

Comparative Analysis of Tourists Perception towards Service Quality Determinants of J&K and Himachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry of India is growing at a good rate and is showing the impressive growth rate year over year. As per the Indian Tourism Industry statistics at a glance, the number of foreign tourist's arrival in India stood at 8.80 million showing a growth rate of 9.7% and the national departures from India stood at 21.87 million with an annual growth rate of 7.3%. The domestic tourists have also shown the growth rate of 14%. In order to maintain or accelerate the growth rate of tourism industry, it is very important to understand the perception of investors towards various determinants of service quality. Therefore, this paper has made an attempt to do the comparative analysis of perception of tourists towards various determinants service quality of Tourism Industry between the state of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. The various service quality dimensions have been taken into consideration and the results shows that tourism industry of Himachal Pradesh is providing little better service quality as compared to the state of Jammu & Kashmir.

1. Introduction

The state of Jammu & Kashmir is like a jeweled crown on the map of the country and is a very beautiful place with its changing seasons and natural beauty. Surrounded by Great Himalayan range in its north and Pir-Panajal Region through South, it becomes a complete package of tourism. The state is also rich in source of rivers that flows down into the valley, forested mountains & glaciers that makes it more beautiful. It has been called as paradise on the Earth by Mughal Emperors. The state has witnessed the arrival of tourists across the globe and tourism sector is one of the significant contributors of GDP in J&K. Therefore it is the need of the hours to study the various parameters that can be used to promote the tourism of J&K. Similarly, the state of Himachal Pradesh is one of the most popular hill stations of India and is attracting number of tourists from India as well as abroad. The state is also very beautiful with its hilly terrain and natural beauty. Therefore the two states of India, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh are doing a significant contribution in the GDP of the Country. Since these two states are an important tourist destination of India, a study can be conducted to know the perception of tourists towards various determinants tourism facilities of these areas and what improvements can be done or suggested to the tourism development authorities of these destinations, so that tourism influx can be increased. The study has been conducted through a structured questionnaire distributed to the 800 respondents of J&K & H.P.

2. Review of Literature

Țițu, M. A., Răulea, A. S., & Țițu, Ș. (2016). In his study on measuring service quality in tourism industry concluded that tourism industry has taken number of initiatives for the development of the tourism industry but still there is a need to develop a lot for the development of the tourism industry. Basiony, A. E. (2014) conducted a study to find out the effect

of five service quality dimensions; tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy on customer satisfaction and behavior intention and found that the entire five dimensions can improve the customer satisfaction directly but only one dimension of service quality that can create behavior intention is reliability. Bhat, M. A. (2012) in his study to examine the service quality dimensions of tourism industry found that there are four main dimensions of tourism service and are Assurance, Tangibility, Responsiveness and reliability. The tourism services of Kashmir valley has been found slightly satisfactory. Haghkhah, A., Nosratpour, M., Ebrahimpour, A., & Hamid, A. A. (2011, March) in their research work on the impact of service quality on tourism industry found that dimensions such as quality of accommodation, venue, its accessibility and other components related to it are positively correlated with the satisfaction of the tourists, possibility of their re-visit and ultimately the development of the tourism industry of a region. Mohsin, A., & Lockyer, T. (2010) conducted a study to find the perception of customers towards service quality of luxury hotels of New Delhi and the results found that there is a wide gap between the service quality expectations of the guests and their actual experiences. Narayan, B., Rajendran, C., Sai, L. P., & Gopalan, R. (2009) in their study to find out the service quality dimensions with respect to Indian perspective found through literature review that there are ten service quality dimensions namely core-tourism experience, information, hospitality, fairness of price, hygiene, amenities, value for money, logistics, food and security. These ten dimensions have a significant impact on the tourist satisfaction and the tourism industry can provide the better services to the tourists by considering all these dimensions of service quality.

3. Objective of the Study

1. To compare the item wise perception of tourists towards Service quality determinants by tourists of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.

2. To analyze the tourists satisfaction and future prospects of J&K & H.P. Tourism Industry.
3. To compare the overall perception of tourists towards service quality of J&K & Himachal

4. Research Methodology

The study has been conducted by using the SERVQUAL, a multi-dimensional pre-designed research questionnaire for collecting the information about the customer expectations and perceptions through five dimensions that are believed to represent the service quality. The research instrument (questionnaire) was administered to the tourists of Jammu & Kashmir and that of Himachal Pradesh. Out of the total questionnaire distributed 400 from HP and 410 from J&K were found appropriate for further analysis. The simple statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation and Z-test have been used for comparing the perception of tourists towards various service quality dimensions of the two states.

5. Data Analysis

Item wise perception of tourists towards service quality across J&K and Himachal Pradesh: The data was collected for 50 statements to find the perception of tourists towards the service quality received by them across the state of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Out of the total statements, only those statements are discussed here in which we found the gap between the mean score of the two states so that such dimensions can be highlighted and brought into the eyes of the tourism agents of the tourism development authorities of these two states. The first statement is related to the problems faced by the tourists and their resolution. It has been found that H.P. is more effectively dealing with the problems faced by the tourists with a mean score of 3.11 and the J&K is having mean of 2.85 only. The P value for the Z test is also less than .05, which signifies that there is a difference in the problem dealing system of J&K & Himachal Pradesh Employees.

The second statement that shows the significant difference is the delivery of services in the tour package as promised. The mean score for HP is 3.17 & for J&K is 2.97. This shows that complete packages as promised are delivered by Tourism people of HP more effectively as compared to the tour agents of J&K. The P value is again significant showing the significant difference between the two. The next statement pertains to the issue that whether the tourism industry understands the needs & requirements of the tourists or not and here the J&K is showing more better results as compared to the state of Himachal Pradesh with a significant difference between the two.

The fourth statement that showed the significant difference is the availability of infrastructural and other allied facilities such as transport, power supply, helpdesk etc. These services are better in J&K as compared to the Himachal Pradesh.

The 5th statement is related to the availability of the public facility and the J&K state is showing the better results as compared to H.P. The 6th statement talks about the professionalism adopted by the employees of the tourism industry and again the J&K is showing more better results that J&K tourism industry employees are more qualified, skilled, cooperative & professional than the tourism employees of Himachal Pradesh. The eighth question enquired about the deliciousness of the food served to the tourists and again the results are in favor of J&K. The ninth statement is related to the problems faced by the tourists and the results shows that they face more problems in J&K as compared to Himachal Pradesh. The 10th statement talks about the need of govt. intervention & results show that Himachal Pradesh is in need of Govt. intervention more as compared to J&K. The statements from 11th to 15th shows mean value more for H.P. and for 16th and 17th it is more for J&K.

Table-1

S.No	Items	State	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Z. Value	P.Value
1.	Effectiveness of problems dealing by the employees of Tourism	H.P	400	3.11	1.14	3.36	.00
		J&K	410	2.85	0.99		
2.	Delivery of complete package as promised in tour package	H.P	400	3.17	1.19	2.58	.01
		J&K	410	2.97	1.03		
3.	The tourism industry understand the need & requirements of the Tourists	H.P	400	3.15	1.20	2.15	.03
		J&K	410	3.31	1.01		
4.	The related infrastructural facilities & services like transport / power supply/ helpdesk/ hotels are efficiently meeting your requirements	H.P	400	3.15	1.24	2.34	.02
		J&K	410	3.34	1.02		
5.	Public convenience (toilets & washrooms) are available and thoroughly neat & clean.	H.P	400	3.16	1.24	2.57	.01
		J&K	410	3.35	0.95		
6.	Peoples associated with tourism industry are cooperative, well qualified. Skilled and highly professional while addressing issues. if any.	H.P	400	3.19	1.12	2.78	.01
		J&K	410	3.39	0.95		
7.	The purpose of your visit (as a tourist) is to enjoy and spent good quality time.	H.P	400	3.24	1.20	2.74	.01
		J&K	410	3.45	0.92		
8.	The local cuisine / food you (as a tourist) are being served is delicious and unforgettable.	H.P	400	3.23	1.08	5.89	.00
		J&K	410	3.63	0.87		

9.	Lot of problems have been faced by you (as a tourist) while visiting destinations. (r)	H.P	400	3.27	1.21	5.64	.00
		J&K	410	3.69	0.91		
10.	Government intervention is required to develop tourist destinations on commercial basis further.	H.P	400	3.15	1.32	7.82	.00
		J&K	410	2.47	1.13		
11.	Local people and others associated with tourism industry have made my stay comfortable. as a tourist.	H.P	400	3.27	1.18	6.83	.00
		J&K	410	2.77	0.91		
12.	Local people of tourism industry take care of me (as a tourist) and try to keep me (as a tourist) away from problems concerning safety and security.	H.P	400	3.18	1.20	3.40	.00
		J&K	410	2.93	0.87		
13.	I have always been treated with respect & love while visiting many places across destinations as a tourist.	H.P	400	3.39	1.15	2.43	.02
		J&K	410	3.20	1.10		
14.	I trust people here around me as a tourist.	H.P	400	3.46	1.23	3.94	.00
		J&K	410	3.14	1.05		
15.	I trust all people concerned with tourism industry as a tourist.	H.P	400	3.49	1.24	2.40	.02
		J&K	410	3.30	0.94		
16.	Leisure/ climate/ topography has made you (as a tourist) to visit this place.	H.P	400	3.22	1.19	4.53	.00
		J&K	410	3.58	1.03		
17.	All pilgrimage sites /adventure/ leisure/ climate topography/ cuisine has made you to visit here as a mixed tourist.	H.P	400	3.37	1.22	4.26	.00
		J&K	410	3.70	0.98		

Tourist Satisfaction & Future Prospects: The three statements were presented before the tourist of both the states and it was found that chances of revisit of J&K was more with mean score of 4.27 as compared to the 3.40 mean score of HP. This means that experience of tourists was better in J&K as compared to HP. The P value is also showing a significant difference between the two.

result was in favor of J&K (4.06) as compared to HP (3.60). The P value is again less than 0.05 showing the significant difference between the two. The last question of this table relates to the expectations & experience of tourist towards the tourism services of these two states. Again the tourists responses show that in J&K their expectations were met to a greater extent as compared to the HP.

The next statement was asked that whether they will recommend others to visit the same place or not and again the

Table-2

Statements	State	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Z. Value	P. Value
Re visit this place	H.P	400	3.40	1.14	11.83	.00
	J&K	410	4.27	0.94		
Recommend this place.	H.P	400	3.60	1.00	6.70	.00
	J&K	410	4.06	0.92		
Expectations match Experience	H.P	400	3.45	1.11	6.80	.00
	J&K	410	3.93	0.86		

Overall Perception of Tourists towards tourism service quality of J&K and Himachal Pradesh: The data for overall perception of tourists towards service quality determinants of J&K and Himachal Pradesh shows that J&K is having a high value of mean that represents that the tourism industry of J&K is providing more good services to the tourists as compared to the state of Himachal Pradesh having a mean score of 5.93.

To test the significance of the difference between the mean values of the two states, the Z-test was conducted its value of 7.41 with P value of 0.00 shows that null hypothesis is rejected that the two means are equal. Hence this can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the overall perception of tourists towards the quality of service offered by the tourism industry of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.

Table-3

Statements	State	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Z. Value	P Value
Over All Perception	H.P	400	5.93	0.81	7.41	.00
	J&K	410	6.38	0.91		

6. Conclusion

The results of the data analysis reveals that difference do exists between the service quality offered by the tourism industry of J&K as Himachal Pradesh. Out of total seventeen

statements selected for this analysis shows that nine statements are having more mean score for J&K and eight are having more mean for H.P. It has also been found that results are significant for all these statements. The statement related

to revisit & recommendation of the two states as tourist destination revealed that tourists are more attracted towards Himachal Pradesh. The overall perception of the tourists

towards service offered by the tourism industry of J&K shows that the tourism Industry of J&K is providing better service quality than the tourism industry of Himachal Pradesh.

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