



ROLE OF NGO'S IN TOURISM

KEYWORDS

Carrying capacity – tourism, Sustainable development – tourism, Watch dog – tourism, Catalyst – tourism, Critical – tourism.

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ABSTRACT *Tourism is one of the largest industries of the world having direct as well as indirect impact on a major chunk of world population. Once believed to be clean and non-polluting industry, is now under scanner for its negative impacts. Many popular tourist destinations are now counting the cost of socio-economic development that has failed to protect their interests.*

The impact of tourism is extremely varied on one hand, its role in socio-economic and political development cannot be negated but on the other hand it has created problems of environmental degradation along with negative impacts on culture and tradition of locals. These challenges have given rise to the demand for more sustainable development in tourism. Different stake holders shall have to be involved in the process of developing sustainable tourism. Therefore in order to find a constructive response to these problems, NGO's can play a positive role by understanding the way it affects the populace especially those living in tourist areas, by working towards better conservation of the resources and contributing towards increased environmental consciousness of the local people in its development and management by justify yields, benefits and ensures their fair distribution, and also puts long term social and environmental benefits ahead of short term socio-economic gains.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a travel for recreation, leisure, family or business usually of a limited duration. Tourism is not like old time hospitality. It is a trade and source of profit. Tourism accounts for 30% of the world's trade of services. Tourism plays a very important role in the development and promotion of the country. Tourism is one of the main sources of foreign exchange for every country. Tourism involves the transfer of capital from one country to another.

In the modern era, the role of NGO's (non-government organizations) is found almost in every sphere of life. NGO's are voluntary organizations that are funded by the state, foundations, business or private persons. It is seen that there NGO's are acting as a watch-dog in the society. They act as critics and awareness agency for the govt., other organizations and common people.

NGO's work at local, national or international level. Non-government organizations (NGO's) began with the idea of addressing the problems of contemporary societies. We can say that NGO's act as agents of social change. NGO plays a constructive role as facilitators and mediators to ensure equity and participation in the development process.

NGO's play a very important role in the tourism sector also this role of NGO's is based on the understanding of the new social, political and economic processes that accept the reliance on markets and private sector initiatives as the most efficient mechanism for achieving economic growth, producing goods, provides most services to people etc. tourism policies are imposed by the government on the people unilaterally. Sometimes these policies are not people friendly and can deteriorate the environment of the tourist resort in one or other way. It is at this movement that these NGO's play an important role. They not only make people aware of the negative effects of the policies, but also take legal help in revoking these policies, which have negative effect. In our nation tourism is not a

voluntary activity. It is a well-developed industry. The government imposes these policies in a well-planned way. The people have every right to differ with these policies. It is here where the role of NGO's is prominent. These NGO's act as a catalyst and help the people to know about the positive and negative impacts of the government policies. These NGO's then help the poor and vulnerable people against the negative impacts of these policies. Therefore NGO's play a diverse role in tourism sector which is discussed as below:-

ROLE OF NGO'S IN TOURISM AWARENESS

NGO's plays very important role in tourism awareness. There are different types of roles that NGO's play in tourism awareness. In general there are mainly three kinds of roles played by an NGO's in tourism awareness. These are as below:-

When the government or authority makes policy in tourism sectors, then there are tourism NGO's that are actually involved in criticizing the policies of government or authority due to its loop holes or negative impacts.

There are other types of NGO's in tourism sector which works at the tourism spot. There NGO's assess the problems which will be borne out of the development at the tourism spot. However it is not necessary that this NGO's is present at the tourism spot but it however plays a very positive and supportive to the NGO's in tourism areas.

There is another type of NGO who is involved in policy making with government or any authority regarding tourism. It is a new phenomenon where the advices of the NGO's are considered during the policy making. In such kinds of the policy making all the stakeholders are taken on board in order to come out with more efficient and more acceptable policy regarding tourism.

The tourism NGO's as a critique of the policy by point-

ing at its negative effects and problems. These NGO's first of all made a detailed study of the tourism policy by government or any authority. After detailed study, they find the problem in it. Then these adverse effects of the policies are circulated among the NGO's, activists, researchers, individuals, government etc. After this, they come up with the more effective policy and the government takes into account the advices and inputs from the NGO's regarding policy making.

A major work of NGO's is to make people aware about their power to intervene with the centre of the power, with policies that will be most suitable. These NGO's make the people to realise their power in decision making.

ROLE OF NGO's AT DESTINATION

The NGO's play a very important role at the tourist destinations, these NGO's work on tourism issues based on their need To understand changes affecting the communities in which they are working due to tourism departments. There are various kinds of such issues as:-

Lack of civic amenities at the tourist destination.

More increased pressure on common resources.

Displacement of the people from their origin place due to land required for large tourism projects.

Due to interaction with tourists, the changes occurring in cultural modes of the local or host community.

Sexual exploitation of children at tourist destination.

The menace of child labour at tourist destination.

Allowing tourist to a destination beyond its carrying capacity.

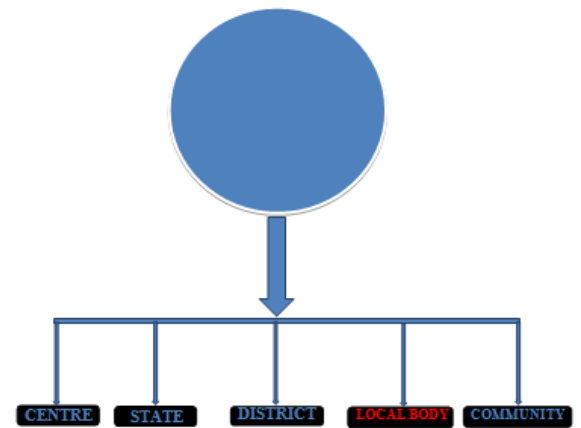
Having an interaction with the local NGO's working on day to day issues at the tourist destination.

Other problems at tourist destination such as crime, host-tourist conflict, drug trafficking, gambling, prostitutions etc.

The NGO's then look out for ways of understanding the changes affecting the area and the communities which are directly linked to the tourist destination. It is at this point that we see the cooperation between the tourism NGO's and those working in the tourist areas, i.e. in other words we can see the symbiotic relationship between the tourism NGO's and the local NGO's which work at the tourist destination.

The tourism NGO's then focusses on the research which focusses on a particular place or issue of tourism importance. After a proper research, the NGO report and document in detail the tourism movement in that area. By doing this, they collect relevant data. They also take into board local groups, interested groups for active participation. Then they produce backgrounders on particular situations which facilitate scientific research on socio-political, environmental and related issues.

Then after doing proper research by the NGO at the tourist destination, they put destination specific issues on the national agenda. Then these NGO's also act as a point of resource for information about a tourist destination, By doing this, these NGO's play a very important and crucial role in making an effective policy for a tourist destination. These NGO's acts not only as critics but also as torchbearer.



ROLE ON NGO's PLAYED AT VARIOUS LEVELS

CONCLUSIONS

The role of NGO's in tourism sector is very important because they point out the negative effect in the development along with the people's perception of that development. These NGO's create awareness among the masses regarding the use and misuse of their resources and assets in relation to tourism development. Not only acting as a critique, they also show the right track in which the development should take place. These NGO's also made us aware of the adverse effect on culture, environment, land etc. due to tourism development. Therefore it is very important for the government or any authority to take into consideration the suggestions and advices of the NGO's while making any policy.

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