



Tourism – Potential Game Changer

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tourism, potential, employment generator, sustain, future

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ABSTRACT

The Indian tourism industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sector in India. Tourism in India is a potential game changer. India is quite developed and there is a lot of scope for further development of this segment. It is a sun rise industry, an employment generator, a significant source of foreign exchange for the country and an economic activity that helps local and host communities. The tourism industry has helped growth in other sectors as diverse as horticulture, handicrafts, agriculture, construction and even poultry. In this paper researcher describes about the tourism sector growth in India. The value of the brand to the consumer, the growth in emerging markets, the importance of consumer-facing technology, and development and retention of human capital have helped shape the tourism industry over the past five years. This paper explores tourism a game changer with respect to opportunities in India.

Introduction

Tourism in India is economically important and is growing rapidly. India is a paradise for tourists and sightseers. It can provide attraction to people of all tastes and temperament because of the unique and happy blending of modernism with orientalism. Tourism industry is the biggest service providing industry of India. Tourism is an important sector of the Indian economy and contributes significantly to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE). The Ministry of Tourism has made various efforts to expand the tourism infrastructure at various destinations in India. It has become the fastest growing service industry in the country with great potentials for its further expansion and diversification. In this paper an attempt has been made to present tourism a potential game changer to India.

Statement of the problem

India is home to some of the world's oldest civilizations. It is need of the hour to look tourism in new ways to encourage in our country. India is visitor-friendly traditions, varied life styles and cultural heritage and colourful fairs and festivals held abiding attractions for the tourists. It is very much essential for a visitor to enjoy the stay and this is enhanced by facilities like road transport, guides and good hotels. Some of the recent initiatives taken by the Government to boost tourism include grant of export house status to the tourism sector and incentives for promoting private investment in the form of Income Tax exemptions, interest subsidy and reduced import duty.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand the current situation of India's tourism
- To know the future prospects of India's tourism
- To describe the challenges and positive impact of tourism

METHODOLOGY In order to highlight the significance of this paper the secondary data has been considered from newspapers, reports, bulletins, magazines, dissertations, thesis and so on.

CURRENT SITUATION OF INDIA'S TOURISM Indian tourism

industry is expected to cross 400 billion by 2019. Today tourism is the largest service industry in India, with a contribution of 6.23 per cent to the national GDP and providing 8.78 per cent of the total employment. India witnesses more than 5 million annual foreign tourist arrivals and 562 million domestic tourism visits. The tourism industry in India generated about US\$100 billion in 2008 and that is expected to increase to US\$275.5 billion by 2018 at a 9.4 per cent annual growth rate. The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency for the development and promotion of tourism in India and maintains the "Incredible India" campaign. Moreover, India has been ranked the "best country brand for value-for-money" in the Country Brand Index (CBI) survey conducted by Future Brand, a leading global brand consultancy. India also claimed the second place in CBI's "best country brand for history", as well as appears among the top 5 in the best country brand for authenticity and art and culture, and the fourth best new country for business.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN INDIA India is a country known for its lavish treatment to all visitors, no matter where they come from. Its visitor-friendly traditions, varied life styles and cultural heritage and colourful fairs and festivals held abiding attractions for the tourists. The other attractions include eco-tourism, adventure tourism, science tourism and heritage tourism. The Indian handicrafts particularly, jewellery, carpets, leather goods, ivory and brass work are the main shopping items of foreign tourists. It is estimated through survey that nearly forty per cent of the tourist expenditure on shopping is spent on such items. Despite the economic slowdown, medical tourism in India is the fastest growing segment of tourism industry, according to the market research report "Booming Medical Tourism in India". The report adds that India offers a great potential in the medical tourism industry.

INITIATIVES MADE TO SUSTAIN TOURISM Some of the recent initiatives taken by the Government to boost tourism include grant of export house status to the tourism sector and incentives for promoting private investment in the form of Income Tax exemptions, interest subsidy and reduced import duty. The hotel and tourism-related industries

try has been declared a high priority industry for foreign investment which entails automatic approval of direct investment up to 51 per cent of foreign equity and allowing 100 per cent non-resident Indian investment and simplifying rules regarding the grant of approval to travel agents, tour operators and tourist transport operators.

FUTURE PROSPECTS According to the latest Tourism Satellite Accounting (TSA) research, released by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and its strategic partner Oxford Economics in March 2009:

- The demand for travel and tourism in India is expected to grow by 8.2 per cent between 2010 and 2019 and will place India at the third position in the world.
- India's travel and tourism sector is expected to be the second largest employer in the world, employing 40,037,000 by 2019.
- Capital investment in India's travel and tourism sector is expected to grow at 8.8 per cent between 2010 and 2019.
- The report forecasts India to get capital investment worth US\$ 94.5 billion in the travel and tourism sector in 2019.
- India is projected to become the fifth fastest growing business travel destination from 2010-2019 with an estimated real growth rate of 7.6 per cent.

Challenges

Various challenges/issues faced by the domestic travel and tourism industry in India:

- Lack of proper infrastructure
- Human resources
- Service levels
- Lack of adequate marketing and promotion
- Taxation
- Security
- Regulatory issues

IMPACT OF TOURISM IN INDIA Tourism in India is economically important and is growing rapidly. Tourism benefits India in three ways---employment, foreign currency and infrastructure development. India caters to several market types. Tourism industry in India has several positive impacts on the economy and society. The following are key positive impacts of tourism in India.

- Preservation of national heritage
- Environment developing infrastructure
- Generating income and employment
- Source of foreign exchange earnings
- Promoting peace
- Stability

CONCLUSION Tourism industry in India is growing and it has vast potential for generating employment and earning large amount of foreign exchange besides giving a fillip to the country's overall economic and social development. But much more remains to be done. Eco-tourism needs to be promoted so that tourism in India helps in preserving and sustaining the diversity of the India's natural and cultural environments. Tourism in India should be developed in such a way that it accommodates and entertains visitors in a way that is minimally intrusive or destructive to the environment and sustains and supports the native cultures in the locations it is operating in. India's rich history and its cultural and geographical diversity make its international tourism appeal large and diverse.

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