Strategy for Preserving Tribal Culture in Southern Rajasthan through Tribal Tourism

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Abstract: Rajasthan tourism represents face of our country in the international market. The economy of Rajasthan is dependent on tourism for its survival. Various form of tourism such as Cultural tourism; Heritage Tourism Desert tourism, etc. are quite developed. Tribal tourism is one area which is still unexplored and uncharted. In this research work, the researcher discusses about the scope of tribal tourism in Southern Rajasthan and at the same time formulating a strategy to preserve the tribal culture by promoting tourism here. There is colossal scope of developing tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan due to the diverse culture, traditions and natural surroundings. Tribal tourism can be responsible for the positive image building of tribal community and exploring the unidentified locations in tribal areas. In this research paper it has been concluded that tribal tourism promotion will help in preserving tribal culture and traditions if developed in a sustainable and planned manner. The research methodology depends on primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected through interview, personal observation and survey. And the secondary data is based on extensive literature review. The research methodology is followed by findings and suggestions and finally conclusion is drawn based on the findings.

Keywords: Rajasthan, tribal, rural tourism, strategy

1. Introduction

Rajasthan is the living proof of royalty, Rajput’s cultural traditions, grandiose régime and spectacular heritage. As the saying goes “Atithi Devo Bhaw” (Guest is god) and “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (Whole world is one family) the tourists coming here are still treated with high esteem and are unpretentiously served. May be this has been one of the various reasons for tourists to come here again and again. But now the grand tourism industry of Rajasthan is on a threshold of being saturated and we are in dire need of finding new possibilities to keep up with the growing demand of the tourists and excel on our services. Through this paper, the researcher is suggesting on finding new spaces to retain the tourist flow and even try increasing it. Tribal tourism will be a great budding to be established for tribal tourism. Despite the various benefits due to the multiplier effect of tourism, it still poses threats on ecological and cultural balance.

With the development of tribal tourism preserving the tribal culture is also an important task. The biggest threat of developing tribal tourism is that, it can easily destroy the culture and traditional value system of tribal or aboriginal community. Hence ministry of tourism and culture in the tourism policy of India, 2002 has segregated ecotourism, cultural tourism and heritage tourism. As all of us are aware that tribal community is very innocent, hence it is very important to formulate a strategy where the traditional heritage and ethnic value could be saved from any adverse effect. Southern Rajasthan offers a variety of cultural aspects of different tribes living here. This variety and unique nature of these tribes are enough to attract tourists here. But the biggest problem is the underdeveloped infrastructure here. The transportation system, communication accommodation and lack of a proper linkage between various places of interest increase our problem. Not only this, to develop tribal tourism we need to develop a strong entrepreneurial class here among the locals. To determine the feasibility of promoting tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan we must consider following points:

• Tribal sectors having potential of attracting in-bound and out-bound tourists.
• Availability of entrepreneurial competency in tourism.
• Level of tourism in these areas.
• General infrastructure in the research area.

With this it is also important that, a strategy needs to be formed for preserving tribal culture due to increased tourism activities in these tribal locations. To understand about the strategy for preserving...
tribal culture we must consider the following points.

- Understanding tribal culture from tribal point of view.
- Preserving by encouraging showcase of tribal cultural aspects.
- Educating tourists to appreciate tribal culture and traditions.
- Educating tribal to be proud of their culture.
- Formulating policies and strategy to preserve tribal culture.

2. Literature Review

For tangible and intangible exhibitions of tribal (aboriginal) tourism promotion started since mid-20th century around the world. It is believed that “ethnographic” researchers started studies on impact of tourism on indigenous groups.

LirrwiYolŋu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation, (2014) opinions that success of Indigenous tourism can be calculated from the numbers of visitors in the specified area, profit generated and employment opportunities that may be generated from it. The achievements that are attained due to tourism promotion are important in the development of society but are harder to capture. [1]

Scherrer and Doohan (2013) believes that the act of asking for permission to access in tribal location of a country may help to develop an inter-cultural environment which may further help in learning process and mutual feeling of respect between the host and tourists. According to him this is a proof that tourists acknowledge and credit tribal communities for their knowledge and cultural practices. [2]

Bunten (2010) while presenting his views on cultural tourism states that it may help to strengthen prolonged Orientalist representation of individuality and uniqueness from stereotype to newness. Thus tribal tourism will help in improving and preserving the tribal culture by providing them audience and thus financial support. He further noted that “tourism provides “inward” education to community members to ensure cultural perpetuation, and “outward” education to tourists to challenge stereotypes and historical inaccuracies.” [3]

Lynch, Duinker, Sheehan & Chute (2010) & Colton (2005), noted that the definition of “Indigenous tourism” ascertains control of various tribal tourism products by tribal communities, especially those products which are based on their culture. Lynch, further discusses on focusing on “social sustainability of a community” and “nation building” through the promotion of tribal tourism in tribal areas rather than only for creating job opportunities, income and profit generation. [4, 5]

Clark (2009) & Fennell (2008) agrees in their study that indigenous (tribal) tourism projects or ventures are often associated with eco-tourism and culture tourism instead of being classified under a different headings which can be developed under special term of “Tribal tourism”. Further Cater (2006) &Hinch (1998) observed that indigenous host and tourists are based on ecological balance and natural understandings. [6,7,8,9]

Rojek (2004) presents a different view for tourism. According to him, it is an inseparable part of capitalist society which is growing due to the erratic desires of the consumers. He further describes market as not only a place for merchandises but it also offers products to satisfy our inner whims and dreams. Thus it can be concluded that tourism is an intense instance of the mirage of entrepreneurship. Referring to his views on tourism, it can be concluded that development of tribal tourism will help the tourists to satisfy their urge to explore and experience authentic culture and traditions of tribal communities and practice adventures in remote tribal areas. [10]

MacCannell (1976) stated about vindicating undesirable impacts and finding methods to so that tourists can experience tribal culture in more simpler, unadulterated lifestyle. A development of tourism in indigenous reasons will help in facilitating socio-economic benefits. [11]

3. Scope of Tribal Tourism Development

Tribal tourism can be developed in tribal locations with social, economic and cultural aspects. But at the same time, we have to figure out ways by which we can help to preserve the most important aspect of tribal tourism experience that is, tribal culture. For developing tribal tourism below mentioned features may work as a guideline.
4. Research Methodology

This research paper is based on descriptive research. The research methodology adopted for this paper is based on primary and secondary data. The primary data is based on the observation of the tribal locations by the researcher. The secondary data has been collected through extensive literature survey and internet sources. The study areas are the tribal locations of southern Rajasthan.

5. Objective of the Study

This research paper discusses the scope of tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan and preserving the tribal communities at the same time. The objectives for the research paper are:

- Potential of tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan.
- Socio-cultural impact of tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan.
- Economic impact of tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan.
- Preserving tribal culture through tourism.
- Strategy for preserving tribal culture in southern Rajasthan.

6. Results and Suggestions

a) Potential of tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan: For successful development of tribal tourism, it is very important to maintain and preserve the original flavor and essence of tribal lifestyle and culture. For this, tribes should be a part of it. As the contribution of the locals is necessary to make the tourists feel welcome in these areas. Thus, tribal should be able to associate themselves with tribal tourism. They should realize and understand that:

- They will be benefited socially and commercially.
- Without their participation the originality of their cultures and traditions will be lost.

Tribal tourism is a community based, participatory and it will improve the economic and social well-being of tribes. Tribal tourism will affect all aspects of tribal life, minting money for the government or private entrepreneurs should not be the only aim for the development of tribal tourism.

The lack of education and awareness among the tribes of southern Rajasthan may hinder the promotion of tribal tourism. Here, the role of RTDC and other organizations involved in the promotion and development of tourism is very important.

b) Socio-culture impact of tribal tourism: To satisfy one’s curiosity, tourists undertake travel and the opportunity to see different areas, observe different cultures and ways of life is quite tempting to him. Tourists are very important factor in socio-culture change. The positive social impacts of tourism are:

- The tribal will be encouraged to communicate with outside world through promotion of tribal tourism. The increase in tourist arrival in tribal locations and their interest in knowing tribal culture will give them a sense of pride for their traditions.
- Tribal tourism will help in improving the self-image of the community. As tribal will no longer be considered as unfriendly and uncivilized who may be harmful to others (civilized community).
- Promotion of tribal tourism will help in enhancing the employment opportunities for the locals by creating jobs. For instance, photographers, hoteliers, tourist guides, escorts etc.
- Mostly tribal are illiterate and some are not even interested to educate themselves as they don’t understand the need for it. This is one of the major reasons for their under development and exploitation. The arrival of tourists from various parts of the world will help them learn the importance of education and will encourage them. Thus educational opportunities will increase.
- Development of tribal tourism may help in developing and motivating tribal for learning.
- Tribal locations have no modern day amenities but the increase interest of tourists will help in modernization of tourist infrastructure.
- The absence of income sources in tribal areas leads to the migration in the nearby cities and towns. This at time leads to their exploitation in form of forced or bounded labor. As arrival of tourists in tribal location will increase due to promotion of tribal tourism, it will help in slowing the process of migration of tribal.
• The increase in tourism and availability of job opportunities may help to attracting new workers in tribal areas.

c) Economic impacts of tribal tourism: Tourism development in tribal areas will change the economic scenario of tribal areas. They will earn more income low capital production and prosperous, low employment, lower income are major constraints in the development of tribal areas. The flow of money generated through tribal tourism will help in overall development of tribes through multiplier effect. Hence it should be accepted as an important contributor in economic growth of tribes.

Tribal tourism will act as a generator of employment. Tourism industry provides more job opportunities than normal manufacturing industries. It is labor-oriented and several types of business firms, hotels, motels restaurants, travel agents, tour operators, gift shops, transporters etc. earn income from tourism related activities. Allied firms like construction firms, food and beverage suppliers, taxi drivers, photographers etc. also get benefited. Thus tribal tourism will be helpful in increasing employment by creating new job opportunities for tribal.

Tribal tourism will help to earn foreign exchange without actually exporting any material goods. Hence it will work as a great booster for growth of tribal community. Here, tourism tends to come towards the host and offer great advantages. Tourism sector’s expansion calls for vast and diversified units of supply. Financial and technical resources are required for successful promotion and development of tribal tourism. Thus tribal tourism can help the tribal community to be more attractive and prosperous.

d) Preserving Tribal Culture: With the promotion of tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan, the tribal culture will be preserved due to the increasing interest of tourists.

i) By increasing awareness: Tribal tourism development will act as a catalyst to motivate tribes to attain education by creating prospects of good jobs. It will improve status and income of tribal workers. It will also help them to review the interests of tribes in their culture, traditions and values. Traditional skills and values are getting lost and needs re-establishing. Tribal tourism will also provide ample opportunities to study the religious and ritualistic services of tribes. These aspects of a culture have always worked as a major fascinating factor for strangers. Tribal festivals, religious rituals and public performances provide an opportunity to develop and popularize tribal tourism.

ii) By creating Job opportunities: Since the growth of new jobs among tribal is lower than the work force growth hence is one of the reasons, tribal are moving towards cities and in process losing tribal culture. As discussed earlier that tribal tourism has great potential, due to its unique heritage, culture and natural attractions, development of tribal tourism will help by creating new job opportunities and will stop their migration towards cities. Thus it will help in preserving their culture.

iii) By stopping migration: Increasing job opportunities and income sources for tribal will help in stopping migration of tribal from their original locations towards cities.

e) Strategy for preserving tribal culture: Formation of a proper strategy to develop tourism will help in promoting tourism. As observed during the various visits, tribal are innocent but they prefer sticking to their culture, traditions and customs. If they are explained that the development of tourism is not supposed to disrespect their sentiments but to understand them better they will be more than happy to host tourists in their lives. For this, strategy to preserve their culture will definitely help them to boast their self-confidence.

6. Findings

To develop and preserve tribal tourism in southern Rajasthan we need to:

• Utilize available natural and man-made tourism resources of tribal region.
• Popularize and promote in print and visual media, festivals and fairs of indigenous culture and traditions.
• Declare tourism potential of the tribal region as places of interest and importance.
• Up-gradation of the existing tourism infrastructure and developing new infrastructure.
• Education and training should be provided to the locals to preserve their cultural aspects.
• Hospitality services should be developed keeping in mind to showcase and popularize tribal culture.
• Law and order should be maintained to provide security to the tourists as well as to preserve tribal tourist sites.
7. Conclusion

The time has come, when we should concentrate on the development of new concepts to attract tourism. The development of tribal tourism will help to generate foreign exchange and new sources for revenue. Today, tourist is very intelligent; he wants to discover new locations and rich culture with comprehensive understanding. To achieve all this, tourists expects knowledgeable explanation, interaction and feedback.

The researcher concludes that it will have significant impact on socio-culture, economy of the community. Tribal tourism is a fascinating opportunity not only for domestic tourists but also for international tourists, as these tribal locations will present an interesting site because of their unique lifestyle, fresh environment and splendid beauty. These locations will help the tourists coming from suffocating, congested, noisy and polluted metropolitan cities. Due to the busy routine, stress of work and day to day problems, there is an inner urge to get away from daily routine and enjoy nature in its actual setting.

Construction of accommodation in tribal areas & infrastructure development like transport and equipment for tourists etc. are needed for tribal tourism development. Though development of tourism infrastructure is primary responsibility of government but role of private sector is also important in tribal tourism. Due to anticipated economic benefits such as increased income and employment opportunities, tribal tourism is a welcome change in tribal areas.

Development of tribal tourism will help in boosting, services and amenities of tribal areas to attract tourists. It will help to generate extra income by creating entrepreneurial opportunities, development of tribal arts and crafts, income and employment generation, development of infrastructure and preservation of environment and heritage. To achieve all these motives, it is very important that tribal tourism is developed as a community based initiative.

8. References


9. Appendices

Strategy for Preserving Tribal Culture

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| Short Term Goal: Mapping all the tribal resources for tourism. | | | | |
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