

## TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AND SATISFACTORY LEVELS OF TOURISTS: A CASE STUDY OF GANDERBAL DISTRICT IN KASHMIR VALLEY

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**Abstract:** *Tourism plays an important role in the overall economy and development of an area. Valley of Kashmir is known for its scenic, mesmerizing and unparalleled beauty all over the world. It has been considered as the “paradise over the earth”. Ganderbal one of the smallest districts in the valley of Kashmir is known for its wide range of tourist destinations ranging from high altitude Lakes and green Alpine meadows to beautiful low lying valleys. The district is not only popular for its scenic beauty and richness in landscape but also has a great exposure of adventure tourism. It is often called as the district of lakes, as it possesses the most number of lakes in the whole State. There are numerous tourist destinations in the district and hence has got a huge tourism potential in whole of the valley. The places like Sonamarg (also known as Meadow of Gold), Manasbal Lake, Khir Bhawani Temple, Amarnath Cave and ancient Naranag Temple are some important tourist destinations in the district. Present paper brings out the levels of satisfaction of tourists visiting different tourist destinations in the district with respect to the infrastructure and future scope of tourism. It also throws light on those aspects which need to be paid attention for the further development of tourism sector in the district.*

**Keywords:** Alpine Meadows, Adventure tourism, Tourism potential, Infrastructure.

### Tourism, General Overview

Even since the dawn of the civilization on the earth, man has been trying to unfold the Gordian knot of Mother Nature (B. Satish). However the prime purpose of the primitive man was to fulfil the physiological needs i.e., food, water, shelter, sleep and clothing. With the passage of time, man's endeavours had also been changing. In the quest to unfold the hidden secrets of nature, man moved from area to area for not only satisfying his biological needs but also enjoy a comfortable life. As long back as in 1960s, Thomas cook, the pioneer of organized mass tourism proclaimed in England that, “the earth in all its fullness and beauty is for the people”. Today tourism has become a worldwide phenomenon. It is the most rapidly growing global industry and has got multifarious benefits. (A. Shanta Kumari and T. Parvender). Tourism in the modern world is looked up on as an important factor in the developmental process of a society. Tourism brings the prosperity in the recipient country. Today, international tourism is the largest single element in the world trade. Many countries derive foreign exchange through tourism for their development purposes. Developing countries facing the problems of epidemic poverty, underemployment, and unemployment find a relief to these chronic problems by exchanging tourism in their regions.

### Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir is the hilly and economically backward part of the country carrying all the inherent characteristics of an under developed economy. It occupies an apex seat in the beautiful tourist resorts of the world and possesses everything that enchants tourists. The state of Jammu and Kashmir is known all over the world for its beautiful valleys, shimmering lakes, snow-capped peaks, invigorating climate, gushing brooks, opportunities for trekking, fishing, skiing, and number of archaeological, historical, cultural, and religious places. All the three divisions of the state viz. Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh present a synthesis of diverse ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic

strands and have their own peculiar tourism resources. The valley of Kashmir for scenic beauty, Jammu for Vaishno Devi and ancient temples and Ladakh for Gumpas are visited especially by thousands of Indian and foreign tourists. Valley of Kashmir has variously been called as an, "emerald set in pearls". Enchanted by this lovely vale, King Jahangir had proclaimed, "if there is paradise on earth, it's here, it's here, it's here". However, the other parts of state are no less important. The tourism industry in the state occupies the paramount position in view of its powerful growth potential owing to high tourism resources and on account of its low industrial potential. Thus the economy of the state depends heavily on tourism industry for accelerating its development process. The present study is an attempt to evaluate and make a quantitative measurement of the tourism potential of the Ganderbal district of the Kashmir division.

### **Significance of the study**

The purpose of the present study is to report the present tourism potential of the different tourist spots in the Ganderbal district and to recommend ways of improving the quality of satisfaction of the tourists. It also attempted to highlight the all possible ways for making the stay of tourists comfortable as possible in the area and highlight the areas where there is immediate need for development so that the visitors can be ensured from all possible ways to enjoy the total travel experience during their visit in the area. The present study equally aims to recommend ways of increasing the present tourism potential of the different tourist spots in the district by assessing the existing tourism potential. The significance of the present study also lies in the fact that it is attempted to highlight the areas that are weakly developed in a destination and guide ways for their development.

### **Aims and Objectives of the study**

The present study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the tourism potential of the different tourist spots in the Ganderbal district on the basis of various selected indicators.
2. To analyse the overall satisfactory levels of tourists at different tourist spots of Ganderbal district.
3. To suggest suitable measures, for improving the level of satisfaction of the tourists, policy implications for accelerating the tourist inflow and development in the Ganderbal district.

### **Data base**

The data for the compilation of present paper have been derived from both primary as well as secondary sources. The primary data regarding the present study was collected by personally going to various tourist places with the help of questionnaires and personal interviews. The questionnaires were used to assess the tourists in terms of purpose of visit, country/place of origin, number of persons in group, relationship, age structure, sex occupation, magnitude of visit, host-tourist relationship, satisfaction levels, modes of transport, problems faced, and suggestions for improvement. The secondary data was collected from various sources/departments such as-

- a) Directorate of tourism, Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar.
- b) Tourism office, Manasbal Resort.
- c) Deputy Commissioner's office, Ganderbal.

In addition to this, the relevant information and literature was obtained from various published and unpublished reports, papers, journals, etc.

### **Methodology**

The tourists visiting the district were interviewed at five different tourist spots namely Sonamarg, Manasbal, Khirbhawani, Naranag and Amarnath cave through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire sought information on various grounds by whom the tourists got interacted. About 20 percent of the total tourists were interviewed at each spot and thus a total of about 100 percent respondent tourists were contacted from the five different tourist spots in the district. Actually the identification of tourist nodes and evaluation of tourism potential was done on the basis of following selected indicators: (i) Climate, (ii) Attitude of local people, (iii) Availability of tour operators, (iv)

Accessibility, (v) Accommodation, (vi) Satisfaction with the fulfilment of vow (vii) Local traffic, (viii) Parking facility, (ix) Events, (x) Parks and green areas, (xi) Pedestrian ways, (xii) Landscape beauty, (xiii) Quality of water and sanitation, (xiv) Shopping facility, (xv) Food availability. At each tourist spot, the respondent tourists were asked about his/her own level of satisfaction and to categorize it under the above mentioned indicators in to very satisfied, satisfied, average, unsatisfied and very unsatisfied category at each tourist spot in the whole district. After successful collection of data, the data was tabulated, analysed subsequently, processed and the final results were achieved. Apart from these indicators, suitable and appropriate cartographic and statistical techniques were used to analyze and interpret the data regarding the present research.

### **Geographical Appraisal of the Study Area**

Ganderbal one of the smallest districts in the valley of Kashmir is known for its wide range of tourist destinations ranging from high altitude Lakes and green Alpine meadows to beautiful low lying valleys. Present study area is lying within the Geographic coordinates of 34° 14'-34° 23' N latitude and 74° 47'-74° 78' E longitude at an average altitude of 1,950 metres (6,400 feet) above sea level. The district is not only popular for its scenic beauty and richness in landscape but also has a great exposure of adventure tourism. It is often called as the district of lakes, as it possesses the most number of lakes in the whole State. There are numerous tourist destinations in the district and hence has got a huge tourism potential in whole of the valley. Although every spot in the district has a recreational value and religious faith, however, the following tourist destinations attract tourists in large numbers.

### **Sonamarg**

It is located at an average altitude of 2800 Mt's (AMSL) with Geographical Coordinates of 34°20' N Longitude, 75°20' Latitude. It is rated as one of the matchless tourist hill resorts of the world. It is situated in the Sindh valley along the Srinagar-Leh national highway. Sonamarg popularly known as "MEADOW OF GOLD" situated at the terminal moraines of famous Thajawas glacier at the distance of about 83 Kms from Srinagar. It has got high snowy peaks at its backdrop against a cerulean sky. It has a string of shimmering waterfalls and famous Thajawas glacier. It is an excellent base for trekking and is a major trek that passes along several mountainous lakes which are also popular for their religious sanctity viz. Gangaballke, Satsarlake, Gadsar, Vishansar, and Krishnsar. The tiny village of Baltal which is also the base camp for Amarnathyatris is the last settlement in eastern Ganderbal, right at the foot of Zojila pass which is the entry gate to the Ladakh region. Thus, Sonamarg area is sheer scenic splendour.

### **Manasbal Lake**

Manasbal Lake, the panoramic lake is one of the deepest lakes of the valley having average depth of 13 Mt's. The lake is situated on the right banks of river Jhelum at a distance of about 34 Kms from Srinagar at an altitude of about 1560 mt's AMSL with Geographical Coordinates of 34°15' N Latitude, 74°40' E Longitude. It is a small lake with a maximum length of about 6 Kms and an average breadth of about 1.20 Kms and the shore length of 1.583 Mt's (5.194 ft). This lake is supreme of all the low altitudinal lakes of the valley and main attraction of this lake is its clean crystal waters and Lotus blossoms which add to its natural beauty. The period between June and August is ideal for conducting various water sports. A Mughal garden Jarokha Bagh overlooks the lake. The lake is also ideal for bird watching.

### **Khair Bhawani Temple**

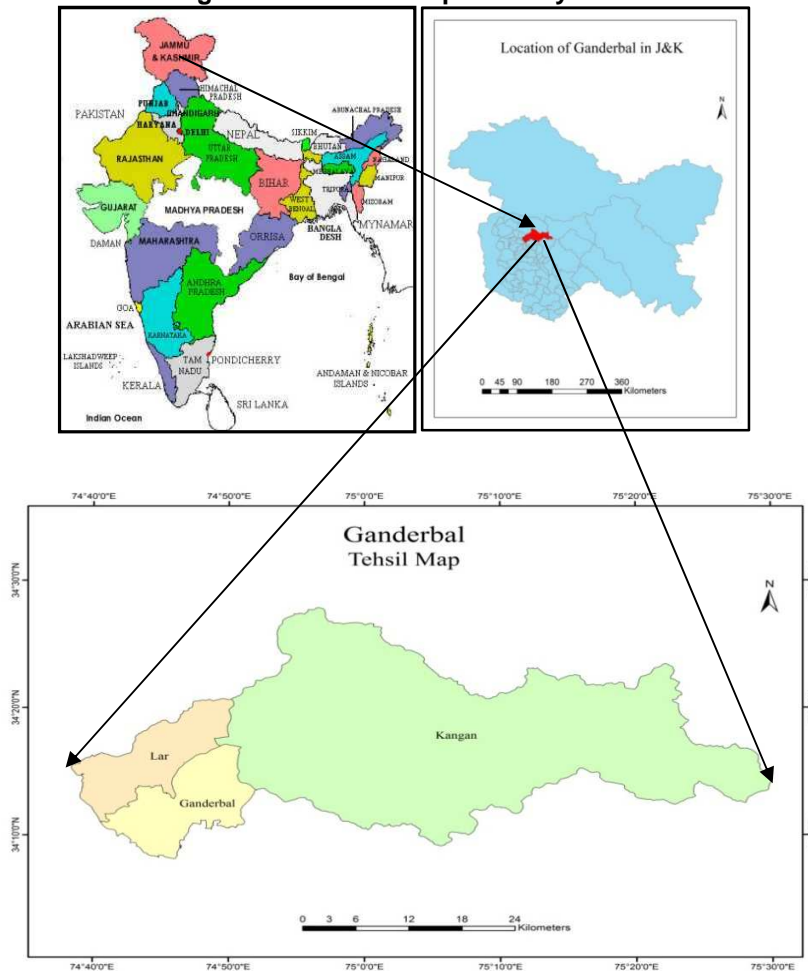
It is situated at a distance of 14 miles east of Srinagar near the village Tulamulla. It is the most important temple for the followers of historical Vedic religion in Kashmir and has got a significant importance from the Hindu religious point of view. Around the temple is an area covered with smooth and beautiful stones. Around the temple are large old chinar trees beneath which the pilgrims sit or sleep on mats of grass. The temple is located on the spring whose water according to the Hindu devotees keeps changing its colour of water, when

black or darkish colour appear, it is believed to be an indication of inauspicious times for Kashmir. It is being developed and maintained by the Dharmath trust J & K.

### Amarnath Cave

Amarnath cave is a famous shrine of Hindu religion located among the mountains in districts of Anantnag and Ganderbal. The cave is situated at an altitude of 3888 mt's (12756 ft) with Geographic coordinates of 34°21' N Latitude and 75°50' E Longitude and is about 141 Kms. from Srinagar via Sonamarg Baltal route. The cave is surrounded by lofty snowy mountains, also the cave is itself covered with snow for most time of the year except for a short period of time in summer when it is open for pilgrims. An annual pilgrimage is made to the Amaranth cave by lakhs of Hindu devotees on the challenging mountainous terrain. The Length of cave is about 60 feet, width of about 30 feet and average height of about 15 ft from the cave floor. The pilgrimage to Amaranth is performed annually in the month of July at the full moon in the month of July- August; thousands of Hindu pilgrims make the yatra to the Shree Amarnath cave when a natural ice - lingam (stalactite) the symbol of lord Shiva, reaches its greatest size.

**Figure 1: Location Map of Study area**



### Naranag

Naranag is a tourist village of Ganderbal district. It is located around 8 Km's from Kangan, 6 Kms upstream from the Nallah Sindh noted for its scenic beauty of meadows, lakes, green valley's and snow clad mountains. It is a base camp for trekking to the Mount Harmukh (16870 ft AMSL), Gangaballake, Krishansar lake etc. Naranag Valley is noted for its scenic meadows. It also serves a base camp for Satsar (seven lakes), Gadsar, Mount Harmukh, Krishansar and Vaishnosar.

Naranag receives heavy snowfall during the winter due to which it remain cut off from other areas of the valley. Naranag temple serves as the main attraction for the tourists. It is one of the important archaeological sites of the country. The site consists of a cluster of temples facing each other at a distance of about 200 meters.

### Satisfactory levels of Tourists at different tourist Spots

An attempt is made to identify the tourism potential of the different tourist spots in the district. The tourism potential of different tourist spots in the district were identified randomly as per the level of satisfaction perceived by the respondent tourists contacted during the survey under the various selected indicators which include the above mentioned indicators. The information from the respondent tourists on the level of satisfaction under the above selected indicators was collected through a structured questionnaire. The tourists visiting the district were interviewed from the five different tourist spots viz. Sonamarg, Manasbal, Khir Bhawani, Amarnath cave and Naranag valley. About 20 percent of the total tourists were approached randomly through a structured questionnaire from the above mentioned five different tourist spots in the district and thus a total of about 100 tourists were contacted during the whole survey. During the whole survey, the respondent tourists were asked about their levels of satisfaction at the five different tourist spots in the district and were asked to categorize randomly as per the level of satisfaction perceived by them under the various selected indicators into very satisfied, satisfied, average satisfied, unsatisfied and very unsatisfied category. The data about the level of satisfaction at a particular tourist spot was collected according to the tourist's own judgement with respect to his/her own level of satisfaction. After successful collection of data at the five different tourist spots in the district, the data was tabulated, analyzed, processed and the results were achieved. The whole analysis can be interpreted as follows:

**Table 1: Index of level of satisfaction of the tourists at Sonamarg**

S. No	Selected indicators	No. of tourists (category wise)					Percentage of tourists (category wise)				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
01	Climate	0	0	0	4	16	0	0	0	20	80
02	Attitude of Local People	0	1	2	17	0	0	5	10	85	0
03	Availability of tour Operators	0	2	7	6	5	0	1	30	25	0
04	Accessibility	0	0	3	5	12	0	0	15	25	60
05	Accommodation	0	0	2	4	14	0	0	10	20	70
06	Satisfaction with the fulfilment of vow	3	5	12	0	0	15	25	60	0	0
07	Local Traffic	0	0	2	6	12	0	0	10	30	60
08	Parking facility	0	0	4	5	11	0	0	20	25	55
09	Events	0	2	9	9	0	0	10	45	45	0
10	Souvenirs	6	11	0	3	0	30	55	0	15	0
11	Pedestrian ways	0	1	6	5	8	0	5	30	25	40
12	Parks and green areas	0	0	1	7	12	0	0	5	35	60
13	Landscape beauty	0	0	0	4	16	0	0	0	20	80
14	Quality of water & sanitation	0	0	4	6	10	0	0	20	30	50
15	Shopping facility	0	0	4	4	12	0	0	20	20	60
16	Food availability	0	0	4	8	8	0	0	20	40	40
	Total	9	22	60	91	138					

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013).

Note: The weight age of the above indicators were derived with the help of scale 1-5. Here 1 means that tourists are very unsatisfied with a particular component and 5 means that tourists are very satisfied with a particular component.

**Table 2: Index of level of satisfaction of the tourists at Manasbal**

S. No	Selected indicators	No. of tourists (category wise)					Percentage of tourists (category wise)				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
01	Climate	0	0	0	3	17	0	0	0	15	85
02	Attitude of Local People	0	2	2	3	13	0	10	10	15	65
03	Availability of tour Operators	4	5	7	3	1	20	25	35	15	5
04	Accessibility	0	0	6	4	10	0	0	30	20	50
05	Accommodation	0	0	5	5	10	0	0	25	25	50
06	Satisfaction with the fulfilment of vow	0	1	2	5	22	0	5	10	25	60
07	Local Traffic	0	0	4	5	22	0	0	20	25	55
08	Parking facility	0	0	5	6	9	0	0	25	30	45
09	Events	5	6	7	2	0	25	30	35	10	0
10	Souvenirs	2	6	5	7	0	10	30	25	35	0
11	Pedestrian ways	0	1	3	6	10	0	5	15	30	50
12	Parks and green areas	0	0	1	8	11	0	0	5	40	55
13	Landscape beauty	0	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	50	50
14	Quality of water & sanitation	0	1	3	7	9	0	5	15	35	45
15	Shopping facility	0	2	4	5	9	0	10	20	25	45
16	Food availability	0	0	5	7	8	0	0	25	35	40
	Total	11	24	59	86	140					

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013)

Note: The weight age of the above indicators were derived with the help of scale 1-5. Here 1 means that tourists are very unsatisfied with a particular component and 5 means that tourists are very satisfied with a particular component.

**Table 3: Index of level of satisfaction of the tourists at Khir Bhawani**

S. No	Selected indicators	No. of tourists (category wise)					Percentage of tourists (category wise)				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
01	Climate	0	0	0	3	17	0	0	0	15	85
02	Attitude of Local People	0	0	0	4	16	0	0	0	20	80
03	Availability of tour Operators	0	7	8	5	0	0	35	40	20	0
04	Accessibility	0	0	1	9	10	0	0	5	45	50
05	Accommodation	0	5	6	4	5	0	25	30	20	25
06	Satisfaction with the fulfilment of vow	2	3	8	5	2	10	15	40	25	10
07	Local Traffic	0	0	3	4	13	0	0	15	20	65
08	Parking facility	0	0	2	7	11	0	0	10	35	55
09	Events	2	5	8	4	1	10	25	40	20	5
10	Souvenirs	7	6	7	0	0	35	30	35	0	0
11	Pedestrian ways	0	0	2	9	9	0	0	10	45	45
12	Parks and green areas	0	0	2	8	10	0	0	10	40	50
13	Landscape beauty	0	0	0	4	16	0	0	0	20	80
14	Quality of water & sanitation	0	2	1	6	11	0	10	5	30	55
15	Shopping facility	0	0	6	9	5	0	0	30	45	25
16	Food availability	4	5	4	7	0	20	25	20	35	0
	Total	15	33	58	88	126					

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013).

Note: The weight age of the above indicators were derived with the help of scale 1-5. Here 1 means that tourists are very unsatisfied with a particular component and 5 means that tourists are very satisfied with a particular component.

**Table 4: Index of level of satisfaction of the tourists at Amarnath cave**

S. No	Selected indicators	No. of tourists (category wise)					Percentage of tourists (category wise)				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
01	Climate	0	0	0	1	19	0	0	0	5	95
02	Attitude of Local People	0	0	0	5	15	0	0	0	25	75
03	Availability of tour Operators	0	8	8	4	0	0	40	40	20	0
04	Accessibility	0	0	2	5	13	0	0	10	25	65
05	Accommodation	6	3	4	5	2	35	15	20	20	10
06	Satisfaction with the fulfilment of vow	1	3	4	6	6	5	15	20	30	30
07	Local Traffic	9	7	3	1	0	45	35	15	5	0
08	Parking facility	0	0	4	9	7	0	0	20	45	35
09	Events	3	9	5	3	0	15	45	25	15	0
10	Souvenirs	3	8	9	0	0	15	40	45	0	0
11	Pedestrian ways	0	3	5	8	4	0	15	25	40	20
12	Parks and green areas	0	0	4	6	10	0	0	20	30	50
13	Landscape beauty	0	0	0	1	19	0	0	0	5	95
14	Quality of water & sanitation	0	0	2	6	12	0	0	10	30	60
15	Shopping facility	10	6	2	1	1	50	30	10	5	5
16	Food availability	3	9	6	2	0	15	45	30	10	0
	Total	35	55	58	63	104					

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013).

Note: The weightage of the above indicators were derived with the help of scale 1-5. Here 1 means that tourists are very unsatisfied with a particular component and 5 means that tourists are very satisfied with a particular component.

**Table 5: Index of level of satisfaction of the tourists at Naranag**

S. No	Selected indicators	No. of tourists (category wise)					Percentage of tourists (category wise)				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
01	Climate	0	0	0	4	16	0	0	0	20	80
02	Attitude of Local People	0	0	2	8	10	0	0	10	40	50
03	Availability of tour Operators	1	19	0	0	0	5	95	0	0	0
04	Accessibility	0	1	3	5	11	0	5	15	25	55
05	Accommodation	2	3	5	7	3	10	15	25	35	15
06	Satisfaction with the fulfilment of vow	1	3	4	5	7	5	15	20	25	35
07	Local Traffic	2	5	9	4	0	10	25	45	20	0
08	Parking facility	2	6	5	5	2	10	30	25	25	10
09	Events	4	14	2	0	0	20	70	10	0	0
10	Souvenirs	2	5	4	4	5	10	25	20	20	25
11	Pedestrian ways	2	5	9	3	1	10	25	45	15	5
12	Parks and green areas	0	0	6	7	7	0	0	30	35	35
13	Landscape beauty	0	0	0	3	17	0	0	0	15	85
14	Quality of water & sanitation	0	2	3	6	9	0	10	15	30	45
15	Shopping facility	0	1	2	6	11	0	5	10	30	55
16	Food availability	2	4	3	6	5	10	20	15	30	25
	Total	18	68	57	73	104					

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013)

Note: the weight age of the above indicators were derived with the help of scale 1-5. Here 1 means that tourists are very unsatisfied with a particular component and 5 means that tourists are very satisfied with a particular component.

**Table 6: Levels of satisfaction at various tourist spots in different categories**

Level of satisfaction in categories	Percentage of respondents ( percentage) at different tourist spots				
	Sonamarg	Manasbal Lake	Khir Bhawani	Amarnath Cave	Naranag
Very satisfied	48.44	43.13	40.00	33.01	32.5
Satisfied	23.75	26.88	27.5	20.00	22.82
Average	18.44	18.43	17.5	18.41	17.81
Unsatisfied	6.56	7.5	10.37	17.46	21.25
Very unsatisfied	2.81	4.06	4.96	11.11	5.62
Total	100.00	100	100	100	100

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013)

The table 6 displays the level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists under the above mentioned indicators contacted during the survey at Sonamarg. It is revealed from the above table that among the tourists contacted during the survey at Sonamarg, 72.19 percent are satisfied of their visit to Sonamarg, while a minute proportion of about 9.37 percent of the respondent tourists are unsatisfied with their trip to Sonamarg. However a proportion of about 18.44 percent fall in the average category. The above analysis reveals that Sonamarg is very high rated tourist spot in terms of the level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists because the proportion of satisfied tourists is significantly high as compared to the unsatisfied tourists. The table 6 also displays the level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists under various selected indicators contacted during the survey at Manasbal. It is noticed from the above table that among the tourists contacted during the survey at Manasbal, 70.01 percent are satisfied of their visit to the spot while a proportion of about 11.56 percent of the respondent are unsatisfied. However, a proportion of about 18.43 percent fall in average category. Under the supervision of Wular Manasbal Development Authority, the spot has been maintained and developed during the last decade. The spot has got a pilgrimage importance in the form of an ancient temple discovered in 2010 by a local resident and the people irrespective of caste, color, creed, religion visit the place to get the peace of mind. A huge amount of revenue is generated regularly at the spot in terms visiting pass from the tourists. The sports activity especially water is has made the spot very unique from the other. The table 6 also displays the level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists under various selected indicators contacted during the survey at Khir Bhawani. It is noticed from the above table that among the tourists contacted during the survey at Khir Bhawani, 67.5 percent were satisfied of their visit to the spot while a proportion of about 15 percent of the respondent are unsatisfied. However, a proportion of about 17.5 percent fall in average category. The table 6 also contains the data regarding the level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists under various selected indicators contacted during the survey at Amarnath cave. It is noticed from the above table that among the tourists contacted during the survey at Amarnath cave, 53.01 percent are satisfied of their visit to the spot while a proportion of about 28.57 of the respondent are unsatisfied. However, a proportion of about 18.41 percent fall in average category. The analysis of the survey carried out at the Amarnath cave reveals that Amarnath cave is less developed tourist spot than Khir Bhawani as per the level of satisfaction of the tourists perceived under the various selected indicators. The table 6 also displays the data of level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists under various selected indicators contacted during the survey at Naranag valley.

**Table 7: Overall level of satisfaction for the tourists in the whole Ganderbal district**

Level of satisfaction in categories	Proportion of respondents ( percentage)
Very satisfied	40.26
Satisfied	24.81
Average	18.5
Unsatisfied	12.18
Very unsatisfied	4.25
Total	100.00

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013).



The above table shows that overall level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists under the various selected categories contacted during the whole survey in the district. After working out the level of satisfaction of different tourist spots in the district, the overall level of satisfaction of the tourists in the whole district was checked out. Among the hundred tourists contacted during the survey in the above mentioned tourist spots, the above table reveals that 65.07 percent are satisfied of their visit to district while a proportion of about 16.43 percent of the respondent tourists are unsatisfied with their visit to district. However, a proportion of about 18.5 percent fall in average category the whole survey points out the fact that the district has got an immense potential for the tourists and there is immediate need of certain steps taken in order to over throw certain kind of problems faced by the tourists in the district.

**Table 08: Ranking of tourist nodes in the Ganderbal district**

Tourist Spot	Level of satisfaction in percentage ( percentage)					Rank
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Average	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	
Sonamarg	48.44	23.75	18.44	6.56	2.81	1
Manasbal	43.13	26.88	18.43	7.5	4.06	2
Khir Bhawani	40	27.5	17.5	10.31	4.69	3
Naranag valley	32.5	22.82	17.81	21.25	5.62	4
Amarnath cave	33.01	20.00	18.41	17.46	11.11	5

Source: Primary survey conducted (24 March- 30 March, 2013)

The above table shows the ranking of the tourist nodes in the Ganderbal district according to the level of satisfaction of the contacted tourists during the whole survey at each spot. It is revealed from the above table that Sonamarg is the 1st order tourist spot as the proportion of satisfied tourists (72.19 percent) is significantly high as compared to the other tourist spots selected for the survey in the district. A proportion of about 70.1 percent of the respondent tourists contacted during the survey at Manasbal are satisfied with their visit to the said spot and subsequently, it became the 2nd order tourist spot. However, the proportion of satisfied tourists at Khir Bhawani, Naranag, Amarnath are 67.5 percent, 60.32 percent, 55.32 percent and thus, they became the 3rd order, 4th order and 5th order tourist spots respectively.

### **Conclusions and Suggestions**

Tourism is one of the fast growing industries in the world. There are many factors which promote tourism industry. Climate is one of them. The regions of the higher altitudes are always preferred by the people to escape from stress and strain of day to day life. Anything which attracts and entertain can be considered for tourism. Generally, Ganderbal is a tourism oriented district. The growth in the tourism turnover in recent years confirms that the district is on the path towards making tourism as an active generator of its economic development. From the research, analysis and the discussion of results, following conclusions are drawn:

- I. Ganderbal is a unique centre in the tourist map of Kashmir valley. The place is blessed with plenty of tourism destinations like pilgrim centres, reservoirs, and dense green forests. There are other places of historical importance. Wildlife and nature are also the assets of the area. The district can be noted as a vast developing tourist spot in the state.
- II. In the present study, it is attempted to identify the tourism potential of the important tourist nodes in the areas on the basis of level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists contacted during the survey carried out in the district. The level of satisfaction of the respondent tourists contacted during the survey at each selected tourist spot in the district was carried out on the basis of certain selected indicators.
- III. Ganderbal has much more tourism potential than present tourist attractions but so far it has not been explored fully, provided with all the infrastructural facilities, the area will act as a magnet to attract maximum tourists.
- IV. Tourism has immense potential in the district and there is a lot of scope for new tourist places to be thrown open for the tourists especially in high altitudinal mountainous areas.

- V. The increasing inflow of tourists to the district, year after year has made it necessary for the state government to increase the expenditure on tourism industry in the said area.
- VI. Shortages of facilities, insufficiency of public material, lack of advertisement, statistics and of course lack of research are some of the main problems that are responsible for the negative impact of the level of satisfaction of the tourists in the area.
- VII. It has been revealed that the opening of Sonamarg for winter sports, so as to develop it as a whole year tourist destination and attract tourists towards the valley has shown good results.

### **Suggestions**

A few suggestions have been made below in order to improve the tourism potential of the district and to increase the level of satisfaction of the tourists.

#### **I. Provide better transport facilities**

Tourist traffic largely depends on the ability to move freely from one place to another under all circumstances. The area lacks behind in providing better and adequate transport facilities, therefore certain measures have been suggested.

##### **a) Arrangement of better road links**

A serious problem discussed is the poor condition of the roads inside the area connecting different tourist spots. This has proved a great problem in the path of tourism development in the area. Therefore, the need is to provide comfortable and smooth approaches to the various tourist places in the area.

#### **II. Arrangement of adequate accommodation**

This is the biggest problem so far tourists have been facing. The existing accommodation by way of huts, tents, rest houses, dak bungalows should be extended. There is lack of accommodation due to increasing flow of tourists.

- III. Publicity and promotion is absolutely essential to tourism since this make the tourist spot to become known. The publicity for the promotion of tourism activities in the area is very poor. The officials attached to the tourist department have not taken so much interest in advertising the tourist places in the district. So publicity must be improved and maintained in order to attract the tourists from far wide.
- IV. The tourism potential of the different tourist spots in the district must be increased if totally new approach is sought i.e., to increase the infrastructural facilities (without disturbing the ecological balance of the area) so that the level of satisfaction of the tourists visiting the area will be increased.
- V. Tourism department should start with a view to promote tourism in the area. Examination of the overall situation is to make for improving the efficiency in the area. There is ample scope for these authorities to earn profits. The authorities should enter into the agreement with other organizations and organize tour festivals, handicraft melas, etc. From time to time and generate income.
- VI. Not only the winter sports but the initiative should be taken up in the area for trekking, water rafting and mountaineering.

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