

INFORMATION AND DESTINATION: MEDIA IMPROVES THE GROWTH OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

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Abstract:- Global capitalism has helped to accelerate the growth of tourism in two ways. One, as the world shrinks into a global village people travel wide and far as part of their work and seeking more opportunities. Two, the increased global capitalism forces people to prefer to take out some time and move to destination they think better for leisure, rest and recreation. Their choices of destinations depend mostly upon the information they get from different media. Media plays an important role in the growth and promotion by creating a better awareness and understanding to cater the needs and requirements of the people. As the media promotes tourist places through newspapers, ad campaigns and TV serials, it helps the people in choosing their destinations by providing necessary information regarding that place. This paper explains how media is promoting tourism through print and TV media and how it impacts the tourism development. This paper will also talk about special campaign started by Gujarat tourism and development and how much media is able to convert “potential” into the “actual” tourists.

Key Words :- Tourism, Industry, Media, Information, Image

Introduction

Tourism is a leisure time activity and through which tourists get enjoyment during the free time which is at their disposal and rejuvenated for engaging in their further periods of production. Tourism is concerned with pleasure, holiday travel and going and arriving somewhere. Therefore, local situation in politics, weather, social activities and peace at large are important factors which affect the tourism development plans. Today, the global tourism industry is growing at a steady phase. India is one of the countries which is blessed with tremendous variety of tourist resources.

India is trying its best to become one of the top destinations in world tourism. Global capitalism has helped to accelerate the growth of tourism in two ways. One, as the world shrinks into a global village people travel wide and far as part of their work and seeking more opportunities. Two, the increased global capitalism forces people to prefer to take out some time and move to destinations they think better for leisure, rest and recreation. Their choices of destinations depend mostly upon the information they get from different media. Media plays an important role in the growth and promotion by creating a better

awareness and understanding to cater the needs and requirements of the people. To maintain a tourist destination in the right perspective, the tourism authorities need to be in close and continuous contact with the different branches of media on a regular basis. As the media promotes tourist places through newspapers, ad campaigns and TV serials, it helps the people in choosing their destinations by providing necessary information regarding that place.

Role of Media in Tourism Promotion

One should understand the job of media as their primary role. Over the past century the role of media in global society has been evolving as -

- Providing information and amusement
- Checks and balances in social accountability
- Shaping the public agenda and priorities
- Protecting the environment of public interest
- Promoting best global practices
- Contributing towards sustaining social value systems

Development of tourism is not limited to increasing the number of hotels, resorts and other such facilities, rather it has far more to do with creating the culture of tourism and the way it is perceived by the people. In this, media can play an important role. The

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role that the media is playing in the various aspects of life is becoming increasingly greater each day. The media is a mediator between tourism and society that means they mediate in a process of conveying tourism products and from the producers to the consumers. Media helps in clarifying values and civilizations of the different countries and helps in widespread information. The media has a social responsibility to enhance the blending of local, national and international cultural values for enriched politics, society and economy. Thus, media contributes greatly in activating tourist attractions.

Media is a way through one can communicate with large number people. Tourists use information from multiple sources including TV, radio, newspaper, magazines, movies and Internet. Each type of medium has a different significance for different categories of readers in shaping their decisions to visit a particular destination.

The objectives are:

- (1) to highlight the theoretical or conceptual implications of the new media communication technologies, globalisation and cultural contestations on the India's tourism industry;
- (2) to present an overview of the current challenges of tourism policy issues and options in India;
- (3) to explain the specific pattern of media effects by the new technologies on the development of culture;
- (4) to discuss appropriate media communication technology options for promoting sustainable tourism, peace and conflict resolution, cultural competence and inter-cultural communications.

Print Media

There are number of books and magazines like Bhraman, Outlook Traveller, Discover India, Travel Torch, Wildlife etc. Even many newspapers take out the supplements on travel like Economic Times takeout "Travel". Jagran comes with "Yatra", providing the information easily to people about different destinations and about their culture and environment. These niche magazines or special pages assign celebrities and famous writers to visit destination and write out their experience in literary beautiful style. And people who decide to travel, use these magazines as a reference material not only to know more about the destination, but also to make

their travel experience fruitful and rewarding. The colourful and attractive photographs and package are a natural attraction of these publications which even make them popular among the advertisers too.

TV

TV serials have become indirect way of promoting tourism These days many TV serials like "Sanskar Dharohar Ki" based on Gujarat, "Baalika Vadhu" based on Rajasthan etc. are coming up on specific states showing their culture, art and there by promoting the specific state. Many of these serials are based on the exotic and mysterious locale in remote villages. Instead of offering the audience the claustrophobic atmosphere of the interior sets they offer something extra ordinary. They go to villages and make the visuals as real and exotic as possible. This also inspires the audience to visit the place for themselves and experience the exoticism first hand. There are also many films, documentaries, promotional films which help in promoting tourism. A study on the promotion of tourism aptly touches upon the role played by Bollywood film industry.

Cyber Media

Today a modern electronic medium, internet has come up to revolutionize the promotional activities of tourism industry. Cost-effective social media such as Facebook, flicker, YouTube, twitter, mobile blogs and RSS feeders have also introduced a whole new era of communication. Social media channels ensure better outreach as well. Each of the social outlets allows projection, discussion, portrayal, image and video depiction. And there are many blogs which specialise writing on travelling and tourism.

Social Media

The major upheavals that took place across the Arab World this year are once again proof of the power of social media. The social media proved to be a major communication vehicle that spread across the region like wildfire. The social media have not only changed the face of politics but also have a major influence on the world of travel and tourism.

There can be little doubt that the explosion of social media impacts every form of business including the world of tourism. Social media such as Facebook and myspace, provide instant ways to reach thousands or millions of people. Twitter is a fast way to get a few words out and social media, such as linkedin connect people interested in business relationship. The social media allows people to speak

about great and not so great experiences to become instant critiques and via youtube to even become instant stars. In the world of tourism, there are two major uses of social media. Tourism's and travel's customers have created social media networks in which they share reviews of hotels, restaurants and/or attractions. These people often post stories about their experiences both good and bad and as these websites become more prevalent, they also impact not only a locale's reputation but also the way that we need to market and advertise.

This is word-of-mouth advertising taken to a new level. Tourism entities, be they attractions, hotels, transportation systems, restaurants or communities may use social media as a personalized form of advertising. The use of the social media can help your tourism entity to enhance its buzz and create credibility at a low or no cost to the provider. The essential point to remember is that like tourism, social media exist to bring people together.

Ad Campaigns

Travel commercials are also greatly important to the promotion of tourism on every TV channel. Capturing the essence of a destination in less than a minute means packing in a lot of pictures and stunning video shots that will stick to the hearts and minds of viewers. Over the years ad campaigns have contributed towards shaping tourism into a responsible industry by promoting it. This is proved by the Gujarat as Gujarat tourism has done extremely well in the last two years. In its recent launch of the “Khushboo Gujarat Ki” campaign featuring icon of the Indian film industry Mr. Amitab Bachchan, the tourist inflow to Gujarat has witnessed a phenomenal upswing. Similarly ad campaign by Incredible India promotes different states like Madhya Pradesh, North East and thereby helping in increasing tourism.

Tourism and Media

The media have a crucial role to play in putting emerging destinations. The relationship between tourism and the media is vital and complex. Tourism is highly dependent on media reporting because the vast majority of travel decisions are made by people who have never seen the destination first hand for themselves. When there is bad news or a crisis the impact on tourism can be devastating. While media has contributed positively to the development of the global tourism industry, there have been occasions where media publicity has adversely

affected tourism in several countries. Media, when not handled well, can have disastrous effects on tourism. For example last year in 2012, media portrayed Kashmir so much in news with bomb blast and terrorism, though in real, the situation was not that bad. As a result the tourism of Kashmir fell down badly as compared to year 2011. Thus, Media can promote tourism by projecting a destination and it can also destroy a destination by negative publicity.

Tourism is the largest contributor in terms of revenues and employment opportunities. Million tourists get right information about tourists destination and visit those places. In a survey, it was found that 87% people choose destinations on the basis of what they have heard, read or seen from media. Thus, media are vital players in shaping the choices and promoting the potential tourists to visit destinations of a country and thus develop tourism there. So it is important for government and tourism promotional organisations to understand and appreciate the role of media and work to promote tourism. Thus as we know that every traveller is a potential tourist, media by spreading the information tap this potential and convert in to the actual tourists. According to Gujarat Tourism and Development Corporation, the international tourist traffic has gone up in the range of 30-80% while the domestic tourist traffic has increased by 14-30% in Gujarat. Thus, media create awareness and helps in catering the needs and requirements of the domestic and internal tourists and this way helps in the growth and development of tourism industry.

But some recent studies have also indicated the undesirable plight of tourism like the damage it causes on environment and traditional livelihood of communities and the United Nation caution in this regard is worth quoting-

The three case studies demonstrate that while tourism can be a force for alleviating poverty and helping to cement peace much depends on the way the sector is planned and managed. Tourism can only achieve the above goals if it respects the environment and places host communities at the centre of the development process. Responsibility lies with the government of developing nations to ensure that tourism grows in a sustainable manner. But, as the case study of Kenya shows, individual tourists also have a part to play. As the driving force behind the ecotourism movement, they have shown that the

choices they make as consumers can determine whether tourism takes a path that helps or hinders development in poorer countries.'

We may add here that the media also has to play a constructive role in enlightening the tourists and the travel companies about the need to be more sensitive about the protection of environment and local community living.

Conclusion

Tourism is all about perception. The image built on the material reality of a particular destination influences much upon the way in which it is received by the perceptors. And the media in its various hues plays a major role in creating such image Media mostly helps to create a positive attitude about the image of the factor called place in tourism industry.

However, the media should also have to play a crucial role in creating awareness about the negative aspect of the exploitative nature of tourism. Tourism has exploitative nature and its one of the important factor in exploiting nature too. The importance given in modern capitalist development to promote tourism is with the intention of alleviating poverty and unemployment, but tourism has equally created its own menace through taking up the cultural autonomy of the local communities and thus prompting them into more traps. Media can play a major role in promoting what is called sustainable tourism and promoting ethical values which can help travellers to understand the fragile nature of our destinations and human destiny.

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