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7. Economic Development: Issues & Challenges Research on Amenable Tourism in regards to Sustainable Development of Maharashtra Tourism

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Commerce & Management Studies.

Abstract

Significance of Tourism Industry plays a vital role in economic development of any country or state. Origins of tourism can be traced back in 17th century when people started to travel across the globe for the purpose of conquering new lands, trade, and leisure, medical treatments, exchange of food and culture. Etc.

Maharashtra is known as the land of scholars, saints, kings and warriors, forts and historical places which has played a successful role for the progress of Indian Tourism..

It is also a mere responsibility of stakeholders to critically analyse, evaluate and find corrective measures on negative impact of tourism such as damage to environment and natural resources, overcrowding, economic leakage etc.

This paper emphasizes on development of Sustainable Tourism of Maharashtra which has impact on generation of high scale tourism business attracting the national and international tourist which will be beneficial for the overall economic development of state and country in long run.

Introduction

Maharashtra is the 3rd largest state of India in terms of Area and Population which is located on the west coast of India with 720 kms of long coastal line followed by Western Ghats and Sahyadri Mountain ranges. Several wild life sanctuaries and nature parks are the highlight of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. "Maharashtra Unlimited" is the campaigning slogan for Maharashtra Tourism which is thoughtfully framed as the state has abundance of Tourist Attractions like Ancient Caves, Temples, Marvellous Beaches, Ancient monuments and Forts, Forest and Wild lifer, Magnificent hill stations, Pilgrimage centres and rich tradition of Arts, Cultures and Festivals.

Sustainable tourism is defined by the UN Environment Program and UN World Tourism Organization as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities. Data on Maharashtra tourism is updated yearly, averaging 30,628,394.000 Person from Dec 1997 to 2021, with 25 observations. The data reached an all-time high of 149,294,703.000 Person in 2019 and a record low of 6,974,453.000 Person in 1997. Visitor Arrivals: Local: Maharashtra data shows fluctuation in tourist inflow. The data is categorized under Global Database’s India – Table IN.QD001: Resident Visits: by States. Source- (ceicdata.com). There is a need of research and study on this sensitive topic which can serve as corrective plan to rectify the loss of tourism.

Review of Literature

Focus on use of eco-friendly products: By taking into account need of environmental sustainability, the focus should be given on the use of eco-friendly products by the various stakeholders. For that purpose, strict laws should have shaped and applied in the locality the various stakeholders. “SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN KONKAN: A NEED OF TIME” Dr. Sardar Patil.

Tourist pressure. Research is also needed to determine what level and rate the tourist traffic triggers negative impact on wildlife.

“ECO-TOURISM: CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY IN MAHARASHTRA”-
Rahul Pardeshi

Sustainable tourism can provide solutions to the issues of inclusive growth. Besides, the ‘return to roots’ focus, in tourism, is interlinked with increased access to information, enlarged interest in heritage and culture, improved accessibility and climate change concerns.- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

The destination has played an important role in tourism. It is a mix product of the tourism which offers integrated experiences to its tourist and consumers. Basically destination are regarded as well define geographical areas such as a town, a city, a country, a nation or as whole world where tourist stay at least one overnight (WTO, 2007).

Design/Methodology/Approach

The Literature Review highlighted important studies conducted to understand the need for accountability of all stakeholders of tourism in regards with Sustainable Development of Tourism in State of Maharashtra.

Data Collection Method –

Secondary Data Collection Methods –

Different published academic journals, government websites and publications were referred for data collection. The collected information was used to analyse, compare and compile the collected data.

Primary Data Collection - Discussions with academicians, hospitality professionals, Industry professionals and tourists helped in collection of basic data.

A total of 5 interviews were conducted due to time and resource constraints. Sampling method was used. The questions asked in interviews were based on areas:

1. According to you how important is Tourism in regards with generation of employment for locals?
2. Do you agree that Tourism is also putting an adverse effect on climatic conditions like air pollution?
3. Do you feel there is lack of awareness about tourism places of Maharashtra to the Non-Maharashtrian Tourists?
4. Do you think tourism products like forts, heritage hotels, beaches, hills, fairs and festivals, wildlife in the national parks needs international marketing?
5. Do you think there is a need for re-evaluating and re-framing the marketing strategies to increase the tourist flow in Maharashtra?

Interviews were conducted by telephone, email, group discussions and one-to-one question-and-answer session. Its length was about 30 minutes. The data collection methods helped support the findings of the analysis of the information in the relevant document and add accurate and complete information to the research subject.

Data Analysis

Out of 100 % respondents, 85 % feels that tourism plays an important role in generation of feasible income and employment opportunities in state 10 % slightly agree, whereas 5% disagree on this point.

One on one and telephonic discussion on above point covered aspects like:

Tourism and hospitality industry has most significant contribution in any country or region in terms of immediate creation of new jobs. Foreigners travel abroad seeking to visit places of natural beauty or historic significance. This creates new job opportunities.

Out of 100%, 72% respondents feels that excessive flow of tourists can lead to adverse effects on climatic conditions like air pollution whereas 20 % slightly agree and 8% disagree on this point.

On reviewing study on Global Challenges, following observation was recorded:

Tourism often puts pressure on natural resources through over-consumption, often in places where resources are already scarce. Tourism puts enormous stress on local land use, and can lead to soil erosion, increased pollution, natural habitat loss, and more pressure on endangered species.

World Counts

As per the discussion with some of respondents following statements were recorded and framed:

Culture and heritage tourists usually visit cultural heritage attractions such as historic buildings and other historic attractions; archaeological sites; state, local, or national parks; art galleries or museums; concerts, plays or musicals; ethnic or ecological heritage sites; and such like attractions. These trips create sense of cultural tourism.

Carolyn Childs - How Culture and Heritage Tourism Boosts More Than a Visitor Economy

Out of 100 % respondents, 75 % feel that there is lack of awareness about tourism places of Maharashtra to the Non-Maharashtrian Tourists and there is a need of promoting the Maharashtra Tourism Products to non-resident guests, 25% disagree.

As per verbal discussions with respondents points were observed such as, lot of other state tourists are unaware of historic and ancient places to visits, they only know which are regular place of visits such as Gateway of India, Taj Mahal Hotel, Ajanta Ellora Caves and other destinations from Konkan, Vidarbha, Nasik are not so known and therefore less tourist flow.

Out of 100 % respondents, 80 % feel that Maharashtra Tourism products such as forts, heritage hotels, beaches, hills, fairs and festivals, wildlife should be marketed internationally, 20% slightly agree.

Discussion with respondents emphasizes that Maharashtra tourism has a high scope of attracting international tourists as state is rich in bio diversity, state has distinguished beaches in Konkan, magnificent and breath-taking views of forts and points in Sahyadri Mountain Ranges, historically significant customs, traditions festivals. All these are assets to State Tourism.

Out of 100% respondents, 92% strongly believe that there is need of reframing the Marketing Strategies of Maharashtra Tourism, 6% slightly agree and only 2% disagree on it.

Respondents state that they have been visited to many foreign countries where they experienced that the marketing of tourism products is done on large scale and importantly over

worldwide range, examples- Dubai Tourism, Qatar FIFA world cup, Swiss Alps, Thailand tourism and so on which shows the need of reframing the marketing strategies of state tourism.

On above point a article says "It's not just local communities that live in tourist destinations that are feeling the negative effects of tourism. As tourists ourselves, many of us prefer to visit places that are clean, not too crowded, and safe. We also usually want to preserve local cultures, traditions, religions, and buildings, rather than experience an inauthentic ploy for money.

Future Learn: What is sustainable tourism and why is it important?

Conclusion

Taking above study and observations in considerations we can say that every destination and attraction's stakeholders whether they are consumers or service providers, they should understand the key points in sustainable and non-sustainable culture. Balance must be maintained between limits and usage so that continuous changing, monitoring and planning ensure that tourism can be managed properly in Maharashtra. Various strategies can be followed to develop competitiveness in tourism, keep in mind the key points of sustainability such as:

Training & Educating every individual involved in Tourism

Once, people get basic education or knowledge about the environment and the sustainability in their life, and then the improvement within them can lead to help to their respective destination. For example: local tourist guide training programme, which will help to understand the history as well as importance of the place by local people and how they can serve to the tourist on competitive level. Maharashtra Tourism has been playing an important role to give education and training to the seekers. Most of hospitality sectors such as Hotels, Travel and Tourism are educating and counselling the guests and explaining the importance of Sustainable Tourism. Strict rules must be imposed regarding pollution, wild life conservation, waste management, recycling, civil law and order, guidelines for foreign tourists, environment conservation and other sustainability related laws. Government and concerned departments need to re-think the possibilities of adaptive marketing strategies facilitating the promotion of key factors such as Cultural Heritage, Authentic Cuisines, Arts and Crafts, Festivals and Trades, Customs and Local Traditions which can boost up the inflow of tourists hence providing employment, entrepreneurial opportunities to the people of state, in turn strengthening the economy of Maharashtra.

Maharashtra should popularize Agro & Eco-tourism as one of the new coming tourism segment which will help to surpass the income generation through tourism industry in



Maharashtra.

Adequate budget must be approved and allotted to promote the state tourism.

Government bodies must try to set up a committee for training and development of required skillset in major areas of service providing sectors such as Accommodation and Room Division Management, Culinary, Food & Beverage Services, Travel and Tourism etc. Universities implementing the Hospitality Studies education should focus majorly on teaching the requisites of Sustainable Tourism, emphasizing on practical and theoretical knowledge covering the major and important aspects of tourism and creating the deeper sense of "Atithi Devo Bhava" in the minds of every stakeholder of Tourism.

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