
Socio - Economic impact of Tourism

Dr.Mrs.V.Indiradevi

*Asst. Prof in History
Fatima College, Madurai*

Abstract

Tourism has become a thriving global industry and it has become the fourth largest industry in the global economy. Development of tourism is no doubt a major concern of many developing countries today including ours. Tourism in India has become one of the major sectors of the economy, contributing to a large proportion of the National income and generating huge employment opportunities. It has become the fastest growing service industry with great potentials for its further expansion and its diversification.

India is a country known for its lavish treatment to all visitors, no matter where they come from. Its visitor- friendly traditions, varied lifestyles and cultural heritage and colourful fairs and festivals held abiding attractions for the tourists. It is natural for people belonging to different cultures, life styles, or social settings to interact and leave an impact on each other. In tourism this happens at a massive level. Its growth has no doubt produced many impacts. Such impacts are highlighted in this paper.

Keywords: Tourism, social interaction, Western Culture, Self Image, Modernization, National Income

Tourism fosters Peace and Development

While foreign tourists generate goodwill for India around the world, domestic tourism is a powerful contributor to the cause of national integration. Tourism brings together people of different cultures and religions and fosters better mutual understanding. For doing this effectively and durably it demands conditions of peace. It is rightly said that tourism is the greatest peace movement in the world.

Increases Communication with Other People

The local people try to communicate in broken English to acquaint the foreigner with their culture and tradition. This want of communication has lead to open various institutes where one can learn how to speak in English and other foreign languages like French, German, etc.

Motivation for Learning

All types of people come in contact with tourism like rickshawala, shop-keeper, hotel management, folk-dancers, musicians, other artists, etc. They try to communicate in various other languages of the different states, which makes it easy to sell their goods and impress the tourists by their art and culture. They try to learn English, German, etc. Utility of foreign

languages which is beneficial from the economic point of view and in developing strong social interaction.

Influence of Western Culture

Jeans, T-shirt, and skirts have become very common. Cocktails and Western music has become common in restaurants and hotels. All these show the influence and impact of Western culture on the society.

Improved Self Image of the Community

It is found that most tourists get more attracted towards the villages to observe the lifestyle, culture and traditions.

Modernization of the Infrastructure

The Government is trying to provide more modern facilities to the present hotels and restaurants. Various facilities like ice-cream parlors, beauty parlors, STD-ISD, Video-Photo Studios are very common in tourist places.

Mode of travelling has also been improved as new highways, airports, broad-gauge trains and air-conditioned buses are being used for tourism. Modernization of facilities and infrastructure of tourist places are directly influenced by the development of tourism.

Education and Employment

Urbanization of the State which is an essential part of tourism development created employment opportunities to the people of various classes such as engineers and contractors while constructing highways, broad-gauge railway lines, hotels, restaurants, parks, etc. Similarly, modern facilities such as ISD, STD and studios are providing various jobs to the local people.

Negative impacts of Tourism on Society

- Loss of morals
- Increase in begging
- Prostitution
- Cheating
- Crime and gambling
- Health
- Creating a sense of antipathy
- Resentment towards the tourists in over used areas
- Overcrowding and congestion due to mass tourism.
- Unwanted lifestyle changes
- Displacement of residents for tourism development
- Family disruption
- Exclusion of locals from natural resources
- New cliques modify social structure.

Economic Aspects of Tourism

Tourism promotion is a key operation in any regional or state development Programme. In early days economic development of various rich people of society was entirely based on industry and agriculture. But today there is no reason to live in a two-dimensional economy. Tourism business emerges as third dimension. Many communities are now adopting tourism to improve their economic standard.

Tourism and National Income

Tourism gives impetus to national income. International tourism and domestic tourism both have significant share in national income. Tourism constitutes a demand for services and of consumer goods that would otherwise not have been produced. The construction of accommodation, urbanization for tourist purposes, infrastructure developments, increased tourist transport and modern facilities, etc. can be the examples of how tourist demand encourages investment.

Tourism as a Revenue Earner for government

The governments gain economic benefits from taxes and duties on things that tourists use and buy. Thus duties on alcoholic drinks and petrol and a hotel room tax constitute an extra source of national income from the Tourism Industry.

Tourism as Generator of Employment

Tourism is job-oriented and provides employment several times more than normal manufacturing industries. Several type of business firms, such as hotels, motels, restaurants travel agent, tour operators, gift shops, transporters, etc., earn bulk of the dollars. Various other secondary or allied business firms, for example, construction firms, suppliers of food and beverages, taxi drivers, photographers, hair dressers, doctors, dentists, etc. also gets benefit from it. Tourism thus increases employment level by creating new employment in various sectors and by stimulating the creation of other facilities. It indirectly increases productivity by others, particularly of the agriculture sector as it draws manpower resulting from hidden employment or seasonal underemployment.

Tourism as a source of employment is particularly important for areas with limited alternative sources of employment such as non-industrial areas having rich natural resource other than scenic attraction and climate.

Tourism as Foreign Exchange Earner

Every country aims to develop tourism as a strategy to obtain industrial equipment and create general conditions for independent growth. The vastness of the market, the diversity of the product, the sheer numbers involved and above all, the financial giants, have made tourism as major economic activity and the single most important source of foreign exchange earnings.

Tourism is the only export based trade that earns large foreign exchange without depleting national resources and without actually exporting any material goods. Therefore, as an export industry, tourism ranks above all other traditional export industries and carves for itself a unique place. Incoming tourism has always been highly appreciated as it means an inflow of foreign exchange to the national economy.

Tourism and Redistribution of National Income

One of the greatest problems facing the development of an economy is hoarding of national income by a few privileged ones. In the middle ages, savings were converted into gold, silver, jewels and precious metals. In the second stage savings were invested in huge purchases of land and buildings. Tourism prevented national income being hoarded by few. It created new opportunities of investment. It allows savings to be spent on travel, cruises, art visits or in health resorts, visit to international sport events, conventions, festivals exhibitions, etc. It all leads to redistribution of money which increases employment opportunities and a reduction in employment in other sectors it all results in the development of neglected areas.

Tourism and Cost Considerations

One factor which has often been overlooked in assessment of tourism for economic return to host communities is the cost of developing local resources and catering to visitors. These costs include community costs such as infrastructure and imparted services.

Tourism and Opportunity Costs

The relative economic benefits to be gained from investing in tourism rather than some other industry is a comparison known in economics as the 'opportunity cost' of an investment.

Tourism and Inflation

The more obvious instance involves increases in retail prices in shops during the tourist season and steeply rising land values leading to a general rise in home costs and property taxes.

Over-Dependence of Tourism

The third world economies which tend towards dependence on a single primary product are badly affected by changes in commodity prices. In these circumstances the introduction of tourism appears initially as a welcome form of diversification.

While the growth in India's tourism industry is impressive, it still has a ways to go until it truly becomes as accessible for tourists as Western Europe and North America. But the unplanned and uncontrolled growth in tourism has serious implications for the society and economy. Generally such impacts are ignored by the policy makers and planners. This is partly due to the short terms of power in the government; part of it is due to massive corruption. Tourism must not be allowed to damage the resource, prejudice its future enjoyment or bring unacceptable impacts. Holistic tourism results when planning is done on integrated development

of recreation resources and tourist activities to derive optimum benefits in terms of social, economic and ecological objectives on one hand and to the satisfaction of tourist on the other.

References

1. Bhatia A.K. *Tourism, History and Development*, Sterling Publications, New Delhi 1982.
2. Gulab Nabi, *Socio Economic Impact of Tourism*, Pointer Publishers – Jaipur 2000.
3. Romila Chawla Ed., *Impacts of Tourism* Sonali Publications, New Delhi-2006.
4. Push Pinder S.Gill Ed. *Tourism Economics and Social Development* Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi-1997.
5. K.K.Sharma *Tourism and Socio - Cultural Development*. Sarup & Sons Publications, New Delhi 2004.
6. Honey,Martha,Gilpin,Raymond Article on “*Tourism in the developing world – Promoting peace and reducing poverty*” 2009.
7. H.Lalnunmavia article on “*Development and impact of Tourism in India*” 10th July 2012.