

Tourism in India: Challenges and Opportunity

Gita G. Pandya

Principal, Government Arts College, K.K. Shastri Educational Campus, Khokhara, Maninagar (East), Ahmedabad, Gujarat – India.

Abstract

Tourism is an integral part of human life. It is a situation where person from one country, or region to other region and country for a short run period, is included in the concept of tourism. Now-a-days the tourism industry has a greater importance. India has a greater heritage of historical place like the TajMahal, Various Forts, Natural sites etc. Since 2000 tourism industry has been giving number of benefits to India. The number of foreign tourist visited to India which has given foreign exchange earning to the Country. Here, we have focused the growth and performance of the Indian tourism industry. We have also analyzed the causal analysis of the Indian tourism industry for overall development of the Indian economy. National tourism policy 2002 and its implications are important in this context.

The tourism industry of India is economically important and grows rapidly. The World Travel & Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated INR6.4 trillion or 6.6% of the nation's GDP in 2012. It supported 39.5 million jobs, 7.7% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an average annual rate of 7.9% from 2013 to 2023. This gives India the third rank among countries with the fastest growing tourism industries over the next decade. India has a large medical tourism sector which is expected to grow at an estimated rate of 30% annually to reach about 95 billion by 2015. This paper discusses how India is emerging as a popular tourist destination in the world, driven by the focus on innovation and creating value for tourists. It aimed change the attitude and behavior toward foreign tourists by stressing on the aspect that a guest has been held in high esteem in India since ancient times. It also examines the impact of India's economic growth on tourism, Contributors to economic growth, Role of Tourism industry in India's GDP, Foreign versus Domestic Tourists. The paper also explores that there has been a tremendous growth in tourism in India because of the policies of the government and support from all levels. Tourism is considered to be an economic bonanza. It is a multi-segment industry. While gauging the positive economic effects of tourism, we study its contribution to the generation of national income, expansion of employment opportunities, rising of tax revenue, generation of foreign exchange .and transformation of regional economy. Travel & Tourism is an important economic activity in most countries around the world. As well as its direct economic impact, the industry has significant indirect and induced impacts. Indian Tourism offers a potpourri of different cultures, traditions, festivals, and places of interest. There are a lot of options for the tourists. India is a country with rich cultural and traditional diversity. This aspect is even reflected in its tourism. The different parts of the country offer wide variety of interesting places to visit.

KEYWORDS: Tourism, Digital India, Clean India

Introduction:

India is a huge tropical country and is well known for its diverse climatic features. India has become one of the worlds promising tourist destination with large number of visitors each year. It has a dramatic growth of tourism over the last 25 years and it is one of the most remarkable economic changes. Tourism activity has long lasting socio-economic impacts on the economy. India is the 12th most attractive tourist destination in the Asia-Pacific by the

report of world economic forum. Tourism is widely recognized as a vital industry with vast potential for employment generation and economic development. Hence, it is an effective means for faster development of nations, particularly the developing nations like India. Tourism industry is receiving good attention as a foreign exchange earner because most parts of the world it is promoted today primarily for the purpose of earning of foreign exchange. The disbursal of tourist expenditure on accommodation, food, transport, recreation and so on has a linkage effect leading to the overall development of a country.

The Indian government's "Incredible India" tourism campaign and the information technology growth in India have been attracting millions of foreign tourists and business tourists to India. "Athiti Devo Bhava", which means guests are like our god, is the epithet of Indian culture. That's also the catch-line of the Ministry of Tourism's Incredible India campaign. The recently released data from the ministry shows a healthy rise in foreign tourists arriving in India. The data points out to a remarkable rise in e-visa entries. Tourism helps the visitors to get acquainted with the culture, customs and conventions, language and mode of living of the local people. Tourism thus liberalizes their mind and helps the people to strengthen the bonds of friendship, international understanding and co-operation.

Tourism industry in India:

India has fascinated people from all over the world with her secularism and culture. There are historical monuments, beaches, places of religious interests, hill resorts, etc. that attract tourists. Every region is identified with its handicraft, fairs, folk dances, music and its people. The Departments of Tourism promotes international and domestic tourism in the country. The Tourism Advisory Board recommends measures for promotion of tourist traffic in India. Sincere efforts could help to further develop the Indian tourism industry. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries of the world. It plays vital role in the economic development of our country. India is one of the popular tourist destinations in Asia. Bounded by the Himalayan ranges in the north and surrounded, on three sides by water (Arabian sea, Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean), India offers a wide array of places to see and things to do. The enchanting backwaters, hill stations and landscapes make India a beautiful country. Historical monuments, forts etc. add to the grandeur of the country. They attract tourists from all over the world. India has a composite culture. There is a harmonious blend of art, religion and philosophy. Though India has been subjected to a series of invasions, she has retained her originality even after absorbing the best of external influences. Religions like Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism etc. has co-existed in India.

The diverse geographical locales of India delight the tourists. The monuments, museums, forts, sanctuaries, places of religious interest, palaces, etc. offer a treat to the eyes. India is a country known for its lavish treatment to all visitors, no matter where they come from. Its visitor friendly traditions varied held abiding attraction for the foreign tourist. The other attraction include beautiful beaches, forests and wild life and landscapes for eco-tourism; snow, river and mountain peaks for adventure tourism; technological parks and science museum for science tourism; centers of pilgrimage for spiritual tourism; heritage trains and hotels for heritage tourism; yoga, ayurveda and natural health records and hill stations also attract foreign tourist to India. Some of the places that attract a huge number of tourists are Agra, Jaipur, Jhansi, Hyderabad, Nalanda, Mysore, Aurangabad, Delhi, Mahabaleshwar etc. Haridwar, Ujjain, Shirdi, Varanasi, Allahabad, Puri, Ajmer, Amritsar, Vaishno Devi, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Rameshwaram, sabarimala, kanyakumari, etc. are places of religious importance. Srinagar, Kullu, Manali, Dehradun, Nainital, Darjeeling, Ooty etc. are famous hill resorts.

In 2005 The Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) started a campaign called 'Incredible India' to encourage tourism in India. For a better growth, the department divided different places in different section like 'spiritual tourism,' 'spa tourism,' 'ecotourism' and 'adventure tourism'. Things have now started looking bright for the Indian tourism industry. The future of India Tourism industry is increasing year by year. India offers many tourism packages to the visitors such as eco tourism, health tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism, heritage tourism wildlife tourism etc. India is the only country that offers different categories of tourism. The Indian government took efforts to encourage different kinds of tourism in India. India shows an exponential growth in tourism industry because of the support given by the government. Only in India the tourists can enjoy all these kinds of tourism together. The survey according to FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) states that there is a very bright future for the tourism industry in India. India has always been known for its diverse climate, hospitality, uniqueness etc this is the reason why India has been doing well in all types of tourism in India. Indian government adopted different approaches for the promotion of tourism in India, which includes new mechanism for speedy implementation of tourism projects, development of integrated tourism and rural destinations, special capacity building in the unorganized hospitality sector and new marketing strategy.

Opportunities of Indian tourism:

The current scenario looks very positive. We are optimistic that with the new government giving priority to tourism, there would be welcome steps to boost the sector. More international tourist arrivals can be expected and may reach 15 per cent growth, and thus help India achieve one per cent of the share of global tourism as projected by the Union Ministry of Tourism. The target is to achieve the 16-million-tourist mark by 2020. This will give a lot of opportunity to tour operators, tourist guides, hoteliers, and transporters. It will also give an opportunity to the government to collect more taxes. Medical Tourism is a great opportunity for India. Also, more and more conferences and conventions are taking place in India and the country has become an ideal location for MICE Tourism. Ecotourism, nature-oriented tours, etc., are catching up in various locations in India. With a growing number of young outbound travelers, transition from the middle class to upper middle class and desire to visit another country, the number of outbound tourists is ever growing, and so is the opportunity to serve them. More and more jobs will be created and opportunities of growth in Tier-II cities will be available. Travel and tourism play an important role in India's economy compared with other nations, India ranks 14th in the world in terms of its tourism sector's contribution to the GDP. Tourism creates jobs, both through direct employment within the tourism industry and indirectly in sectors such as retail and transportation. When these people spend their wages on goods and services, it leads to what is known as the "multiplier effect," creating more jobs. The tourism industry also provides opportunities for small-scale business enterprises, which is especially important in rural communities, and generates extra tax revenues, such as airport and hotel taxes, which can be used for schools, housing and hospitals. Tourism, particularly nature and ecotourism it helps promote conservation of wildlife and natural resources such as rain forests, as these are now regarded as tourism assets. It also helps generate funding for maintaining animal preserves and marine parks through entrance charges and guide fees. By creating alternative sources of employment, tourism reduces problems such as over-fishing and deforestation in developing nations.

Challenges of Indian tourisms:

Lack of proper infrastructure: infrastructure needs for the travel and tourism range from physical infrastructure such as part of entry to modes of transport to urban infrastructure such

as access roads electricity, water supply, telecommunications etc. The sector related to the travel and tourism industry includes airlines surface transports accommodation and infrastructure and facilitation system. The poor infrastructure has been a major reason why the international tourist has been skipping the country.

Access and connectivity:

To harness India's tourism potential, several efforts are being taken for opening new destination and exploring niche segments. However infrastructure facilities such as air, road connectivity and hospitality services at these destination and the connecting cities are inadequate. This remains a major hurdle for the development of tourism.

Amenities: Amenities at various tourist locations and en route need to be improved these include basic amenities such as drinking water, well maintained and clean waiting rooms and toilets, first aid etc.

Human resource:

Availability of skilled manpower is a major challenge faced by the travel and tourism industry, to sustain growth in the travel and tourism industry, trained manpower or workforce is required.

Information & communication:

Though the official languages of the republic of India are Standard Hindi and English yet the government of India has given 22 languages of the 8th schedule the status of official languages. Because of such diversity in the regional languages the foreign tourist has to face the problem of communication with the locals.

Security & safety:

India is highly lacking on this attribute of competitiveness. The major reasons being the internal community riots and also the terrorist attacks faced from time to time. The country is highly unsafe for females and there is poor discipline as well as political instability in the country.

Lack of publicity:

Lack of publicity for good tourist destinations among the travelers and also lack of good education to the locals on receiving guests and hosting them. Also, lack of publicity on cuisines and cultures.

Conclusion:

India's size and massive natural, geographic, cultural and artistic diversity offer enormous opportunities for the travel and tourism industry the promotion and aggressive marketing measures undertaken by the government is expected to aid arrival of tourists. India has seen a progress but the perception is changing too slowly. There has been some investment in infrastructure but infrastructure is not just airports, hotels and roads. It also includes telecommunication network, banks, healthcare etc.

References:

1. R.P.Das, NageshwarRao (2002), Journal of services Research, volume 2, number 1 (April-September, 2002)
2. Auroubindo Ganesh and Dr. Madhavi, C. 2007. Jan-June, "Impact of Tourism on Indian Economy - A Snapshot" Journal of Contemporary Research in Management, Volume-1, No.1, 2 PP. 235-240.
3. Honey, Martha and Gilpin, Raymond, Special Report, 2009, "Tourism in the Developing World -Promoting Peace and Reducing Poverty"
4. Market Research Division, Ministry of tourism, GOI, 2009 "Tourism Statistics 2008.