



Tourism Growth in India and Impact of Ecotourism on Rural Development

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ABSTRACT

Today, Tourism is one among the key sectors generating revenue and employment. Maharashtra being rich in heritage, culture and scenic beauties makes it one among the foremost preferred tourist destinations. But, this also brings in forth, the priority for conserving and protecting our major sites. Hence, getting our attention towards ecotourism. Ecotourism is that the key to conserve the species because it's mentioned as sustainable nature based tourism. It incorporates tourism consonant with nature. Further it provides opportunities for tourists to experience and explore the powerful manifestation of nature. It also emphasizes the utmost necessity of protection of biodiversity and native culture. Ecotourism helps in economic development of area through employment generation. Awareness created and income generated through ecotourism enables to guard the species. This paper studies the concept of eco-tourism and its various aspects. The info collection method used was secondary data from e- journals, books and websites. The results show that there's endless increase within the inflow of tourists in India in recent years, which demands continuous and rigorous efforts on the part of Tourism Ministry. Government, host community and tourists to support and promote Ecotourism & Tourism

Keywords: *eco-tourism, Biodiversity, sustainable, employment, etc.*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has emerged in this decade as the central pillar of the services economy and can uniquely help society to respond to global challenges if its growth is managed properly, with an emphasis on entices and Poverty-alleviations. The dynamic past and projected growth of tourism sector its broad direct and indirect impact across all economics, particularly those of developing states, make it particularly well-suited as a development tool. India is a vast country with a history that goes back to 5000 years, it vast geographical diversity, rich culture and heritage, fairs and festivals, snowcapped mountains; vast coastlines are monumental attractions that span the entire county.

India being a vast and diverse county has something to offer to everyone. The beauty of its ancient monuments beat and rhythm of its flak and classical domes that have come down the ages almost uncharged, its colourful crowded bazaars and beautiful beaches its well-meaning and charming people are a few of the countless facets of India. All these go to make India a paradise for tourism.

Nature of Tourism

Tourism is the largest industry in the world and has the Potential to assist significant number of people, especially the unskilled labor force. It plays an important role in sustaining national economy. During the economic crises in southeast Asia, it was demonstrated that tourism helped these countries to survive during crises. Certain characteristics of tourism



such as its labour intensive nature, inclusion of women and unskilled workforce its dependence on the natural and cultural assets, largest source of foreign exchange earning etc., has forced nations to explore their tourism potential with a view to earn profit out of it.

Meaning

The concept of Tourism as a phenomenon involves the movement of people within their country. Anatomy of phenomenon reveals its basic composition i.e., man, space and time. These elements constitute the essential conditions for the existence of the phenomenon of Tourism. There could be no tourism act without them on the basis of these elements of tourism.

Global Scenario

Internationally, tourism occupies a very important place in the economics of several countries. It has today achieved the status of an industry. Governments all over the world are competing with each other in selling tourism and travel, history, culture etc. to the people all around the world. It is the world's largest industry which is forecasted to grow at 7 per cent every till 2018. Although global recession and international domestic tourism is again expected to boom over the next two decades. This is largely attributed to a rise in global wealth, liberalization of international air-space, cheapest freights and use of internet as a travel tool. At the global level, the earnings from tourism have made it one of the world's largest industry and the fastest growing sectors of global trade accounting for 10.7 per cent of global GDP. 12.8 per cent of global exports, 8.2 per cent of global employment and 9.4 per cent of global capital investment.

Present Status

Tourism growth at the global level shows that tourism has become the world's largest and fastest growing industry. Its contribution in the field of foreign exchange earnings, employment generation and in developing better understanding at international level is highly recognized. However, in India, the tourism industry has remained ignored by the Government. It is performing well below its potential despite the fact that India has a unique heritage and culture and a wide variety of tourism attractions.

It is gathered that in spite of the fact that India has some of the most exquisite sites and locales and some of the best world renowned monuments to see, it has a poor 40th rank in the world. The smaller countries like France, Spain, Hungary, etc. are way ahead of India. The following reasons i.e., lack of professionalism, unhygienic conditions, poor infrastructure, lack of easily accessible information, law and order problem, lack of safety, poor visitor experience, inadequate facilitation services, multiplicity of taxes and above all low priority accorded to tourism etc, are responsible for the poor performance of Indian tourism at global level keeping in view the promising future of Indian tourism Industry the government of India has to develop and permeate the key areas of tourism as a priority.

Aspects of Planning

It was the new national tourism policy was formulated with very vast objectives, mission and strategies. The new national policy is based upon the objectives:

1. Generating awareness about the benefits of tourism for the host population.
2. Mobilize state Governments to use tourism as a mean for achieving their socio-economic objectives.
3. Encourage the private sector to enhance investment in tourism.
4. Provide legislative and regulatory support for sustainable tourism.
5. Protect the interests of tourism industry and consumers and
6. Develop and promote rural/farm tourism on priority along with other forms of tourism.



Ecotourism

Ecotourism is the management of ecology, in such a way as to obtain maximum pleasure with an eye on Conservation needs. The tourists are responsible in the sense that they never try to alter the integrity of the ecosystem and are respect full to the fragile environment. They expect only what can be delivered on the spot reasonable and don't leave with anything other than their valuable memories. Ecotourism is purposeful travel to natural areas to understand their natural and cultural history care is taken not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem while producing economic opportunities, the making conservation of natural resources beneficial to the local people. It has ground as a consequence of the dissatisfaction, which arise on account of the inappropriate implementation of mass tourism.

Meaning of Ecotourism

The term Ecotourism was first coined by a maxi cam environmentalist Hector cembalos Lasourain in 1983. Initially the term was used to describe nature based travel to relatively undisturbed natural areas with an emphasis on education. The concept has however, developed in to a scientific approach to the planning, management and development of sustainable tourism products and activities. Ecotourism is nature based and ecologically sustainable, it conserves nature and it has negligible impact on the environment. The visitors are wale to understand the natural and cultural history of the are. Ecotourism has been conceptualized as nature based ecologically sustainable and local people are benefited.

Biosphere Reserves

Biosphere reserves are multipurpose protected areas for preservation of the genetic diversity and integrity of plants, animals and microorganisms in representative ecosystems. There are thirteen such reserves in India at present. These are: Nilgiri, nanda Devi, Nokrek, Great Nicobar, Gulf of Mannar, Manas, Sunderabans, Simlipal, DibruDaikhova, DehondDeband, Pachamarhi, Kanchanjanga, and Agasthyamalai.

Mangroves

Mangroves are very specialized forest ecosystems of tropical and sub-tropical regions bordering sheltered seacoasts and estuaries. They are reservoirs of a large number of plant and animal species associated together over a long evolutionary period and exhibiting remarkable capacity for salt tolerance. They stabilize the shoreline and act as a bulwark against encroachments by the sea. Major mangrove areas are : Northern Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sundarbans (West Bangal), Bhitarkanika and Mahanadi Delta (Oriass), corings, Godavari Delta and Krishna Estuary (Andhra Pradesh), Pichavarm and Point Calimere (Tamil Nadu), Goa, Gulf of Kutch (Gujarat), coondapur (Karnataka), Achra/Ratnagiri (Maharashtra), Vembanad (Kerala).

Coral Reefs

Coral Reefs are shallow water tropical marine ecosystems , characterized by high biomass production and rich floral and faunal diversity. There are four major coral reefs identified in the country so far: Gulf of Mannar, Andaman and Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep Islands, Gulf of Kutch.

Deserts

The great Thar Desert and the little deserts in the north western region of the country are distinct ecosystems which have fascinated tourists from all over the world.

Mountains and Forests

The great Himalayas and other mountain ranges in the country along with the snow-clad slopes, forests and rivers have also become great attractions for eco tourists. The country has an area of about 752.3 lakh hectares notified as forest land and of this about 406.1 lack hectares classified as Reserve Forests and 251.1 lack hectares as Protected Forests.



Flora and Fauna

India is floristically very rich. There are about 45,000 species of plants in India. The country also has a great variety of fauna, numbering a little over 65,000 known species, including 1228 of birds, 428 of reptiles, 372 of mammals, 204 of amphibians and 2,546 fish.

Water Resources

The Arabian sea, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal embrace the sides of the Indian sub-continent except for the northern boundary. The land map of India is crossed by several rivers and dotted by lakes at many places. These water bodies provide attractive opportunities for water sports. In addition to this, there are 89 National parks, 483 Wild life sanctuaries and 572 nature-endowed areas: and 3606 protected monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains Act. Most of these resources are located in rural areas. This vast geographical diversity offers great scope for the development of ecotourism.

Conclusion

Ecotourism is based on the four principles – nature orientation eco sustainability, possibility of conducting research and involvement of local people. Modern tourism industry may take different forms including adventure, health, trade fairs, cultural and religious festivals, national celebrations and food festivals. Among these ecotourism blends a different strategy of enjoying the nature's serenity in its own way. Considering the wide geographical and biological diversity, the scope of ecotourism in India is very high. If these resources are tapped successfully we can transform the face of tourism industry in India. What actually needed is careful planning and a target oriented approach.

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