

Emerging Challenges before Tourism Industry in India: A Conceptual Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is not merely an entertainment industry, it plays a very crucial role in the total economic growth of a country. For developing countries like India, tourism could boost modern economy through structural transformation. Tourism is major contributor in Indian economy but still it has vast scope which can be explored in more detail. To explore the new expects and boost tourism in India, there have been new issues and challenges such as liberalization, social and political insatiability, changing tourist dynamics, terrorism, visa problems, accessibility at few places etc. The present research paper focuses on these issues and challenges faced by tourism industry in India. The study is based on secondary data. The paper discussed problems faced by tourism sector based on the analysis of available literature and researcher's experience and oral interaction and discussion with industry professional.

1. Introduction

In early times, travelling was done to satisfy biological needs. In the subsequent periods, the empire era changed the way of travelling such as travelling for business, politics and religious purpose. The Romans visited shrines, festivals, temples and even started traveling for amusement and entertainment. As the time passes, the progress in industries and productive activities led to the social and economic growth, higher income, leisure time and introduced the tourist places. The progress in education also bring awareness and curiosity to explore new place and desire to travel. But there were still some constraints like transportation, safety and security etc. But in the modern world the technological advancement has bring the world closed and make a close neighborhood. It also bring more secure modes of transportations and provide safety and security too. In fact, you can travel to any corner of world in just few hours. Further G. Fraustie quoted that in near future the average citizen of a developed country will be able to meet his need just by working 36 hours a week which means he will devote only 6% towards productive work. This give ample time for a person to explore the world.

Tourism industry is viewed as social, cultural, multidimensional and possessing physical and political characteristics. It is one of the highest revenue generating sector and GDP of many countries depends on Tourism. In India, there is a large potential for tourism sector especially in rural areas (Chand and Bhushan, 2005). Tourism industry is capable of transforming the economy of India. The Indian government has also recognized the importance of tourism and hospitality industry and its contribution in economy. Government has also taken few steps towards its growth such as 100 percent FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) in the field of hotel and tourism sector, visa on arrival for many countries, special trains for tourists, develop tourist circuits, Incredible India campaign etc. Not only central government state governments are also running their own campaign to develop tourism. Not only is that government also more focused towards development of religious, highway and rural tourism in India.

2. Significance of the present study

Tourism is an amalgamation of various sectors such as hotel, transportation, food and beverage service and other amenities and services etc. It is an inter disciplinary subject which is complicate and complex too, hence tourism industry directly and indirectly have much to explore. From India's point of view, this research identify and highlights the challenges and problems faced by tourism sector. These problem are hurdles in the development of Indian economy too as tourism is one of the largest foreign currency earner too. The identified problems would help an organization and government to develop suitable strategy to enhance the tourists' inflow. The research would also be significant in the context of other countries facing similar challenges in developing tourism. This would also serve as literature for other researchers who wish to carry out further studies in the same field.

3. Research Methodology

The present research paper is based on secondary research. The data was collected from different research paper, books, articles, government reports and web portals. The researcher also interview some of tourists, travel agents and tour operators, academician, hoteliers and other professional related to this field. The personal observation and indirect investigation were also found useful to make this study significant.

4. Challenges faced by Tourism Industry in India

The tourism sector in India has shown substantial growth in last two decades. But many economist still assume that India is far behind its potential in tourism sector. The number of problems and challenges limits the growth of tourism in India. Some of the factors which effects the growth of tourism are discussed below.

4.1 Accessibility to Tourist destinations

India has variety of tourist places and tourists visits these destination with different motives such as religious, adventure, pilgrimage, leisure etc. (Mandeep, 2015). some of the destination which are in the major cities are easily accessible

even by public transport but outside these cities the transport services hamper the development. Surprisingly at many destination there are no public transport availability nearby. The road conditions especially in north eastern parts are very poor.

4.2 Social and Political Concerns

In today world of globalization, some part of the society still think that tourist effects our culture and disturb our natural order. These social group also don't like the influence of western culture. Not only has these social group, the instability of government and political influence disturbed the nature of tourism. In India, Jammu and Kashmir is faces the biggest issue of social and political interferences.

4.3 Infrastructural Bottlenecks

The tourism sector was expected to fetch largest foreign exchange in India, but cannot go with the mediocre infrastructure available. The lack of development around these tourist destination and roads to access these destinations are hampering the growth of tourism sector (Suresh & Maran, 2013). At some of the destination there are no restaurants for miles for the tourist to stay and medical facilities are also miles away from these tourist destinations.

4.4 Lack of Professionalism

From various literature and person travelling experience by the researcher, there were various factors which indicates lack of professionalism in tourism services (Subhash T., 2015). Government has also opened educational courses for developing and enhancing professionalism in tourism. For example many universities and colleges are running bachelor and master degree programs in tourism but curriculum and training designing is not matching the needs of tourists. Also lack of staff and resources are some common drawbacks in education system. It was also observed that government institutions such as hotels, tourist complexes, offices, visiting bureaus etc. does not provide any preferences to tourism degree holder candidates.

4.5 Sluggish Managerial Skills

The tourism industry requires innovation and creativity in service delivery. Providing the same service to a tourist each time may loses his interest. So there should be some creativity and changes in service delivery system at periodic basis. Major part of tourist service providers are lower income groups which prepares them averse to uncertainty (Dayananda.K.C.,2014). The lack of management skills at middle and higher level were also found at many tourist destination. Many small tourist operators are running their business without proper planning, costing, pricing, demand forecasting and many time's does not care for tourist satisfaction also. The states governments has also not adopted proper tourism strategies because of certain constraints.

4.6 Lack of Confidence and information

The lack of information available about tourist destination is also hindering the development of that tourist destination. The lack of resources and adequate information centers, and quality information brochures, leaflets with detailed information is also a major concern. Except few states such as Rajasthan and Gujrat, other states tourism development corporations are not

competitive in its markets. So both tourist destination as well as market need to be ready with quality and quantity information (Ranbir S., 2012).

4.7 Financial Problems

For developing a tourist destination, infrastructure with good accessibility is the basic requirement. But the funds and monetary assistance provided by the government is not enough to support these destination. It was also observed that like other sectors, the tourism entrepreneurs are not financial supported by the government. This was also criticized by many travel agencies and companies (Suresh & Maran, 2013).

4.8 Low Community Participation

India hosts many festivals and cultural events such as Surajkund craft fair, kartik festival, Gita jayanti, Mango festival and other shows throughout the country. But the participation of local community is not up to the mark. There was lack of public awareness programs. Also local communities are neglected in planning and controlling these events. Many studies shows that local participation also contribute to tourist satisfaction. The absence of local community participation was also noticed by various researchers (Thyagaraju N, 2016).

4.9 Lack of Assessment of Tourism Resources

Many states of India, are focusing on cultural, pilgrimage and religious tourism only. They are not exploring the wide range of tourism services available. Nobody is ready to take the risk to develop other emerging forms of tourism. There are so many old architecture still available in far villages in form of havelies and shows tradition style of living. There is a wide scope of rural tourism in India(Chand and Bhushan, 2005). Government should formulate a route map and draft policies to develop and enhance and explore other forms of tourism.

4.10 Lack of Effective Policy and Planning

In modern world, tourism has become one of the successful economic booster for economy. There are many examples such as Thailand which survives on tourism only. For tourism development there should be proper policies, strict legislative rules, effective marketing strategies and strong liaison with professional service providers are need of time (Mandeep, 2015).

4.11 Limited Resources access

Many of tourist destination and sites are still controlled by the government. People have access to these destination all around the year and there are no restriction on usage of resources on those destination. Without proper planning and no restriction on resource usage creates challenge for sustainable tourism development. The mass tourism is also consuming the resources quickly and put thrust on infrastructure of that destination, resulting in problems for local host community. For effective sustainable tourism development, effective control over the crowd and putting some taxes on tourist could be helpful.

4.12 Inadequate Interpretation of Services and Facilities

There should be detailed information about tourist destination available all the time. For this government has opened authorized tourist centers at various location but these are not enough. There should be authorized tourist information

boards with detailed information about the destination and tourist maps should be available at all major stops. Government could also start language imperators for effective communication between tourist and host population.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

In today's world of globalization and advancement in technology has made the entire world into a village by shortening the boundaries. It has also opened the gates for tourism growth and along with brings new challenges and competition. India should look for new ways and suitable marketing strategies to promote its tourism products and services. India has unparalleled tourism resources and services. It has vast opportunities in not only in cultural and religious tourism but also for adventure, spiritual, sports and other tourism forms. But one of the major concern should be to develop human resource for enhancing tourism services. Tour operators and guides should be able to develop good connection with the tourists.

Here are some points worth considering for revamping tourism in India:

- ✓ Government should invite tourism and hospitality professionals for developing suitable tourism policies.

- ✓ Different tourist offices and centers should be adequately staffed and preference should be given to tourism or hotel management degree holders.
- ✓ There should be provision for financial assistance for tourism entrepreneurs like other industries.
- ✓ The center government could develop a Tourism Planning Board and there could be subsidiary at state level also which strategies looks after tourism development.
- ✓ There should be a better liaison between center and state tourism department.
- ✓ There should be rules and regulation for each tourist destination and mass tourism should be avoided.
- ✓ Government should formulate a common tourist act to regulate and control tourist traffic in India.

The present research paper has discussed various problems and challenged faced by tourism industry in India such as lack of entrepreneurs' motivation, limited resource access, infrastructural problems, mass tourism, inadequate tourist centers etc. By establishing and adopting effective tourism policies and taking the contribution of non-government tour agencies could help in overcoming these problems.

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