



## Comparative Analysis of Sports Tourism Policies in Uttarakhand and Mizoram

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### Abstract

*This paper provides a comparative analysis of the sports tourism policies in Uttarakhand and Mizoram, two Indian states characterized by unique geographical and cultural features. The study explores key dimensions such as policy frameworks, infrastructure development, the hosting of sports events, financial incentives, and revenue generation over the last five years. Through a detailed examination, the research identifies the strengths and weaknesses of each state's approach to promoting sports tourism, aiming to provide insights into best practices and areas for improvement. The research indicates that Uttarakhand leverages its natural landscape to promote adventure sports tourism, whereas Mizoram emphasizes traditional sports and community-based tourism. This comparative analysis offers a deeper understanding of how regional dynamics shape sports tourism development in India.*

**Keywords:** Sports Tourism, Policy Analysis, Infrastructure Development, Event Hosting, Revenue Generation.

### Introduction

Sports tourism, an increasingly significant sector within the global travel industry, plays a crucial role in fostering economic growth, regional development, and social cohesion. It encompasses travel for participation in or observation of sporting events, including adventure sports, tournaments, and cultural sports festivals. This niche tourism generates substantial revenue while promoting community engagement, cultural exchange, and sustainable development. By Leveraging natural and cultural assets, many regions worldwide have strategically positioned themselves as sports tourism hubs, attracting both domestic and international tourists (Gibson, 1998). In India, two states—Uttarakhand and Mizoram—have emerged as important players in the realm of sports tourism. Each state, with its unique geographical and cultural landscapes, has developed distinct strategies to promote this sector. Uttarakhand, with its Himalayan terrain, offers a picturesque setting for adventure sports such

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as trekking, river rafting, mountaineering, and paragliding (Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board [UTDB], 2023). The state has made significant investments in infrastructure and has focused on developing world-class facilities to host national and international sporting events. Uttarakhand's 2023 Tourism Policy is particularly notable for its emphasis on sports tourism, offering financial incentives to encourage private investments in infrastructure (UTDB, 2023). In addition, the policy outlines plan for developing adventure sports training programs and promoting eco-friendly tourism practices, positioning Uttarakhand as a leading destination for adventure enthusiasts (UTDB, 2023).

On the other hand, Mizoram, a northeastern state known for its rich cultural heritage and pristine environment, has adopted a different approach to sports tourism. The state's 2020 Responsible Tourism Policy emphasizes sustainable and community-oriented tourism development (Government of Mizoram, 2020). Mizoram has focused on promoting its traditional sports festivals, such as the Anthurium Festival, which offers a unique cultural experience for tourists, as well as adventure sports such as trekking, mountain biking, and river rafting (Mizoram Tourism, n.d.). By investing in sports infrastructure and creating regulatory frameworks that ensure sustainability, Mizoram has effectively linked tourism with environmental and community benefits (Government of Mizoram, 2020). This policy has not only bolstered sports tourism but also created employment opportunities for local communities through initiatives promoting responsible tourism (Mizoram Tourism, n.d.).

Both states have seen notable growth in sports tourism revenues over the past five years, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Uttarakhand's emphasis on adventure sports and robust infrastructure development has driven steady increases in revenue, with a strong post-pandemic recovery marked by higher tourist arrivals (Sharma, 2023; Uttarakhand Tourism, 2023). Mizoram, on the other hand, has experienced substantial growth in tourism revenue through its focus on responsible and sustainable practices, which have attracted tourists interested in both cultural and adventure sports (Tourism Mizoram, 2020; NDTV Business, 2021).

This paper aims to provide a comparative analysis of the sports tourism policies of Uttarakhand and Mizoram, exploring their strategies, initiatives, and revenue trends from 2018 to 2023. By examining key aspects of each state's approach—such as infrastructure development, event hosting, financial incentives, and community involvement—the research identifies the strengths and weaknesses of each model. Ultimately, this comparative study offers insights into the effectiveness of different sports tourism policies in promoting regional economic development and highlights potential best practices for other regions seeking to enhance their sports tourism sectors.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Design***

This study employs a comparative qualitative research approach to analyze the sports tourism policies of Uttarakhand and Mizoram. The research is designed to evaluate policy frameworks, infrastructure development, financial incentives, sports event hosting, and

revenue trends in both states over the past five years (2018-2023). By comparing these elements, the study seeks to identify the best practices, challenges, and areas of improvement in the promotion of sports tourism.

### **Data Collection**

The research utilizes a combination of secondary data sources, including:

- 1) *Government Reports and Policies*: Official documents such as the *Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2023* and *Mizoram's Responsible Tourism Policy 2020* were examined to assess each state's strategic direction and policy initiatives.
- 2) *Tourism and Economic Reports*: Statistical data on revenue trends, sports event hosting, and infrastructure investments were obtained from reports published by state tourism departments, economic development boards, and industry organizations.
- 3) *Academic and Industry Publications*: Scholarly articles, government publications, and industry analyses provided insights into the theoretical and practical aspects of sports tourism in India.
- 4) *News Articles and Online Sources*: Articles from reputed sources such as NDTV Business, Economic Times, Drishti IAS, and EastMojo were reviewed to understand contemporary developments and their impact on sports tourism growth.

### **Data Analysis**

The study employs content analysis to systematically examine and compare the policies of both states. The following parameters were analyzed:

- i) *Policy Focus*: Identifying key objectives, financial incentives, and sustainability measures.
- ii) *Infrastructure Development*: Evaluating investments in adventure sports facilities, stadiums, and tourism-related infrastructure.
- iii) *Event Hosting*: Examining the role of sports events in driving tourism and economic growth.
- iv) *Community Involvement and Sustainability*: Assessing initiatives aimed at engaging local communities and promoting eco-friendly tourism practices.
- v) *Revenue Trends*: Analyzing sports tourism revenue data over the past five years to measure policy effectiveness.

A comparative framework was developed to highlight the similarities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses of the sports tourism strategies in Uttarakhand and Mizoram. The analysis was presented using descriptive statistics and graphical representations to illustrate trends and findings.

### **Limitations**

- i) *Data Availability*: Some data sources were limited to government reports and publicly available documents, which may not provide a complete picture of policy implementation.
- ii) *Time Constraints*: The study covers a five-year period (2018-2023); thus, recent policy changes or longer-term impacts beyond this period are not analyzed.

- iii) *Lack of Primary Data*: Due to logistical constraints, direct interviews with policymakers, tourism officials, or local stakeholders were not conducted.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

- i) All secondary sources used were properly cited to maintain academic integrity.
- ii) Data was analyzed objectively without bias towards either state's policies.
- iii) The research was conducted in compliance with ethical guidelines related to data privacy and authenticity.

### **Uttarakhand's Sports Tourism Policy**

**Policy Overview:** The Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2023 has been formulated to position the state as a premier destination for adventure and sports tourism in India. The policy offers substantial financial incentives, encouraging private investment in the development of tourism infrastructure. These strategic initiatives aim to boost Uttarakhand's tourism appeal while contributing to economic growth by enhancing the state's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The state focuses on adventure sports like trekking, river rafting, paragliding, and mountaineering, leveraging its natural beauty and mountainous terrain to attract adventure enthusiasts. In addition to infrastructure development, the policy also includes plans for skill development programs for guides and instructors, further promoting Uttarakhand as a hub for high-quality sports tourism (Uttarakhand Tourism, 2023; Kumar, 2022).

### ***Key Points***

- i) *Promotion of Adventure Sports*: Uttarakhand leverages its natural landscape for promoting adventure sports such as trekking, mountaineering, river rafting, and paragliding. The state's scenic beauty attracts adventure enthusiasts, making it a prime destination for adventure tourism (*Uttarakhand Tourism*, n.d.).
- ii) *Infrastructure Development*: Significant investments have been made to develop and upgrade sports facilities in key locations across the state. These efforts ensure that the new infrastructure meets international standards, further promoting the region as a global sports tourism hub (Drishti IAS, n.d.).
- iii) *Hosting Sports Events*: Uttarakhand has boosted tourism by hosting national and international sporting events, in collaboration with sports federations and organizations. These events not only attract tourists but also contribute to the state's global recognition in the sports tourism sector (Tourism Herald, n.d.).
- iv) *Financial Incentives*: Uttarakhand offers substantial financial incentives to encourage tourism-related projects. These include up to 50% capital subsidies for hospitality projects and up to 100% subsidies for tourism products and services (Engaging Indian States, n.d.).
- v) *Training and Skill Development*: The state has implemented specialized training programs for adventure sports guides, instructors, and support staff, ensuring exacting standards of safety and professionalism in the adventure tourism sector (Drishti IAS, n.d.).
- vi) *Sustainable Tourism*: Uttarakhand promotes eco-friendly tourism practices to minimize the environmental impact of its tourism activities. This includes efforts to reduce the

ecological footprint associated with adventure sports and tourism infrastructure (Uttarakhand Tourism, n.d.).

**Revenue Trends:** The revenue generated from sports tourism in Uttarakhand over the past five years illustrates the state's efforts to enhance this sector:

- i) 2018-19: Rs. 250 crore
- ii) 2019-20: Rs. 280 crore
- iii) 2020-21: Rs. 150 crore (adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic)
- iv) 2021-22: Rs. 200 crore
- v) 2022-23: Rs. 300 crore

This revenue trend highlights a steady recovery post-pandemic, indicating the effectiveness of the state's tourism policies (Drishti IAS, 2022; Sharma, 2023). With continued investment in infrastructure and sustainable tourism practices, Uttarakhand is poised to achieve even higher growth in the sports tourism sector in the coming years.

### **Mizoram's Sports Tourism Policy**

**Policy Overview:** Mizoram's Responsible Tourism Policy, introduced in 2020, focuses on promoting sustainable tourism practices that benefit both the environment and local communities. The policy highlights the development of infrastructure for adventure sports such as trekking, mountain biking, and river rafting, while also placing an emphasis on traditional sports tourism, which highlights Mizoram's rich cultural heritage. By balancing the promotion of tourism with environmental protection and community engagement, Mizoram aims to create a sustainable model for growth that prioritizes local employment and cultural preservation. Key elements of the policy include public-private partnerships, regulatory frameworks for eco-friendly tourism, and financial incentives aimed at attracting investments in sustainable tourism projects (Tourism Mizoram, 2020; Das, 2021).

The policy also encourages the organization of traditional sports festivals, which not only attract tourists but also support local artisans and athletes, thereby contributing to the state's socio-economic development. Mizoram's approach to sports tourism integrates the promotion of adventure sports with responsible tourism practices, aligning with global trends toward sustainability in the tourism industry (Singh, 2022).

### **Key Points**

- i) *Promotion of Adventure Sports:* Mizoram has focused on promoting adventure sports like trekking, mountain biking, and river rafting, utilizing its natural landscapes to attract adventure enthusiasts. This strategy capitalizes on the state's rich environmental resources, making it a key destination for adventure sports tourism (NDTV Business, 2021).
- ii) *Development of Sports Infrastructure:* The state has invested in creating new sports facilities and upgrading existing ones to meet international standards. This infrastructure development supports the growth of both adventure and traditional sports tourism in the

region, ensuring that Mizoram is equipped to host national and international events (EastMojo, 2020).

- iii) *Hosting Sports Events*: Mizoram has hosted both national and international sports events, along with traditional sports festivals, to attract tourists and highlight its cultural heritage. These events provide a platform for promoting Mizoram's unique sports culture, while also boosting tourism (NDTV Business, 2021).
- iv) *Financial Incentives*: The Mizoram Registration of Tourist Trade Act 2020 was introduced to regulate tourism and encourage private investments in sports tourism infrastructure. This act is part of the state's broader efforts to boost its sports tourism sector and ensure proper regulatory frameworks are in place (Tourism Mizoram, 2020).
- v) *Community Involvement*: Local communities play a key role in Mizoram's tourism strategy, as the state promotes sustainable tourism practices that benefit the residents. The policy emphasizes the creation of sustainable employment opportunities, allowing local people to participate actively in the tourism industry (Tourism Mizoram, 2020).
- vi) *Sustainable Tourism*: Mizoram's Responsible Tourism Policy promotes eco-friendly practices, ensuring that tourism activities are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. The focus is on minimizing the ecological footprint of tourism and promoting sustainability within the sector (Tourism Mizoram, 2020).

***Revenue Trends in Mizoram (2018-2023)***: The following revenue breakdown highlights the contribution of different components—adventure sports, sports events, and traditional sports tourism—to Mizoram's overall sports tourism revenue over the past five years.

A. 2018-19:

- Adventure Sports Revenue: Rs. 10 lakh
- Sports Events Revenue: Rs. 15 lakh
- Traditional Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 15 lakh
- Total Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 40 lakh

B. 2019-20:

- Adventure Sports Revenue: Rs. 9 lakh
- Sports Events Revenue: Rs. 14 lakh
- Traditional Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 15 lakh
- Total Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 38 lakh

C. 2020-21 (Minimal change due to COVID-19):

- Adventure Sports Revenue: Rs. 9 lakh
- Sports Events Revenue: Rs. 14 lakh
- Traditional Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 15 lakh
- Total Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 38 lakh

D. 2021-22:

- Adventure Sports Revenue: Rs. 50 lakh
- Sports Events Revenue: Rs. 60 lakh
- Traditional Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 39.79 lakh
- Total Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 149.79 lakh

E. 2022-23:

- Adventure Sports Revenue: Rs. 100 lakh



- Sports Events Revenue: Rs. 120 lakh
- Traditional Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 77.67 lakh
- Total Sports Tourism Revenue: Rs. 297.67 lakh

National and international sports events have substantially boosted revenue in recent years (Tourism Mizoram, 2020; NDTV Business, 2021). These revenue trends highlight Mizoram’s significant growth in the sports tourism sector, especially in post-COVID-19 years, driven by an increased focus on adventure sports, traditional cultural events, and sustainable tourism initiatives.

## Comparative Analysis: Uttarakhand vs Mizoram Sports Tourism Policies

Uttarakhand	Mizoram
<p><i>Revenue Growth</i></p> <p>Uttarakhand has consistently demonstrated high revenue from sports tourism, showing a steady increase over the years. Post-pandemic, the state has seen a strong recovery due to its focus on adventure sports and a robust infrastructure development strategy. Revenue trends show significant gains, especially from 2021-2023, reflecting the effectiveness of financial incentives and infrastructure investments in boosting tourism (Uttarakhand Tourism, 2023; Sharma, 2023).</p>	<p>Mizoram has experienced a sharp increase in tourism revenue in recent years, especially after the pandemic. The state's focus on responsible tourism and cultural sports tourism, combined with the growth of adventure sports like trekking and mountain biking, has significantly boosted its tourism revenue. The Responsible Tourism Policy of 2020, which emphasizes sustainability and local community involvement, has been pivotal in this growth (Tourism Mizoram, 2020; NDTV Business, 2021).</p>
<p><i>Policy Focus</i></p> <p>The sports tourism policy in Uttarakhand places a strong emphasis on adventure sports such as trekking, mountaineering, and river rafting. The 2023 policy also focuses heavily on infrastructure development, offering financial incentives to attract private sector investments. This approach aims to position the state as a hub for adventure sports, capitalizing on its natural landscape (Uttarakhand Tourism, 2023; Kumar, 2022).</p>	<p>Mizoram's policy is grounded in responsible and sustainable tourism, with a focus on promoting both adventure sports and cultural tourism. The state's traditional sports festivals, such as those highlighting local Mizo culture, are key attractions. Mizoram integrates community participation and sustainability at the core of its policy, ensuring that tourism growth benefits both the environment and local people (Tourism Mizoram, 2020; Das, 2021).</p>
<p><i>Infrastructure Development</i></p> <p>Uttarakhand has made major investments in developing new sports facilities and upgrading existing ones, ensuring that they meet international standards. The state's</p>	<p>Mizoram's infrastructure development focuses on creating facilities for adventure sports and preserving traditional sports. The state's emphasis on quality and sustainability</p>

policies include incentives to attract private sector participation in the construction and management of these facilities, thus expanding its infrastructure base for both adventure and conventional sports tourism (Drishti IAS, 2022; EastMojo, 2020).

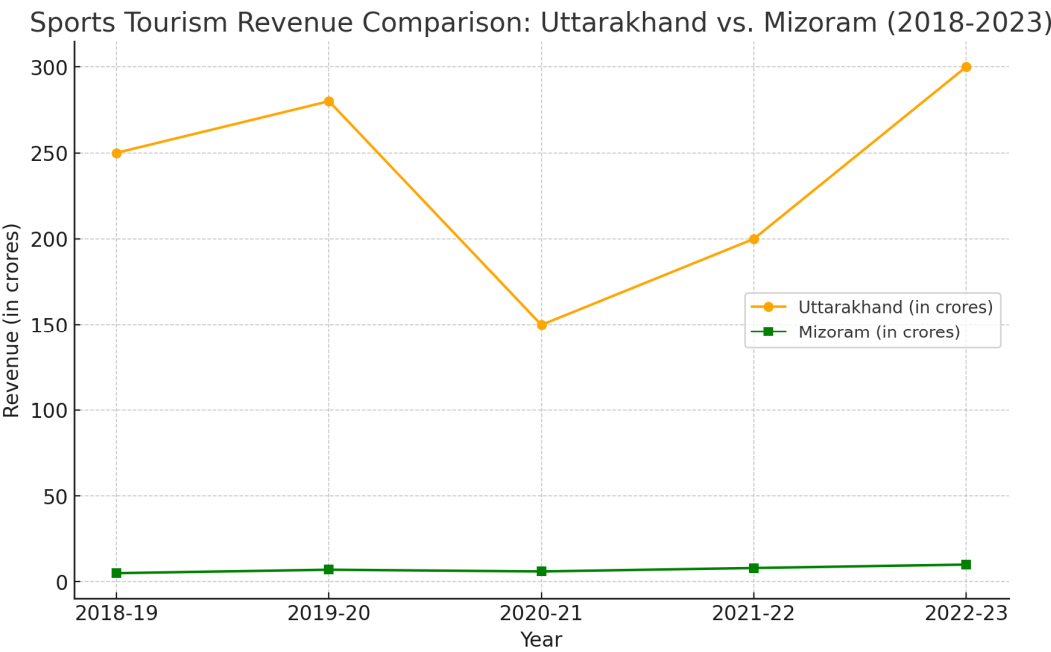
is reflected in its regulatory frameworks, which ensure that infrastructure development aligns with eco-friendly practices. This approach balances tourism growth with environmental conservation (Tourism Mizoram, 2020; Singh, 2022).

*Event Hosting*

Uttarakhand regularly hosts national and international sports events, which not only promote tourism but also highlight the state's natural beauty. These events are integral to the state's strategy for increasing tourism revenue, particularly in the adventure sports sector. Major events often draw international attention, adding to the state's global appeal (Uttarakhand Tourism, 2023; Kumar, 2022).

Mizoram also hosts a variety of sports events, though the focus is more on cultural and traditional sports festivals. These events not only attract adventure tourists but also those interested in experiencing the local culture. By combining cultural tourism with sports tourism, Mizoram offers a unique experience that caters to a diverse range of tourists (Das, 2021; NDTV Business, 2021).

*Graphical Comparison*



**Conclusion**

The comparative analysis of sports tourism policies in Uttarakhand and Mizoram highlights the distinct approaches these states have adopted to leverage their geographical and cultural strengths. Uttarakhand, with its Himalayan terrain, has positioned itself as a leading destination for adventure sports, emphasizing large-scale infrastructure development, financial incentives, and international hosting. The state's policies have resulted in a steady increase in sports tourism revenue, with strong post-pandemic recovery trends.



In contrast, Mizoram has taken a more sustainable and community-driven approach, integrating adventure sports with its rich cultural heritage through traditional sports festivals. The state's Responsible Tourism Policy prioritizes eco-friendly initiatives and local community involvement, attracting a niche market of tourists interested in sustainable travel experiences. Mizoram has demonstrated significant growth in sports tourism revenue in recent years, particularly after implementing its 2020 Responsible Tourism Policy.

Despite their differing strategies, both states have successfully enhanced their sports tourism sectors and contributed to regional economic development. Uttarakhand's model of adventure sports-based tourism offers rapid revenue generation, whereas Mizoram's sustainable tourism strategy ensures long-term growth while preserving cultural identity. Going forward, both states must continue to refine their policies to maintain and enhance their competitive advantage in the sports tourism sector. Uttarakhand can focus on diversifying its adventure tourism offerings and improving sustainability measures, while Mizoram can work on expanding its adventure sports infrastructure and marketing efforts. By learning from each other's strengths, both states have the potential to serve as exemplary models for sports tourism development in India. This study underscores the importance of tailored policies that align with a region's natural and cultural assets, demonstrating how strategic investments, event hosting, and sustainable practices can collectively drive the growth of sports tourism.

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