

The Study of Suggestive Areas for Boosting Tourism Sector in India

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Abstract

The tourism industry has not only contributed only to the tourism revenue but also it has supported other diverse sectors, too such as horticulture, handicrafts, agriculture, construction and even poultry. Investments in tourism infrastructure development of India contributes not alone to the tourism but to the civic infrastructure also. It might include provision of road side amenities, tourist information bureaus and tourist information providing websites. India as a tourist spot is rising but its growth is comparatively very slow as compared to rest of the countries. Managerial planning, proper advertising, cleanliness, hygiene and infrastructure are some culprits responsible for slow growth of tourism sector. Though, India has a lot of attraction like culture, history, architecture, food, warm people, scenic beauty, temples, festivals, colours but the negative points overshadow the positives. The present paper gives some important suggestive areas for boosting tourism sector in India. It is recommended that training, capacity building and sensitization specific to different categories of service providers should be carried out as part of 'tourism awareness programs'. Special efforts should be made to reach out to the local communities through awareness campaigns and workshops to better inform local bodies, parents, teachers, citizen's groups and individuals seeking gainful employment.

Keywords : Tourism Industry, Employment, Rising Income, Private Sector, Infrastructure, Fiscal Incentives.

JEL Classification : Z 1.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism contributes in a major way to a country's economy, nowadays. Millions are

being spent by every country to make it a better tourist destination. The Indian Tourism Ministry plays an important role in the development of the industry, initiating advertising campaigns such as the "Incredible India" campaign, which promoted India's culture and tourist attractions in a fresh and memorable way. The tourism industry has not only contributed only to the tourism revenue but also it has supported other diverse sectors, too such as horticulture, handicrafts, agriculture, construction and even poultry. Investments in tourism infrastructure



Access This Research Paper Online

Paper Code : JCT-O17-RG-SKS-6

<http://jctindia.org/october2017/v12i2-6.pdf>

<https://ideas.repec.org/a/jct/journal/v12y2017i2p40-44.html>

<http://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:jct:journal:v:12:y:2017:i:2:p:40-44>

How to Cite This Research Paper

Gupta, Rima and Sharma, S.K. The Study of suggestive Areas for Boosting Tourist Sector in India. Journal of Commerce and Trade October 2017; 12 : 2; Pp. 40-44.

development of India contributes not alone to the tourism but to the civic infrastructure also. It might include provision of road side amenities, tourist information bureaus and tourist information providing websites. Efforts towards enhancement of overall transport infrastructure in the form of good quality roads, rail network, airports, helipads, and availability of tourist vehicles etc. may also be strengthened in order to improve the overall infrastructure. There is a need to spread education and awareness on the importance of tourism sector and increase stakeholder participation involving the government, private sector and the community at large. Marketing campaigns like '*Atithidevo Bhava*' may be implemented at regular intervals. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has consistently been working on improving India as a prime destination for tourists. In order to improve India's position in the tourism industry in the world, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India had decided to conduct a study to understand the competitiveness of the tourism sector in India in comparison with selected other developing and developed countries.

As such, the Ministry of Tourism had prepared the National Tourism Development Policy, 2002, with the objective of positioning tourism as a engine of sustainable economic development and to harness its positive effects for employment generation and poverty control in sustainable environment oriented way. It was felt that at the institutional level, a framework would have to be evolved that is Government-led, private sector driven and community-welfare oriented. Sustainability was envisaged to serve as the guiding star for the new policy. The developmental and managerial strategies are to be so as to ensure better tourism earnings and growth in future. No one engaged, directly or indirectly in the tourism industry, is to be allowed to secure short-term gains by resorting to what has been called the 'darker side of tourism'. Neither over-exploitation of natural resources should be permitted nor the carrying capacity of

the tourist-sites ignored. Special thrust be given to rural based tourism and where traditional heritage of our culture and traditions is protected.

2. MAIN FEATURES OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

- a) Position the present tourism industry as a engine of economic development; Harness the coming effects of tourism sector for more employment generation, and provide thrust to rural based tourism;
- b) Focus on domestic tourism as a major driver of tourism growth.
- c) Focus on India tourism as a global brand to take advantage of the diversifying global travel trade and the tap potential of India as a favorite tourist destination;
- d) Acknowledges the critical role of private sector with government working as a proactive facilitator and catalyst;
- e) Create and develop integrated tourism circuits based on India's unique civilization, heritage, and culture in partnership with states, private sector and other agencies;
- f) Ensure that the tourist to India gets physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched, spiritually elevated and "feel India from within".

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology is the blue plan of the study and controls over the objective set and properties of research duly termed upon.

Objective : To study the suggestive areas for boosting tourism sector in India.

Data : Secondary Data.

Type : Descriptive and Analytical

Area : Overall Tourism Sector in India.

4. SUGGESTIVE AREAS FOR BOOSTING TOURISM SECTOR IN INDIA

India as a tourist spot is rising but its growth is comparatively very slow as compared to rest of the countries. Managerial planning, proper advertising, cleanliness, hygiene and infrastructure are some culprits responsible for slow growth of tourism sector. Though, India has a lot of attraction like culture, history, architecture, food, warm people, scenic beauty, temples, festivals, colours but the negative points overshadow the positives. When a tourist looks at a beautiful piece of Indian architecture say Red Fort, the moment they step out they see litter here and there and they forget the beauty of what they had seen and go back with the picture of the dirt that they saw. A major boost to India which serves as a great attraction to it is Taj Mahal which is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Domestic tourism is also a major factor which is contributing to the growth in tourism sector. The advertising campaigns of India like 'Incredible India' have been famous but they fail to attract a major section of travelers because it showcases only one aspect of India's tourism. The advertising sector needs a lot of improvement and once this is done a lot of improvement will be witnessed in the tourism sector. The suggestive areas for boosting tourism sector in India are :

a) Infrastructural Development

Investments in tourism infrastructure include development of tourism as well as the development of civic infrastructure, way side amenities, tourist information bureaus and tourist information websites. Efforts towards enhancement of overall transport infrastructure in the form of good quality roads, rail network, airports, helipads, availability of tourist vehicles etc. may also be strengthened in order to improve the overall infrastructure.

b) Projection of India's Image as a Safe and Secure Tourist Destination

Tourist Police Task Force has been established by various State Governments for

ensuring safety and security for tourists. Special sensitization campaigns may be implemented for women tourists and to publicise these campaigns on global platforms. Health concerns for tourists visiting India also needs to be mitigated.

c) Development of Tourism Destinations

Various government agencies and travel organizers have done extensive market research and evaluation to identify desired tourist destination attributes and major markets and segments. These may be developed either as 'products' such as religious, wellness, adventure, nature, rural or agriculture tourisms or as 'experiences' such as the Rama trail planned in Gujarat or the Spice Route Tourism planned in Kerala.

d) Attract Private Investment

Private sector players may be encouraged to participate in development of tourism infrastructure by provision of fiscal as well as non fiscal incentives. PPP projects and formation of Special Purpose Vehicles for mega tourism projects may be required.

e) Joint Marketing Programs

With tourist circuits spanning across various states, collaborative marketing efforts may be required for promotion of the same: (i) Focused branding and promotional campaigns may be designed (ii) Marketing material like brochures, print creative, audio video creation of web-sites, online creatives, advertisements over media channels like print, radio or internet etc. may be utilized. (iii) Involvement of local travel trade partners may be encouraged. Trips to involved destinations, informative sessions, financial support and incentives may be provided (iv) Direct and intensive reach marketing programs may be executed through social networking sites such as twitter, facebook etc. in order to reach out to the young tech savvy global population (v) Focused websites, exhaustive in content, user friendly and attractive in visual appeal may be developed in

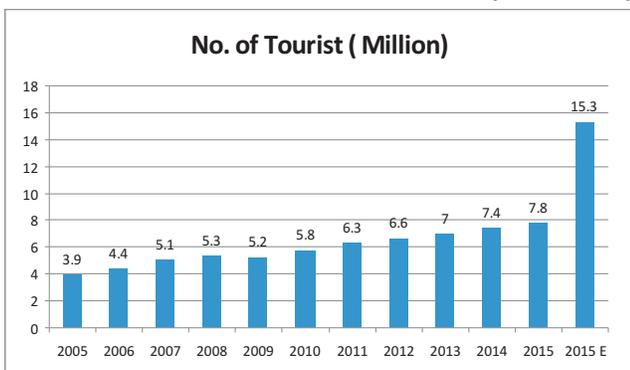
multiple languages of target countries (vi) Participation in international events may be increased and a greater number of domestic tourism events and road shows may be organized in order to offset seasonality of tourist inflow. Events may be based on innovative themes of music, dance, sports, food, fruits, handicrafts, Indian culture and traditions, Indian villages, festivals etc. (vii) Customized tour packages may be developed keeping in mind the profile of visitors, budget and travel requirements. Comparative pricing of tourism products may also need to be considered after analysis of other tourism packages and products available.

Table 1
Foreign Tourist Arriving in India
(In Million)

S. No.	Year	No. of Tourists (Million)
1	2005	3.9
2	2006	4.4
3	2007	5.1
4	2008	5.3
5	2009	5.2
6	2010	5.8
7	2011	6.3
8	2012	6.6
9	2013	7
10	2014	7.4
11	2015	7.8
12	2025E	15.3

Source : World Travel & Tourism Council Economic Impact 2015, Ministry of Tourism, TechSci Research

Graph 1
Foreign Tourist Arriving in India
(In Million)



f) HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

It is recommended that training, capacity building and sensitization specific to different categories of service providers should be carried out as part of 'tourism awareness programs'. Special efforts should be made to reach out to the local communities through awareness campaigns and workshops to better inform local bodies, parents, teachers, citizen's groups and individuals seeking gainful employment.

g) Development of Tourist Circuits across States

Key tourism circuits across the country may be identified with discussions with key stakeholders such as state governments, local travel trade partners etc. Key attributes, tourism potential, current and future connectivity and synergy within destinations may be studied.

h) Differentiated Tourism Offerings for Repeat Travelers

Customized packages with different tourism products and discounts may be provided to repeat travelers in order to provide a different and enriching experience on each visit.

There is a need to spread education and awareness on the importance of tourism sector and increase stakeholder participation involving the government, private sector and the community at large. Tourism awareness programs and workshops may be organized to enhance the development and maintenance of tourism sites in the country.

5. CONCLUSION

India is a tourism product which is unparalleled in its beauty, uniqueness, rich culture and history has been aggressively pursuing the promotion of tourism both internationally as well as in the domestic market. With increasing tourist inflows over the past few years, it is a significant contributor to Indian economy as well. Rise in income levels and up gradation of lifestyle, development of

diverse tourism offerings and policy and regulatory support by the government played a pivotal role in the development and growth of travel and tourism sector in India. However, the sector is facing challenges such as lack of good quality tourism infrastructure, global concerns regarding health and safety of tourists, disparate passenger/road tax structures across various states and shortfall of adequately trained and skilled manpower. While several plans and programmes have already been devised for tackling these challenges, successful implementation would be critical to accelerate growth. Concerted efforts by all stakeholders

such as the central and state governments, private sector and the community at large are pertinent for sustainable development and maintenance of the travel and tourism sector in the country. It is recommended that training, capacity building and sensitization specific to different categories of service providers should be carried out as part of 'tourism awareness programs'. Special efforts should be made to reach out to the local communities through awareness campaigns and workshops to better inform local bodies, parents, teachers, citizen's groups and individuals seeking gainful employment. ●

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