

# Taking India Towards Responsible Tourism – A Need for Sustainable Tourism Development

Hiren R. Raval\*

## Abstract

*Tourism is developing in India as well as at a global level. Number of tourists and its contribution towards income of the country has risen in past years. Tourism is making strong foot print in economic development. So, government of different countries have also framed tourism strategies accordingly. On the other hand, tourism destinations have also faced challenges in terms of environmental issues, natural disasters and pollution of different types in different countries. Obviously, tourism development needs efforts and government should think of development but at the same time environmental issues and pollution also need to be attended by government as well as travelers all over the world. Tourist destinations and heritage should be preserved and efforts and investments need for conservation. This paper tries to indicate issues and make suggestions for responsible tourism development.*

**Keywords:** Tourism development, Infrastructural Development, Investments, Environmental issues, Climate Change, Responsible tourism, Sustainable Development.

## INTRODUCTION

“Tourism” – the term is now more familiar with huge mass of the people in the world by passing time. Fortunately, compared to primitive stage, present generation of people have more time to spend for leisure and recreation accompanying with abundant flow of monetary gain. With stressful life in the society and work burden make people travel to different destinations for relaxation from their scheduled lives and to revitalize themselves. Tourism provides such an opportunity to people to make them more alive and get relished from their journeys.

## Concept and Definitions of Tourism

Roots of tourism in India can be found out in “Sanskrit” language. Sanskrit has its word “atana” which means “going out”. This term itself produces other terms like:

1. Tirthatana - Which means going out for religious purpose.
2. Paryatana - -Which means going out for pleasure and knowledge
3. Deshatana - Which means going out beyond geographic boundaries of the country for monetary gain.

### \*Author for Correspondence

Hiren R. Raval  
E-mail: [Hirenrajal5050@gmail.com](mailto:Hirenrajal5050@gmail.com)

Assistant Professor, Shree Ranchhoddasji Bapu Mahila Home Science and Lt. M.J. Kundaliya English Medium, Mahila College Rajkot, Gujarat, India.

Received Date: January 19, 2023  
Accepted Date: March 14, 2023  
Published Date: March 22, 2023

**Citation:** Hiren R. Raval. Taking India Towards Responsible Tourism – A Need for Sustainable Tourism Development. International Journal of Sustainable Building Technology. 2024; 7(1): 43–47p.

Numbers of attempts have been made to define tourism in twentieth century by different people in different manner. But most widely accepted definition is given by World Travel Organization (W.T.O.) i.e.

1. “Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes [1].”

2. According to Australian economist Hermann V. Schullard (1910) “The sum total of operators,

mainly of economic nature which directly relate to the entry, stay and movement of foreigners inside and outside a certain country, city or region [2].”

3. According to Switz Professor Hunzinker and Krap (1942) “Tourism is the totality of relationship and phenomenon arising from travel and stay of strangers, provided the stay does not imply the establishment of permanent residence and is not connected with a remunerative activity [3].”

This definition was subsequently adopted by International Association of Scientific Experts on Tourism (AIEST)

With rise in disposable income of various classes of people in India, there is rise in number of tourists in India. As compared to past years, there has been very good rise in income as well as spending of people over tourism. There is continues rise in number of domestic and international tourists in India. Tourism has also pushed economy towards development in different areas like hotels and restaurants, transportation, insurance industry, banking services as well as shopping of different domestic products in economy. Government also takes interest to develop infrastructure facilities as well as developing transportation facilities in the country. Government makes investment in infrastructure to boost and encourage businesses to enhance tourism allied facilities in the country to attract more tourists in the regions.

Objectives of developing tourism sector in India is

1. To create more employment opportunities in local areas.
2. Giving push start to small businesses through tourism.
3. Overall economic development of the country.
4. Increasing contribution of tourism in income of the country.
5. Exposure of Indian culture and heritage at a global level.

Efforts of government to encourage tourism industry also brought results to the country. India has got rise in number of tourists as well as contribution of tourism in economy. These results also encourage tourism industry and government to add more efforts and investments in tourism sector.

There is no doubt over growth of tourism in India and its contribution towards national income of the country. Even it also contributes towards creating employment opportunities in the country. But country needs to think over damage to natural tourist sites, increasing population and calamities due to development of infrastructure facilities in hilly areas of different states.

Therefore, there is a need to think over and frame policies towards responsible as well as sustainable tourism in the country.

### **Objectives**

1. To identify contribution of tourism development in economic development.
2. To recognize tourism allied facilities for the development of tourism industry.
3. To take tourism development to new height by identifying challenges.
4. Highlighting damages to tourist destinations due to climate change and natural disasters.
5. Making suggestions to take India towards responsible tourism.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

1. According to Buckley (Citation2012) the specific term ‘sustainable tourism’ was first used almost two decades ago. During the first decade, basic frameworks from backgrounds in tourism, economics and environmental management were studied [4].
2. According to Bramwell & Lane, the two greatest founders of these concepts in the tourism industry, sustainable tourism emerged in part as a negative and a reactive concept in response to

the many tourism issues, such as environmental damage and serious impacts on society and traditional cultures [4.] (Bramwell & Lane, Citation1993)

3. Tourism development has been seen as a solution capable of creating positive changes through the ideas of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism has played an important role in identifying ways to secure positive benefits, as well as the established approaches of regulation and development control [4]. (Bramwell & Lane, Citation2012)

The Mohonk Agreement (2000), a proposal for international certification of Sustainable Tourism and Ecotourism, saw ecotourism as “sustainable tourism with a natural area focus, which benefits the environment and communities visited, and fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation, and awareness [5.]”

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Secondary data has been used from relevant books, government reports for study and analysis for stated objective.

### Meaning of Responsible Tourism

Responsible tourism is tourism that respects the tourism destinations environment, community and culture. It aims to correct the adverse effects caused by irresponsible mass tourism.

Responsible tourism requires that operators, hoteliers, government, local people and tourists take responsibility, take action to make tourism more sustainable.

### Responsible Tourism

Responsible tourism is any form of tourism that can be consumed in a more responsible way.

Responsible tourism is tourism which...<sup>6</sup>

1. Minimizes negative, social, economic and environmental impacts.
2. Generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well being of host communities.
3. Improves working conditions and access to the industry.
4. Involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances.
5. Makes positive contribution to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage embracing diversity.
6. Provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues.
7. Provides access for physically challenged people.
8. It culturally sensitive encourages respect between tourists and hosts and builds local pride and confidence. (Cape Town Declaration, 2002)

### Disasters at Tourist Destinations [7]

Tourism and travelers have offered many things to country and economy. But overdose of tourism has created dangerous effects for local people living at tourist destinations. Some disasters earth faced in last years give indication that still there is a time to rethink and reframe polices and strategies for tourism development.

### Cyclone

Southern states of India have always faced climate change and cyclones creating natural disasters in the region. Tamilnadu has been affected by most number of cyclones every year around five to six cyclones. These disasters have affected local people as well as reduced number of travelers to state. In the year 2015, Chennai faced heavy rainfall that affected more than thousands of businesses and loss of lives in the region. In the year 2018, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamilnadu faced cyclone Gaja which displaced many people in different states. Even Kerala faced fall of 30% income in tourism and

cyclone affected hotels as well as restaurants. The year of 2013, 2018 and 2021 Uttarakhand also got damage due to flood. Thousands of people lost their shelters and some also lost their lives.

### ***Earthquake***

Earthquake means sudden change in the surface of earth. The main reason behind this change is a clash between tectonic plates inside earth. Tectonic plates are huge rocks inside the earth. Gujarat witnessed earthquake in the year 2001. It damaged local people and destructed many buildings and public facilities. In the year of 1993 Maharashtra witnessed earthquake and around 10000 people were killed and many people were displaced from their homes. Therefore, it reduced number of tourists and income to these tourist destinations. The year of 1934 Nepal witnessed earthquake and so many people lost their lives on both sides of Himalayas

### ***Tsunami***

Earthquake, underwater explosions, land slides under water cause tsunami. India faced third largest tsunami in the year 2004. Indian states like Andaman Nikobar island, Tamilnadu, Andhrapradesh, Kerala were badly affected by this tsunami. Hotels, local buildings, roads, houses were damaged due to tsunami. All most all bookings were canceled by tourists due to this incident. These states lost huge proportion of tourist income in this period.

### ***Landslides***

When there is mass movement of rocks in mountains, it is known as landslides. There are many reasons of landslides like earthquake, rainfall, snow melting etc. responsible for landslides. Landslides badly damage infrastructure facilities like road, tunnels, hotel buildings and so on. Landslides happened in the year of 1934 and 1968 that washed out many tourist places and roads in Darjeeling. Guwahati also got damaged in the year 1948 and many lost their lives in this event.

It can not be concluded that overdose of tourism only damaged tourist destinations but climate change and global warming can also be considered responsible for these natural disasters. But it can not even be neglected by the country as people at tourist destinations do not take much care of environment. Even the race of infrastructure development also created damage to tourist destinations in the country.

### **Pillars of Responsible Tourism[8]**

- A. Sustainable management
- B. Socio economic impacts
- C. Cultural impacts
- D. Environmental impacts

**A. *Sustainable management:*** Sustainable management in tourism refers to management practices of tourism industry to address the need of travelers by considering local environmental and social conditions. Not only that but needs to consider present and future results in areas. It aims to reduce negative impacts and maximizing positive impact on environment.

**B. *Socio economic impact:*** Socio economic impact refers to cultural exchange and cultural awareness about local areas and generating employment opportunities in local areas withdrawn from agriculture and other allied sectors in remote and rural areas.

**C. *Cultural impact:*** Cultural impact of tourism refers to promoting and maintaining cultural values, traditions of local area, heritage, local art and craft. Tourists understand cultural values, rituals, food, attire and interact with tourist and share their knowledge.

**D. *Environmental impact:*** Environmental impact refers to promoting minimizing the wastage of resources and making efforts for climate change, conservation of eco system of local areas and promoting wider use of renewable energy.

These pillars need to be considered while framing tourism policy and strategies for making efforts in the direction of sustainable tourism. The government should think of present as well as future of tourist destinations, climate change as well as interest of local stakeholders of tourism.

## CONCLUSION

Sustainable tourism is not a need but a compulsion for the country to think over. Government as well as leaders need to rethink and reframe their policies for better tomorrow in the tourism industry. Certain suggestions can be made to take India towards sustainable tourism.

1. Government needs to take strict actions for damaging tourist destinations as well as polluting tourist sites to prevent tourist destinations from damage.
2. Government also needs to rethink infrastructural development at tourist destinations of hilly areas to maintain interest of local people and reduce damage.
3. Travelers need to be well informed about ecological balance, natural damage and interest of local people.
4. Travel permits to be issued to travel particular regions to reduce and limit the crowd and prevent damage to tourist destinations.
5. Infrastructural access needs to be limited to limit the crowd at risky tourist destinations.
6. Even travelers should be more responsible and cooperative for sustainable tourism.

## REFERENCES

1. UN Tourism | Bringing the world closer [Internet]. Unwto.org. 2024 [cited 2024 Mar 14]. Available from: <https://www.unwto.org/>
2. Hermann V. Schullard (1910) "Concept of Tourism", Tourism concepts and linkages, Uttarakhand open University. P.32.
3. What is tourism? | Turisme Proactiu [Internet]. Turismeproactiu.com. 2018 [cited 2024 Mar 14]. Available from: <http://www.turismeproactiu.com/en/what-is-tourism/>
4. Sarfaraz Hashemkhani, Zolfani, Maedeh Sedaghat, Reza Maknoon & Edmundas, azimieras Zavadskas. Sustainable tourism: a comprehensive literature review on frameworks and applications, Economic Research - Ekonomska Istraživanja, 28:1, 1-30, 2015.
5. www.gstcouncil.org. 2022. The difference between Eco tourism and Sustainable tourism, Global sustainable tourism council., 17-02-2024.
6. South Africa. Department of Tourism, Cape town declaration on responsible tourism in destinations, Johannesburg, 2002.
7. Mr. Praveen.M, Dr. R. Rajesh. DISASTERS AND ITS IMPACT ON THE TOURISM SECTOR, IJCRT, Volume 9, 2021.
8. The Four Pillars of Sustainability: A Key to Starting Your Sustainability Journey | Ecotourism Australia [Internet]. Ecotourism Australia. 2022 [cited 2024 Mar 14]. Available from: <https://www.ecotourism.org.au/blog/the-four-pillars-of-sustainability-a-key-to-starting-your-sustainability-journe>