



TOURISM IN THE BHADERWAH VALLEY: POTENTIAL AND CHALLENGES, A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: Bhaderwah is a small valley-town situated 210 kilometres from Jammu and 30 kilometres from district headquarter, is predominantly hilly and has a temperate environment. Bhaderwah provides visitors with a variety of picturesque landscapes, meadows, little lovely valleys, bright local fairs, an important festival atmosphere, and a distinctive mosaic culture. The city also enjoys very favourable summer temperatures that range from 18 to 32 degrees. The region, also known as Chhota-Kashmir / Mini-Kashmir, is known for its enthralling natural beauty. Bhaderwah is one of many undiscovered locations in Jammu that are still unknown to visitors. The current study is an empirical analysis to identify several barriers to the promotion of tourism in Bhaderwah. The study further focused on the potentiality of tourism and suggests various strategies for the promotion of tourism in the Bhaderwah.

Keywords: Tourism, Bhaderwah, Valley, Potential, Eco- tourism, Cultural Tourism, Pilgrimage Tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

Kashmir is a popular tourist destination that draws visitors from all over the world since it is regarded as heaven on earth. Despite the government's extensive attempts to promote Kashmir as a tourist destination, Jammu hasn't gained much popularity on the state of Jammu and Kashmir's tourism map. Bhaderwah is one of the uncharted areas in Jammu region that is still unknown to visitors. The research region is located in Jammu and Kashmir along the outer Himalayan range at 32.980033° North latitude and 75.713706° East longitude. It's located in the state's eastern region. The Bhaderwah tehsil is bordered on the east by the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh, on the west by Ramban, on the south by Kathua and Udhampur, and on the north by Kishtwar District. There are 75,376 people living in this subdivision, which has a total area of 112.17 square kilometres. The sex ratio was 930, with a total of 39,949 men and 35,427 women, according to the 2011 Census. Due to its picturesque surroundings and high literacy rate, it is also known as Chota Kashmir (Mini Kashmir) and is referred to as the Kerala of Jammu and Kashmir respectively. The topography is irregular, and the landscape is exceedingly rough and mountainous. The region is also known as the country of tall mountains, little valleys, and meadows that exhibit significant elevation variations. Bhaderwah has a reasonably pleasant, dry summer with little monsoon and a fairly chilly, wet winter with adequate snowfall due to western disturbances. Bhaderwah is a highly prized tourist resort in the Jammu area because of its climate and topography.

II. OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the various tourist destinations available in the Bhaderwah
2. To study the various constraints in the way of tourism promotion in the Bhaderwah
3. To suggest the various policies for the promotion of tourism in the Bhaderwah.
4. To publicize the area as a famous tourist destination.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary and secondary data were used to create the proposed investigation. Tourists' responses to questionnaires and personal interviews with a variety of experts, including academics, Bhaderwah Development Authority government personnel, travel agents, hotels, and local ethnic groups in Bhaderwah, have been used to gather primary data. Numerous books, journals, PhD theses, magazines, and the internet were consulted for secondary data.

Sample Units: Sample units are Tourists
Sample Size: 100 Tourists

Sampling Technique: Simple Random Sampling

IV. TOURISM POTENTIAL IN BHADERWAH:

The Tourism Potential in Bhaderwah is enormous and it includes the following types of tourism.

Pilgrimage Tourism:

In Bhaderwah there are many pilgrimage places which attracts devotees all over the state throughout the year. Some important pilgrimage places are Gupt Ganga temple, Vasuki Nag Temple, Chinote Temple, Laxminarayan and Durga Devi Temple, Subar Nag Temple, Nagni Mata Temple, Seetla Mata Temple and a couple of Dargah Sharief and many more.



Fig.1 Chinote Temple



Fig. 2 Gupt Ganga

Various pilgrimage yatras in bhaderwah:

- The Kailash Yatra, which follows the Mani Mahesh Yatra, begins with Chari from Gatha in Bhaderwah, travels to Vasuki Nag and Ramtund for a night, and then proceeds to Kailash. The Yatra concludes on the Kailash Kund in August.
- Machail Yatra: Bhaderwah-Pul Doda-Thatri-Machail is the route of the yatra. The yatra, which Thakurs began as a family ritual in the 1980s, has grown to be a significant yatra in the district. Chandi Mata ka Mandir in Machail serves as the yatra's zenith.
- The Mani Mahesh Yatra travels to Mani Mahesh from Bhaderwah with Chari. In the month of August, the yatra begins.



Fig. 3. Kailash Yatra



Fig. 4 Machail Yatra



Fig. 5 Mani Mahesh Yatra

Eco-Tourism:

There are numerous magnificent natural spots in Bhaderwah Valley; some of them are featured below.

1. Chinta Valley:

On the Bhaderwah-Jai Road, 20 miles northeast of Bhaderwah town, is the valley and settlement of Chinta Valley. It is surrounded by dense coniferous forests on all sides, and the Chinta Nallah creek runs through it.

2. Jai Valley:

At 2200 metres above sea level, there lies a lovely valley called Jai Valley. It is a well-known tourist attraction that is situated in Bhaderwah, Doda. It is 32 kilometres (km) north-east of the town of Bhaderwah. One of the most popular tourist destinations in Bhaderwah, Jai Valley is home to both man-made tourist attractions, including igloo huts and youth hostels, as well as its own natural beauty. Jai Ghatti receives roughly 50,000 visitors each summer. Camping and mountaineering are both popular tourist activities in Jai Ghati.

3. Padri Meadow:

The Bhaderwah-Chamba National Highway, connecting Bhaderwah with Himachal Pradesh, passes through Padri Meadow. It's situated 41 kilometres north of Bhaderwah. A well-known centre for adventure sports, Padri Meadow provides paragliding in the summer and snow skiing in the winter. Visitors must bring woollens because Padri's temperatures are consistently cool, even in the summer.



Fig. 6. Chinta Valley.



Fig. 7 Jai Valley.



Fig. 8 Padri Meadow.

4. Chatargalla Pass (Gulli Danda & Thanthera):

On the Bhaderwah-Bani Road, 33 kilometres from Bhaderwah, is Chatargalla Pass, a lovely meadow. This pass divides Bani, in the Kathua district, from Bhaderwah, in the Doda district. Two stunning tourist destinations appeared on the route from Bhaderwah to Chattargalla: Thanthera Meadow, known for its medicinal and herbal plants, and Gulli Danda, known for its lush vegetation and pleasant climate.

5. Lake View Resort, Gatha:

A man-made tourist destination located around 3 kilometres from Bhaderwah with a beautiful view and boating amenities. Beautifully designed landscaping and water features may be seen at this serene and magnificent location on the riverbank. The best meals and service are provided, and the guest accommodations are nice and quiet.

6. Soej Meadow:

The "Crown of Bhaderwah" or Soej Meadow is one of Jammu and Kashmir's most picturesque locations. The walk to the only authorised camping site in Bhaderwah is 10 kilometres away on foot, but the lack of a road makes it more challenging. The Kailash (Kablas) Mountain is situated with a river emerging on its southern face. The majority of people frequently camp there at night during the Kailash yatra.



Fig. 9. Chatargalla Pass.



Fig. 10. Lake View Resort, Gatha.



Fig. 11. Soej Meadow.

7. Bhaderwah Fort:

It is situated at a distance of about 2.5kms from Bhaderwah. It was constructed in 1733 by Maharaja Pahar Chand, and in 1919, it was transformed into a "house of prisoners" for independence fighters. It was then made a heritage site and is today one of Bhaderwah's most visited tourist destinations. The name Bhaderwah (Bhaderkashi in ancient times) was found on the ancient and sacred temple of the goddess "Bhaderkaali" that was located inside this fort. Telligarh was also thought of as a window or vantage point from which to see the entirety of Bhaderwah.

8. Bhal Padri:

It is about 4 kilometres (on foot) from Padri Meadow. Bhal Padri is a lovely collection of tiny valleys surrounded by thick forest. It connects Bhaderwah and Bhallesa and is regarded as one of the most picturesque place in the area. This valley is home to tribal people who reside there and graze their livestock in the summer.

9. Nalthi Village:

It's located 5 kilometres from Bhaderwah. The village's two primary draws are Walnut Garden and Himman Tourist Resort. The accommodations at Himman Resort are fairly priced and offer visitors a regal experience. In addition to this, there was an encrusted Lord Hanumana shrine in the rocks.



Fig. 12. Bhaderwah Fort



Fig. 13. Bhal Padri



Fig. 14 Nalthi Village

Adventure Tourism:

Being a mountainous valley, it has a lot to offer those looking for adventure. Mountain biking chances are plentiful in the high-altitude meadows surrounding Bhaderwah, which are known as perfect paragliding places, snow skiing slopes, mountaineering and trekking trips, as well as cross-country vehicle and motorcycle rallies.

Paragliding:

- Seoj Meadow (11000 ft) is for beginner and intermediate fliers.
- Padri and Bal Padri (10,000 feet)
- For cross-country and advance flyers: Gurdanda, Sonbain (7000, 8000 ft), Khanitop, and Thuba.
- Chinta and Jai valleys (6000 feet) For basic and advanced training, all these sites offer a favourable environment and ambience for paragliding and are simply accessible and convenient for making the logistical arrangements. Except during the rainy season, paragliding is a year-round possibility and the steep tourist destination's main draw.

Snow skiing

Bhaderwah is blessed with places like the Sonbain glacier on Ashapati mountain, which is adjacent to the settlement of "Thanalla" hamlet and is located at an elevation of 7000–8000 ft. where snow never melts. The dangerous Bhaderwah Chamba road connects the high-altitude meadows of Padri and Padri Gali, which are located 30 kilometres from the main town. From November to June, Padri's slopes are completely covered in snow, making them ideal for both novice and expert snow skiers. These are comparable to the Gulmarg-Kashmir competition slopes and are very accessible. 'Chinta', a different tourist destination, is suitable for doing snow skiing training sessions.

Mountaineering, trekking and camping:

Large meadows are dotted throughout the gentle slopes of the mountains that surround the village of Bhaderwah. The mountains are also covered in deodar trees. The hikes are simple, and participating in them doesn't call for any exceptional health requirements. Several popular and interesting trekking routes include:

- (i) Bhaderwah to Seoj to Kailash Kund to Nalthi Village via Ramtund. The 30-kilometre journey may be completed in 3 days and 2 nights and requires overnight stops at Seoj and Ramtund.
- (ii) Hanga or Manthala village to Dev-Chattar-Chilli (Kelaar) to Khillanni village (75 km), which may be completed in 4 days and 3 nights and passes through dense woodland and untouched flora of the Pir Panjal hills. Camping will be at Dev Chattar Meadow and Chilli Village.
- (iii) Jai-Bach Dhar to Padri to Thanalla village (30 km) Camping at Bach Dhar and Padri Meadow for two days and two nights The indigenous flora and wildlife are routed by murmuring streams that drain dense, dark forests.
- (iv) Chinta-Roushera to Sbbhardar to Ghati Moar (25 to 30 km), which would be finished in two days and one night with a stop in Sbbhardar Meadow.
- (v) For experienced hikers and rock climbers, the two-day, one-night trek from Sarithal (on the Bhaderwah-Basoli road) to Padri over the Ashapati mountain presents difficulties. In addition to the aforementioned, the historic route taken by military general Zorawar Singh to attack Ladakh and Tibet runs from Paddar to Zanskar in Ladakh.

Cultural Tourism:**Festivals:**

Kanchoth: This is the most well-known festival for married women. On this day, they observe a fast. During the day, women dress up and accessorise, and then they worship Lord Shiva in a bid to extend their husbands' lives. To appease Lord Shiva, they sing and dance. They dance in a circle while singing the common ballad "Ghurahi" in Bhadarwahi.

Dances:**➤ Dhakku:**

Dhakku is conducted on a unique occasion called "Kood," which denotes the community's yearly religious celebration and is somewhat comparable to the "Mel" gathering in other parts of Jammu. Kood is only observed once, although on various dates and in various locations. In the evening, the Dhakku is performed around a central campfire. In a wide range of locations, including Bhaderwah, Doda, Kellar, Padar, and others, both cultural assets—DHAKKU and KOOD—find their religious significance. These locations range from Lahul-Spiti, Pangi in Himachal Pradesh to Duddu, Basant Garh, and Ramnagar in Udhampur.

➤ Ghurai: '

Ghurai' is another important dance in which only women take part. The reason the dance is called Ghurai is because it is danced to the tune of a special song called "Ghurai" that is sung by the participants. According to others, the dance is named after Shiva's consort, Gori Mata. On Gauri Tritya, women fast, worship Gori Mata, and ask Gori Mata's blessings to remain in their marriages. The event is known as Konchowth, and the fast as Konchowth.

Mela Patt:

One of the hilly regions is Bhadarwah, which is steeped in custom and tradition and has a long history of hospitality, fairs, and festivals. In this region's cultural past, fairs have a special place. The three months of August, September, and October are when the principal crops ripen and people rejoice and celebrate all the fairs that Bhadarwah holds; "Mela Patt" is the one that is most fervently observed. Tradition holds that this event was established by Raja Nagpal of Bhadarwah with the help of Lord Nag Vasuki sometime in the 16th century.



Fig-15 Mela Patt

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The information was gathered using a survey that 100 tourists completed. After analysing the data, the research's conclusions show that Bhaderwah has immense tourism potential, which, if properly tapped into, can not only lead to the city's development but also to the establishment of Bhaderwah as a major tourist destination. From 100 surveys completed by visitors to Bhaderwah at various tourist destinations, the following research conclusions were drawn:

Age group:	14% are below 18Years.
	34% are between 19 to 35 years.
	40% are between 36 to 50 years.
	12% are above 50 years.
Education Qualification:	16% are 10th class diploma holder or less.
	18% are having 10+2 diploma.
	42% are graduates.
	24% are post graduate.
Gender:	79% are male
	21% are female.

Table 1.1: Basic information of tourists

S.No	Statements for various problems in Bhaderwah	Strongly Disagree %age	Disagree %age	Can-not say %age	Agree %age	Strongly Agree %age
1	Accommodation facility is satisfactory	39	34	6	10	11
2	There is good quality of transport facilities	38	22	5	24	11
3	Markets of Bhaderwah are well established	22	31	4	24	19
4	There is quality food outlets in Bhaderwah	35	26	6	17	16
5	Hygienic food is available in Bhaderwah.	28	33	15	12	12
6	There is lack of information about various tourist places	14	15	3	38	30
7	There are adequate travel agencies available for providing services to tourists	39	28	17	6	10
8	Numerous tour operators are available	38	34	12	9	7
9	Tourist guides are easily available	42	27	15	5	11
10	Communications facility are available at major tourist places	39	27	6	11	17
11	ATMs facilities are available at tourists' places	31	27	3	19	20
12	Medical facilities are available at tourists' destinations	16	31	11	23	19
13	The roads are well maintained for connecting various tourist places within Bhaderwah	31	42	5	12	10
14	Information Centre set up by Govt. are available at major places	52	22	7	13	6

Table 1.2 represent the statements for various problems in Bhaderwah.

- ❖ According to the first part of the statement, 73% of tourists complain that Bhaderwah lacks high-quality lodging options. This indicates the necessity of building excellent lodging options in Bhaderwah.
- ❖ The second statement, which is made by 60% of tourists, claims that Bhaderwah lacks good transport options. This indicates the need to upgrade Bhaderwah's transport options.
- ❖ The third claim reveals that 53% of tourists disagree or strongly disagree with the idea that the markets in Bhaderwah are established. Therefore, it is necessary for the government to implement a number of measures in order to expand the local market in Bhaderwah by providing locals with various financial aids in the form of loans and incentive programmes.
- ❖ The fourth statement reveals that 61% of visitors disagree or strongly disagree that Bhaderwah has a variety of high-quality eating establishments. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the government to take the necessary steps to build high-quality food outlets in Bhaderwah in order to encourage tourism.
- ❖ The fifth statement reveals that 61% of tourists strongly disagree / disagree and reject that quality, hygienic cuisine is offered in Bhaderwah. Therefore, if local food shops wish to remain competitive, they must be made aware of this. They must produce wholesome, hygienic cuisine for the tourists, and they must not skimp on the food's quality in order to make a quick buck.
- ❖ The sixth statement, which is made by 68% of the tourists, claims that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of the many tourist attractions in Bhaderwah. This demonstrates the need for print and electronic media publicity for the Bhaderwah.
- ❖ The seventh statement indicates that 67% of tourists disagree and are highly opposed to the idea that Bhaderwah has enough travel agents to serve tourists, which is a significant barrier to tourism.
- ❖ The eighth statement indicates that 72% of tourists disagree and are highly opposed to the idea that tour operators are readily available in Bhaderwah, which is a significant barrier to the development of tourism in Bhaderwah.
- ❖ Statement nine indicates that 69% of tourists strongly disagree and disagree that tourist guides are readily available in Bhaderwah, which is a significant barrier to the development of Bhaderwah's tourism industry.
- ❖ 10. The tenth statement demonstrates that 66% of tourists strongly agree and agree that the lack of communications facilities at popular tourist destinations is a significant barrier to tourism.
- ❖ The eleventh statement indicates that 58% of visitors strongly disagree or disagree that there are ATM facilities available at popular tourist destinations, which is a significant obstacle to tourism. ATM facilities must be established at popular tourist destinations in Bhaderwah.
- ❖ According to the twelfth statement, 42% of tourists highly agree and agree that medical facilities are accessible at important tourist destinations, while 47% strongly disagree and disagree, demonstrating the necessity of providing medical facilities at key tourist destinations.
- ❖ The thirteenth statement claims that 73% of tourists highly agree and agree that the roads connecting Bhaderwah's different tourist attractions are underdeveloped, which is also a significant barrier to tourism.
- ❖ According to the final conclusion, 74% of visitors strongly disagree and disagrees that the government has established information centres in strategic locations. Additionally, this poses a significant barrier for tourists.

FINDINGS:

Despite Bhaderwah's significant tourism potential, tourists are often ignorant of the area. Despite the fact that the State Government and Tourism Department are making efforts to promote tourism in the area, more significant actions need to be made. Consider how Kashmir has helped to spread its culture over the globe. The Bhaderwah requires the same efforts. The following three areas—or 3As—need to be managed and developed for the tourist attraction to succeed: Accessibility, Accommodation, and Attractions at the place.

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

- 1) **Accessibility:** According to the research, there aren't many high-quality transit options for getting from Jammu to Bhaderwah or from Bhaderwah to the area's different tourist attractions. Accessibility to the location is essential to its success. Even if a destination is stunning, alluring, and equipped with every amenity, it is useless if tourists cannot get there. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Jammu and Kashmir State Government and all private tourism organizations to offer reliable transit options in Bhaderwah.
- 2) **Accommodations:** According to the research results, Bhaderwah lacks high-quality lodging options. There aren't many hotels in the area that offer top-notch tourist services
- 3) **Attraction:** The research's findings show that Bhaderwah has a number of lovely tourist destinations, but visitors find it difficult to get to them. They are on hills, and the roads are not adequately constructed. Additionally, the primary tourist destinations in Bhaderwah lack basic amenities like food, medical care, communication, etc., which is a significant barrier to the city's efforts to promote tourism.
- 4) **Governmental initiatives:** Despite the best efforts of the state government, which established the Bhaderwah Development Authority (BDA) for the development of tourism in the region, there are a great number of locations that the BDA has identified for the promotion of tourism in the area. The many initiatives to create tourism routes in the area are now in progress. The most well-known and naturally stunning locations include Kalash, Seoj, Kansar Domuhanda, etc. For the promotion of tourism in the region, the government has taken action and launched a festival. However, additional significant initiatives are needed if the state administration hopes to make Bhaderwah a popular tourism destination in both India and J&K.

SUGGESTION:

- a. A central location should have a constantly staffed information desk where visitors can learn about the many tourist attractions in Bhaderwah.
- b. Accommodations for tourists should be made during the busiest time of year, when there is a lot of demand owing to the Kailash and Machail Yatras.
- c. Tourists should be provided with safety and security measures at the region's most popular tourist destinations.
- d. Promotion of Bhaderwah should be done through print and electronic media so that everyone is aware of the many tourist attractions in Bhaderwah.
- e. The government should work to build highways connecting Bhaderwah to Bani (Kathua) and Chamba (Himachal Pradesh), which can serve as a gateway for tourists to visit Bhaderwah. As of now, travelers take the Jammu or Srinagar routes to visit Bhaderwah.

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