the preferences of the European customers the experience of the people going for adventure tourism activities, current challenges in adventure tourism and factors that can influence the development of adventure tourism activities in the state of Uttarakhand.

6.1. Preferences of the European customers

Adventure travel is an integral part of the life of the European population. There are 100 million international adventure tourism trips made by the Europeans every year and during this travel, about two-thirds of the total travel expenses are spent in the travel locations itself (Kelly, 2021). This contributes to the growth of the local economies that they visit. And adventure tourism trip is a tourism activity that includes cultural immersion, physical activity, or interaction with the natural environment. There is some level of skill required by the tourists for participating in these activities and there is also some degree of risk involved. There are several niche markets that can be identified within the adventure tourism sector, but a major distinction among the activities can be carried out by classifying them as soft and hard adventure travel. Soft adventure activities are the activities that do not require a lot of experience or skills and a relatively safe. These include activities like fishing, hiking, safaris, bird watching, backpacking, and camping. The adventure activities that involve more risk and require the participants to possess some experience and skills are known as hard adventure activities and they include trekking, rock climbing, caving, bungee jumping, skiing, heli biking, mountaineering, paragliding, and skydiving. The equipment and material required for offering soft adventure travel is easily available and relatively less expensive, but the competition in the soft adventure travel industry is very high. About 43% of the adventure tourism revenue in the African countries and 30% of the revenue from adventure tourism activities in Asia comes from the European travelers. 33% of the adventure tourism revenue in South America is contributed by the Europeans and even within Europe, they account for 60% of the revenue from adventure tourism. The covid-19 pandemic resulted in significant drop in the number of Europeans travelling internationally for adventure tourism, but with the revival of the economies and the opening up of the international borders and international flights, it is expected that these figures will go back to the original numbers very soon (World Tourism Organization , 2014).

6.2. Adventure tourism customer experience

There are typically six stages through which the adventure tourists go through when availing the services. The first step is when the customers dream of the travel and decide that they want to go for a holiday or for an adventure tourism trip. This is followed by the development of a consideration set where the customers narrow down the options available to them according to the duration of their travel, budget, and preference. This set includes the shortlisted locations in which the customer is willing to travel, and this is followed by planning where the customer finally decides the location of travel and start planning and scheduling the trip including the accommodation, conveyance, and other travel related activities. The booking stage for the adventure tourism trips is when the customer makes the payment for the trip, and this is followed by experiencing the activity when the customer executes the plan and goes ahead to experience and participate in the activity of adventure tourism. The last stage is that of sharing, which can take place simultaneously with the other stages or after the adventure tourism trip is completed. This is when the customer starts sharing with others the experience that they had during the trip and whether it was good or bad. This can take place digitally or through word of mouth by customers directly informing others about their experience (World Tourism Organization, 2014).

The quality of customer experience is defined as the overall effectiveness and cognitive assessment of the encounters that the customers have related to their purchase decisions and behavior. Customer experience takes into consideration the peer influence and emotions of a customer and it is an internal aspect of experience quality. In the context of adventure tourism, the quality of customer experience can be a collection of the psychological impact on the minds of the customers after the participation in the tourism activities. This is different from the general measures of customer experience in service marketing like the moment of truth, outcome focus, peace of mind and the product experience. There are several factors that are a part of the overall quality of customer experience from an adventure tourism activity or experience. The satisfaction at the end of any experience is the subjective amalgamation of the entire experience of the customer and it shapes the post consumption evaluation carried out by them. For an adventure tourism activity, the quality of service can be conceptualized as a combination of tangible and intangible elements like the responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and reliability of service. Often, the evaluation of service quality by the customers is not based on the attributes of the service but they are on experience. The satisfaction that the customers derived from any experience is an essential component

of the overall experience quality that they have. Another critical factor determining the customer experience is the revisit intention which is also a driver of loyalty in the tourism industry and marketing literature. The customer loyalty guarantee is the long-term profitability of the business organizations and there are several classifications of customer loyalty based on their attitude, behavior, or composite loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty is an indicator of the psychological manifestation by the customers of the entire experience, and it can shape their attitudes and can also contribute to the customer shaping the attitude of others. An example of attitudinal loyalty is a customer recommending a service or an organization to others. Behavioral loyalty of the customers determines the behavior demonstrated by them like the repeated visits by them to the same place or availing the services of the same organization. The composite approach to customer loyalty is a combination of the behavioral and attitudinal loyalty and it is an effective factor that is directly related to the motivation of the customers and their experience (Tapar, Dhaigude, & Jawed, 2017).

6.3. Challenges in adventure tourism

The entire adventure tourism industry is dependent on the external ecosystem which includes the physical surroundings, natural cycles and the living organisms contributing to their sustainability. Some of the main tourist attractions in the state of Uttarakhand include the holy Ganga River flowing through Haridwar, several lakes in the city of Nainital, the glaciers at Yamunotri and Gangotri and the mountainous range. However, there are several threats faced by these ecosystems because of the excessive tourism and development. Adventure tourism activities try to integrate the basic structure of the process with the natural features of the ecosystem. There is an absence of any land use policy in Uttarakhand and the implementation of any such policy would require integrating the factors of the ecosystem like the rivers, hills, and valleys. Along with this, the development of these activities can also lead to aesthetic pollution because of the construction of the supporting infrastructure like roads, bridges, parking spaces, waste disposal plants and housing. The physical impact on the environment is not only because of the construction carried out to promote tourism but also because of the continuous changes in the ecology. The excessive exploitation of the resources and the increase in the tourism activities and contribute to the loss of biodiversity in these regions. Increase in human activity also contributes to increase in greenhouse gas emissions threatening the natural availability of resources, food supplies and other goods and services. It can also destabilize the entire ecosystem increasing the vulnerability of these reasons to

natural disasters like droughts, floods, cloudburst, and stress caused by human activities. Another challenge faced by these regions is the depletion of Ozone layer which refers to the depletion of the layer of ozone gas that is formed in the stratosphere of our planet which absorbs the ultraviolet radiations emitting from the sun protecting the people from these harmful waves. The increase in solid waste and littering in these regions and absence of an effective strategy for waste disposal contributes to improper disposal by the people. The creation of landfills and the degradation of environment resulting from the solid waste and littering by the people is a challenge that these areas suffer from. The tourism activities impact the climate cycle and also contribute to climate change. The increasing frequency of natural disasters and severe weather events has been reported in these regions and the continued occurrence of such disasters can not only impact the people living in these areas but also have an adverse impact on the tourism activities (Rana, G., & Kumar, S. 2016).

The biggest challenge in recent times in adventure tourism and all forms of tourism has been the Covid-19 Pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the tourism sector due to travel restrictions and decreased demand among travel seekers. The spread of coronavirus has largely affected the tourism sector, as numerous countries have introduced trip restrictions to contain its spread. The United Nations World Tourism Organization reported the global, international tourists' arrival drop by 58% to 78% in 2020, leading to an implicit loss of US\$0.9–1.2 trillion in international tourism revenue (UNWTO, 2021).

In numerous of the world's metropolitan cities, the planned trip went down by 80% – 90%. Clashing and unilateral trip restrictions passed regionally, and numerous tourist places worldwide closed. UNWTO reported a 65% drop in international tourist arrival in the first six months of 2020. Air passenger trips showed an analogous decline. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development released a report in June 2021 stating that global frugality could lose an estimated of US\$ 4 trillion due to the pandemic (UNWTO, 2021).

As a result of the pandemic, numerous countries and regions have assessed insulations, entry bans, or other restrictions for citizens of or recent trippers to the most affected areas. Other countries and regions have assessed global restrictions that apply to all foreign countries and prevent their citizens travel overseas.

There have been concerns raised over the effectiveness of travel restrictions to contain the spread of COVID-19. Together with a dropped urge to travel, the restrictions have had a profitable negative impact on the tourism sector in several world regions.

6.4. Factors that can influence the development of tourism in Uttarakhand

The most significant factors that are found to influence the development of tourism activities in the state of Uttarakhand are discussed in this section.

- i. **Government Support and Financial Aid:** A support towards its government' s advancement is the biggest element in the expansion of the tourist industry in any country. Several of the Ministry for Tourism's major duties are increased tourism infrastructure, visa facilitation and quality assurance etc.
- ii. **Inter-Industry Cooperation:** This includes establishing good links with local adventure providers and suppliers of assets and transportation and communication agencies. There is a need for collaboration and understanding between different businesses and tourist organizations. Furthermore, there really are mutual benefits to such commercial understandings; tour companies and guided guides may contribute to the promotion of adventures by ensuring sure local adventure providers are suggested for visitors interested in maintaining a positive journey experience. Likewise, these tourism adventure companies are rewarded by the hiring of guides.
- iii. **Improved Infrastructure:** The increase in tourist infrastructure covers fundamental infrastructures such as transport and communication connection, public cleanliness, energy and power or easy housing and service choices. A strong security and safety condition for tourists also is necessary.
- iv. **Local Public Support and Awareness:** The fact that perhaps a local populace is aware of both the pleasure and excitement of certain activity supports adventure tourism.
- v. **Marketing & Promotion** The emphasis on advantageous qualities is an important component in the progress of all forms. Travel guides and tour operators have shown a good reaction to the development of customized tour operations to promote knowledge. Business representatives ought to be interested in encouraging adventure.
- vi. **Infrastructure:** In order to strengthen excellent infrastructure and in the tourist industry the government of Uttarakhand spends substantial money. The government has also supported the growth of tourism for supporting food growth in Uttarakhand by setting up the financial structures necessary for it support. The revenue surplus budget prepared by the government for the year 2020 included several provisions for improving the general lifestyle of the people involved in agriculture. A breakthrough throughout the form of the country's most important sewage project between Mussoorie and Dehradun has been recently achieved with regard to transport infrastructure. The

Dehradun-Mussoorie Ropeway project would offer plenty of tourism services like waiting lounges, shops, and public utilities.

- vii. Training:** Good quality service improves the opportunity for older visitors to revisit and remember and welcome new tourists. The government of Uttarakhand recognized the economic reach of the tourist industry. Training in various hostels helps young people to learn exceptional skills in customer service and cooperation care for details and personal care.
- viii. Additional Government Support:** In addition to the investment in basic services, the Government also identifies tourism goods, maintains tourism's legacy, environment, and ecology. Government initiatives have also been initiated to promote the qualities of the new tourism sites, such as the real Garhwali local culture and Kumaoni culture. Tourists who reach these less-trafficked locations will taste regional gastronomic pleasures more immersive. The government has very strict rules in Uttarakhand to maintain social, cultural, and environmental sustainability. Government-designated special tourist areas are really a refuge for investment in new enterprises in the State which facilitate the enterprises of food tourism business enthusiasts. A number of entities interested in promoting Food Tourism have the right to seek Mega Industrial Policy 2015 for tax advantages and other incentives and MSME Policy 2015 seeking incentives. The State therefore gives a variety of advantages for incentives for interest, financial support, subsidies, and concessions.
<https://uttarakhandtourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/document/type/volume-3-appendices-1.pdf>

7. SERVICE DESIGN TOOLKIT

Service is defined as an act of interaction between individuals and entities that contributes to the co-creation of value. This process may or may not involve some degree of automation and a service interaction is a process involving several steps that are followed for achieving a specific purpose. As per the definition by The Economist, service can be defined as a product of any economic activity and anything that cannot be dropped on our foot (Commonwealth of Australia, 2021). Services are used for delivering value to the customers by contributing to the facilitation of outcomes desired by the customers while minimizing the risk and cost of ownership. This is done by enhancing the performance of the tasks associated with service delivery and working towards minimizing the impact of the constraints related to it. The constraints in service delivery can include issues like the limitation of technology, lack of capacity and lack of funding. While some services are designed for performing some specific task, other services simply contribute to enhancing the performance of the tasks (Scarff, 2020).

Service design can be defined as the design of the entire experience of providing the service along with the detailed design of the strategy and process adopted for service provisioning. It is a process that takes care of the discovery, definition, development and delivery of the service and it involves developing understanding of the client requirements, organizational requirements and the market needs for developing ideas and translating them into solutions that are feasible and possible to implement (Moritz, 2018). The service design in this section is prepared to develop an adventure tourism product program in India for the European market by understanding the needs and expectations of the European consumers and by evaluating the avenues and resources available in the Northern parts of India and specifically in the state of Uttarakhand. The process followed for development of the service makes use of the service design toolkit developed at the JAMK University of Applied Sciences (OECD, 2021). This toolkit was selected for designing the service because it provides the guidelines that familiarize the people with the entire philosophy of service design and also offers required flexibility to modify the tool for suiting the needs and requirements of the service that has to be designed. Therefore, it ensures that service designing is carried out but trying out all the ideas that help in meeting the needs and expectations of the customers and reduces the investment risk involved in designing the service that made required changes during the later stages. Using the service design toolkit by JAMK University can help in improving the efficiency of the service allowing the clients to save their time and money (Preez, 2014). The philosophy of service designing according to this tool kit involves constant improvement by learning, experimenting, refining, and modifying the service according to the responses and the feedback. DB Trekkers is an organization that has several years of travel management experience and this adventure tourism program is designed in collaboration with the organization by taking inputs from them regarding the adventure tourism activities carried out in the Himalayan regions and after the detailed analysis of the needs and requirements of the European travelers combined with the factors that determine the customer experience for the people availing the services in adventure tourism (Williams, Soutar, & Ashill, 2017).

7.1. Service design tools

The four tools of service design include defining the challenge faced in the process of service design, learning the customer's perspective, formulating the solution for the development challenge identified in the first stage and testing the solution by evaluating it in practice.

Define	Learn	Solve	Test
<p>The development challenges identified for this project is that the state of Uttarakhand has the optimum landscape and resources needed to develop a budding adventure tourism spot. Tourism is an emerging industry and despite the economic benefits offered by it, the tourist locations in Northern India are mostly unexplored by the European tourists.</p>	<p>The European travelers have the purchasing power and the interest in adventure tourism. However, the adventure tourism services in North India are currently unorganized, haphazard and no packages are designed to meet their expectations. This is a problem that has to be solved by developing and adventure tourism package in collaboration with DBtrekkers.</p>	<p>The challenges of lack of organization in the adventure tourism sector in India and lack of consideration of the needs of European travelers can be addressed by providing them the freedom of customizing their adventure tourism packages for offering pre-designed packages according to their needs.</p>	<p>The travel package can be made available on the social media platforms and through the online travel agents to evaluate the response and to gather feedback from the European travelers on what they are willing to try and what needs to be improved.</p>

Table 2: Four tools of service design (Self Prepared)

7.2. Customer service pathway

Before	During	After
<p>The customer needs fulfilled by this adventure tourism package is the need to experience a new destination and participate in adventure tourism activities within a budget. Additional information on the service can be availed through the official website and through the social media channels.</p>	<p>When availing the service, the customer will first make the booking and make partial payment at the time of the booking. A week before the scheduled trip, the customer has to make complete payment or inform the organization about any changes in plan of cancellation. The customers willing to go forward with the trip will receive the notification about the flight bookings and the details about further travel from the airport of their respective country to India and then after the conclusion of the trip back to international airport in India, their accommodation, and their meals. The customers will participate in the adventure tourism activities and enjoy the experience and they will be escorted back to the airport from where they will board the flight back to their country.</p>	<p>All the customers availing the services will be asked to provide feedback and suggest improvements. They will also be asked about their reviews on the activities, location, accommodation and food and they will be encouraged to share their feedback on the social media platforms for increasing the visibility of the brand and for positive word of mouth marketing.</p>

Table 3: Customer service pathway (Self Prepared)

7.3. First prototype

Name of the service	How does it work?
Your extreme life with Unique Adventure Travelers	<p>The service includes all-inclusive and customize adventure tourism packages for people from Europe. The marketing and promotion will be carried out through the digital platforms and the customers can also make the booking online and have to make the complete payment in advance. They will be provided the details of their travel and accommodation a week in advance, and they will be picked up from the airport and then participate in the travel and adventure activities as per the schedule after which, they will be escorted to the international airport from where they will board the flights to their respective home countries.</p>
Promise to the customer	
<p>The promise to the customers availing this service is an unforgettable and adventurous experience in a serene and unexplored location that will have their adrenaline pumping and that will give them memories to look back at and cherish for a lifetime.</p>	
A picture of the usage situation	Who is it particularly designed for?
	<p>This service is particularly designed for the European customers who are tech savvy and well informed and who are willing to travel to less known and less popular international locations.</p>
	How can it be purchased?
	<p>The customers can gather more information about the service and all the details online by directly contacting the organization or approaching it through online travel agents.</p>

Table 4: First prototype (Self Prepared)

7.4. Business model canvas

Key Partners	Key Activities	Value Propositions	Customer Relationships	Customer Segments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airlines • Tour operators • Hotels • Resorts • Car rental companies • Travel insurance providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales • Customer relationship management • Marketing • Training and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customised adventure tourism package • Add on services • Seasonal offers • All-inclusive packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality and safe adventure tourism packages • Friendly and reliable service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singles • Couples • Families • Seniors
	<p>Key Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled and trained employees • Reputation and brand name • Serenity of destinations 		<p>Channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online agents • Social media and digital marketing 	
Cost Structure		Revenue Streams		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising and marketing • Employee salaries • Travel agent services • Rent and utilities • Maintenance and upkeep • IT systems 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sale of adventure tourism package 		

Table 5: Business model canvas (Self Prepared)

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be stated that the European market has a high potential because there are millions of people from Europe who make adventure trips to other countries every year. These trips not only help them in satiating their need for having unique experiences, but also contribute to growing the local economies. Therefore, the developing nations like India can take advantage of this opportunity to cater to the needs of the European customers by offering both soft adventure activities like bird watching, fishing, cycling and eco-tourism and the hard adventure activities like rock climbing, river rafting, canoeing, bungee jumping, paragliding, skydiving and zip lining. The adventure tour named 'Your extreme life with Unique Adventure Travelers' is designed to address these needs of the European travelers by offering them a unique experience that can be enjoyed by both leisure travelers and adventure tourism enthusiasts. This tour will be helpful in attracting new customers to the unexplored and attractive locales of North India contributing to boosting their economy and fulfilling the adventure needs of the European travelers having the willingness and the purchasing power.

9. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STEPS

The limitations of the research and future steps that can be taken on the basis of the findings and recommendations presented in this study are outlined in this section.

9.1 Limitations

This research is subject to several limitations. The research limitation includes

- The broad nature of the thesis topic.
- Lack of information about the tourist behavior.
- The limitation in the research methodology.

There is a lack of previous studies to compare the repeatability of the result. The initial plan was to conduct Qualitative primary data research through personal interviews with the potential customers, but due to COVID-19 Pandemic, it was not possible. So, the author had to rely on secondary data from various reliable sources.

Moreover, the commissioning party DB Trekkers could only provide information about the trends and behavior of domestic customers as they had domestic customers' data as the company's main clients are Indian tourists.

In the thesis, the research scale is very general and broad. The result cannot represent a particular sample. Even though the author has prepared to assure the study's credibility, the thesis credibility is limited.

More research about adventure tourism in the Himalayas should be carried out in the future because the region has a high potential to develop this form of tourism. Future research should update the new potential customers for the Himalayas as people's behaviors, preferences, opinions, and lifestyles continually shift. Avoiding the author's limitations in this research caused by using only qualitative methodology, both quantitative and qualitative research should be involved in the data analyzing process to make a better result. Future research should update the new potential products and catch up with new adventure tourism trends. The authorities should conduct more research about adventure tourism in the Himalayas to better develop India's tourism.

9.2 Future steps

Future steps include developing the website uniqueadventuretravelers.com. Promoting the final product on different social media platforms and listing it on different distribution channels through intermediaries.

Build the website in such a manner to target and attract the primary customer segment. The marketing should be done keeping in mind the customer segments buying behavior and purchasing trends. The various social media platforms where the final product can be promoted are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Tumblr, Reddit, and LinkedIn Business. Business accounts by the name of Unique adventure Travelers (UAT) has already been set up on these eight different social media platforms. This method is called SMM- Social Media Marketing. Specific other methods for promoting this product are Content Marketing and Email Marketing. All these three methods are very closely interrelated.

After the final product is ready, the other helpful strategy is to perform SMO. Social media optimization (SMO) uses social media networks to manage better and grow an organization's or brand's message and online presence. As a digital marketing strategy, social media optimization can increase awareness of new products and services, connect with customers, and mitigate potential damaging news.

The author's Digital marketing expertise will be utilized in the latter stages when the final product is up and running on the main website and other online platforms. Digital Marketing Tools and Search Engine Optimization Tools to promote the website and the product are a highly advanced method to improve the website's ranking on google. Tools such as Google Analytics and Google Trends helps find the exact customer location, demographic and present trends. Running paid ad campaigns through Google Ads helps in reaching the target customer segment more efficiently. Using specific accounts for business such as GMB- Google My Business account and Google Search Console account helps build the popularity of the website and the brand. Resulting in higher ROI (Return on Investment)

Intermediaries play a very vital role in the tourism industry. The term intermediaries are any dealer who links the distribution chain between the company and its guests. Tourism intermediaries are distribution agents that share in the process of a tourism-product deal from creation until final guests consume it. Mostly the intermediaries in the travel industry are other tour operators, reservation and booking centers, DMCs (destination management companies), and OTAs (online trip agencies).

The author plans to partner with various distribution channels or intermediaries like booking.com, tripadvisor.com, and other tour operators. One particular distributor, the author, will list the final product on is Airbnb. The idea of an Airbnb experience is exciting and fascinating. Through an Airbnb experience,

a host can give guests unique access to their world. A guest can learn about the host's city, community, local culture, food, and more regional aspects.

All the steps mentioned above will help achieve the thesis's main objective and develop the main idea in trial with real customers, the final step in the Service Design Toolkit.

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