

# Tourism Industry Is A Boon Or Bane

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**Abstract:** *Tourism is one of the important aspects for developing / under developed countries. Both domestic and international tourism must be taken into account to evaluate the impacts of tourism on economy, socio-culture, ecology and environment. By mitigating negative impacts of tourism the industry can be seen as prospective boon. Correct planning, creating awareness about tourism and its impacts among all the stake holders, and following the guidelines of UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) go a long way in promoting sustainable tourism. Better relationship between host community and the tourist is to be maintained as top priority taking into account the cultural background of both. Demonstration effect, commodification, social evils, security, harassments, etc. needs to be addressed on priority. Embracing the sustainable tourism is the need of the hour.*

**Keywords:** *Tourism, boon, bane, positive, negative, impacts, sustainable, economic, socio-cultural, environment.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry in general and India in particular is substantial and vibrant. Travel and tourism industry is one of the most profitable industries in the globe. Of late the industry is being reviewed about its positive and negative impacts in respect of economic, socio, cultural, ecological, and environmental aspects. When the positive impacts are maximized and negative impacts are minimized with concerted efforts of planning and execution, definitely the tourism industry will become a boon. To achieve this, proper infrastructure, basic hygienic amenities, sound marketing and promotional strategies, better maintenance of heritage centers, proper security arrangements, employing passionate and trained professionals, educating both host and travel communities about tourism are to be put into place. The importance of sustainable tourism is to be showcased. The Guiding principles of GCET (Global Code of Ethics for Tourism) for promotion of sustainable tourism needs to be adopted.

“We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open” – Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru

## II. TOURISM

The approved definition of tourism by United Nations is - “*tourism is the activity of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consequent year for pleasure, business, or any other purpose*”. The term tourism is of tourists and tourist attractions with a given purpose. Tourism is in vogue since inception of mankind with different nomenclatures in different parts of the globe. The term tourism is a newly coined common modern term. The fact and trend is that tourism developed into leaps and bounds and became one of the major industries of the world.

The prime object in developing tourism into an industry is to achieve maximum economic benefit. This trend is more visible in developing and under developed countries rather than developed countries. Until 1980's all the stakeholders like central and state governments, private entities, voluntary organizations etc. had a sole aim of achieving economic goal from the tourism industry without even thinking about any other impacts of tourism. “*In the 1980's individuals questioned whether tourism was a blessing or blight but the issue is now essentially academic given the value of tourism as the world's largest industry and its role as a global employer and customer*” quoted Valene Smith in 2001. For almost three

decades the emphasis was on planning, and marketing of tourism was the prime orientation in meeting the needs of tourist and their expectations. The sole aim of all the stakeholders is to attract maximum number of tourists to ensure an adequate financial returns on their investments and operations. The politicians and planners too desire to maximize financial benefits for their country or respective regions.

Subsequent to 1980's the atmosphere of change in thinking slowly started in the minds of politicians and planners about the impounding long term social, economic, and environmental impacts of excessive and badly planned tourism expansion. Now it has come to the notice of all stakeholders that tourism creates both positive and negative impacts in the destination regions. A right thinking in forming and making policy and planning may minimize or even remove negative impacts, and tourism may emerge as very positive means of increasing the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of a country.

The crux of the issue is whether the developers, planners, politicians and citizens rise to the occasion and create a responsible and acceptable tourism industry which in turn brings long term benefits to destination country without compromising physical and cultural environment of the designated regions.

#### A. TOURISM NORMS TO BE CONSIDERED ARE

- ✓ Have a basic understanding on various impacts of tourism
- ✓ Be aware that tourism impacts can be categorized as positive and negative impacts
- ✓ Know the extent of tourism impacts
- ✓ Outline the broad methods to be adopted to mitigate the negative impacts of tourism
- ✓ Tourism impacts can be brought under three main categories of economic, social, cultural and environmental
- ✓ It depends on the observer who value and judge the impacts

### III. POSITIVE IMPACTS OF TOURISM

#### A. ECONOMIC POSITIVE IMPACTS

- ✓ Tourism industry contributes to economy in areas like foreign exchange earnings, employment, infrastructure development and investment stimulation
- ✓ Tourism industry is one of the major sectors in generating foreign exchange earnings which is vital for a countries economy. It improves balance of payment/trade account balance
- ✓ Contribution to government revenues
- ✓ A push for local economy
- ✓ Employment opportunities grow in tandem with the development of industry in destination regions and in other allied stake holders
- ✓ It leads to better development of infrastructure needs like roads, improvement in quality of water systems, electricity, communication networks, public and private transportation in the designated areas.

- ✓ Tourism induces the concerned authorities to improve basic amenities and infrastructure which in turn improve the quality of life for residents as well as to facilitate the tourist
- ✓ According to UNWTO, international tourism receipts combined with passenger transport make tourism the world's number one export earner ahead of automotive products, chemical, petroleum and food.
- ✓ Promotes International trade
- ✓ Contribution to GDP through travel and tourism is likely to rise to 9 % by 2020

#### B. SOCIO CULTURAL POSITIVE IMPACTS

- ✓ Brings changes in the life styles of the destination communities enhancing the standard of living
- ✓ Some likely changes or alterations - Many changes takes place in arts, artifacts, customs, rituals and architecture at the tourist place which in turn enhance the quantum consumption of tourism products
- ✓ Effect a change in residents experience, values, way of life, intellectual and artistic products
- ✓ Tourism has the required potential to promote social development through employment creation, revenue redistribution and alleviation of poverty.
- ✓ Tourism acts as a force for peace
- ✓ Strengthens the local communities
- ✓ Lends Cultural Involution
- ✓ Encourages civic involvement
- ✓ Promotes Cross cultural exchange
- ✓ Leads to preservation and restoration of heritage conservation
- ✓ Change in climate, migration in population and onset of new trends
- ✓ Revival of traditional arts and crafts
- ✓ Cultivation of cultural pride and identity

#### C. ECOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POSITIVE IMPACTS

- ✓ In the process of development of tourism, quality of environment is also taken care of
- ✓ Tourism relationship with environment is complex and can create beneficial effects on the environment by contributing to environmental protection and conservation
- ✓ Tourism can also act as an awareness creator for safe guarding the environment
- ✓ Tourism can compensate monetarily for protection and development of environment
- ✓ Protection and conservation of wild life by providing alternative economic use
- ✓ Tourism draws attention to issues relating to bio diversity, endangered species and human impact on environment
- ✓ Environment is being increasingly recognized as the major resource for tourism
- ✓ Tourism depends ultimately upon the environment as it is a major tourism attraction in itself, and Environment is a major tourist resource

- ✓ Tourism can help to promote the establishment of national parks and wild life reserves
- ✓ Tourism can promote the preservation of building/monuments/heritage sites and wild life habitats

#### IV. NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF TOURISM

##### A. ECONOMICAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS

- ✓ There happens to be certain hidden cost to tourism which can have unfavorable and adverse economic effect on host communities
- ✓ Generally rich and developed countries are better able to profit from tourism than developing / underdeveloped countries
- ✓ Least developed countries have the most urgent need of income, employment generation and better living standards by means of tourism, but they are not able to realize to the required levels
- ✓ Large scale transfer of tourism revenues out of the host country and exclusion of local businesses and products
- ✓ Rise of inflation/increase in prices & opportunity costs
- ✓ Dependency on Seasonality and seasonal character of jobs
- ✓ Enclave tourism Impacts
- ✓ Underground economy by means of prostitution and other unlawful activities
- ✓ Economic dependency

##### B. SOCIO CULTURAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS

- ✓ Loss of authenticity and meaning of traditional arts and crafts
- ✓ Loss of cultural characters
- ✓ Commercialization of human relationships
- ✓ Potential misunderstanding between tourists and residents
- ✓ Stress to both tourists and residents because of over crowding
- ✓ Decline of traditional activities due to industrialization
- ✓ Modified way of life due to seasonality of activities
- ✓ Social values altered due to tourist invasion
- ✓ Over dependence of social groups
- ✓ Commodification of human values and relationships
- ✓ Enough potential for conflict of customs
- ✓ Cultural shock & Cultural arrogance
- ✓ Demonstration effects caused
- ✓ Inducement of prostitution
- ✓ Upcoming of massage parlors, sex shops, sex cinemas etc.
- ✓ Institutional prostitution in some countries
- ✓ Growing scale of sex tourism in international tourists
- ✓ Prostitution and sea tours leads to commercial sexual exploitation of children and young women as paralleled to the growth of tourism in many parts of the world
- ✓ Children trafficked into brothels and held into sex slavery

##### C. ECOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS

- ✓ Pollution of air, water, and sound

- ✓ Change of climate due to exploitation
- ✓ Potential threat to natural areas takes places when the level of visitor use is greater than the environments ability to cope
- ✓ Soil erosion, discharge of pollutes into the sea
- ✓ Loss of natural habitats
- ✓ Pressure on endangered species
- ✓ Vulnerability to forest fires
- ✓ Stress on water resources due to over usage in hotels, swimming pools, golf courses, and personal usage of tourists
- ✓ Competition or non-availability of natural resources to local population since large scale use of natural resources lends to depletion of natural resources
- ✓ Golf tourism increased in popularity and led to growth of number of golf courses which in turn put pressure on availability of land and water
- ✓ Creation of undue pressure on local resources like energy, food, and other raw materials
- ✓ Construction of tourism facilities on fertile land, forests, and wet lands, leads to land degradation and deforestation
- ✓ Increased pressure on scenic landscapes and wild life sanctuaries
- ✓ Solid waste, littering, release of sewage, oil, chemicals, and air emissions, have telling effect on architectural monuments.
- ✓ Inappropriate and haphazard development
- ✓ Loss of natural habitat which affects wild life
- ✓ Loss of spirit to safeguard environment
- ✓ Overcrowding and traffic congestion
- ✓ Trampling causes disturbance or eradication of vegetation and soil
- ✓ Contamination of water bodies like lakes, rivers, seas, and ground water
- ✓ The release of chemicals, particulate matter or biological materials cause harm to humans or other living organisms or damage the natural atmospheric environment
- ✓ Activities like skiing or alpine tourism extensively use mountain ecological systems, many people view skiing activity as damaging since it requires associated development of lodges, resorts, roads, which cause soil erosion and deforestation
- ✓ Leads to global warming and climate change
- ✓ Rise in temperature declines visitor's population
- ✓ Eco systems will be affected due to warming
- ✓ Climate change may lead to change in shape of seasonality
- ✓ Greater extreme weather conditions such as flooding, sand storms, cyclones, droughts, summer fires, etc. would minimize tourist population

As the tourism industry has its own positive as well as negative impacts, whether the tourism industry is a boon or a bane needs to be analyzed. When the tourism industry tends to have more positive impacts than negative impacts, then it is certainly a boon. And whereas the tourism industry is not properly planned and haphazardly executed then it heads towards bane. Tourism development at both national and international level can make a positive contribution to the life of the nation provided the supply is well planned and of a high standard, protects and respects the cultural heritage, the values

of tourism, and the natural social and human environment. This certainly boosts the nation.

There are many constraints on the development of tourism. Nations and groups of nations should determine and study these constraints and adapt measures aimed at attenuating their negative influence. Tourism constitutes a major role in national economic activity, in international transactions and in securing balance of payment equilibrium which makes it one of the main activities for the world economy.

The impact of tourism primarily depends on the tourist load on any particular environment and its vulnerability, the tourist load is due to concentration in time and space. In order to avoid long term environmental damage or excessive human problems, any policy for tourism needs to be guided by the concerned to reduce the tourist load. It will be possible to evaluate the advantages, disadvantages, risks and pressures it represents for human environment (economic, social and cultural), and for the different agencies (government, travel, trade, resident population and holiday visitors) it brings into play.

For the last 25-30 years, slowly the positive and negative impacts of tourism is being analyzed. Any policy for the development of tourism must therefore aim at maximizing the positive effects and minimizing the negative effects. If tourism is well planned, developed and managed in a responsible manner, definitely it can maximize positive impacts.

#### V. SOME OF THE FOLLOWING MEASURES MAY BE INITIATED IN ORDER TO MITIGATE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF TOURISM

- ✓ Installation of water saving devices
- ✓ Abolish individual wrapped food items
- ✓ Usage of recycled paper and reusable bottles
- ✓ Minimize the automobile traffic in resorts, clinics, and recreation zones by constructing parking spaces outside the central areas, and electric buses may be used as needed
- ✓ Travel agencies can publish brochures offering tips and information on species protection and proper environmental friendly behavior to visitors
- ✓ High capacity air planes may be put into use to minimize noise and emissions of pollutants
- ✓ Garbage return initiative may be implemented
- ✓ Awareness campaigns promoting the use and loss of natural habitat and effects on wild life
- ✓ Use of solar energy, and replacing regular bulbs with energy saving bulbs
- ✓ Promoting bicycle use for inner city transport
- ✓ Use of rain water and promotion of rain water harvesting
- ✓ Utilization of tourism potential to inculcate awareness and public appreciation of the environment and to spread awareness of environmental problems when it brings people into closer contact with nature and the environment
- ✓ Retain or increase visitor numbers by improving the general amenity value of the local environment

- ✓ Care needs to be taken to ensure that the benefits of tourism are spread as widely as possible throughout the host community
- ✓ Making sure that tourist pays a fair price, and adopt fair trade in tourism
- ✓ Steps to protect local business. Provide financial incentives, training and other techniques for local owners, management and tourism facility operators
- ✓ Develop the capability of local bound operations to handle local agency operations
- ✓ Expand the variety of tourism activities
- ✓ Sustainable tourism which is socially equitable be introduced
- ✓ Have proper tourism management to maintain the dignity and sense of pride of the local community
- ✓ Increase opportunities for everyone to have a holiday
- ✓ Promote Holistic thinking in the concept of eco system
- ✓ Maintaining a balance between conservation and development
- ✓ Price compensation for protection and preserving environment
- ✓ Educate residents about tourism, its concepts, benefits and problems, tourism development policy and program
- ✓ Inform tourist beforehand about the local societies, its customs, dress code, behavioral patterns at religious and other places, local problems and crimes
- ✓ Strict control on gambling, drugs, crime and prostitution

In totality to make tourism a boon, negative impacts need to be mitigated. Concepts like sustainable tourism development and responsible consumption of tourism resources are the likely answer with enhanced planning and management of tourism. This can change the perceived balance between the positive and negative effects of tourism. The long term advantages and disadvantages of tourism can be better understood if economists and environmentalist work more closely. A new form of tourism (clean up tourism) is to be encouraged alongside high quality of planning, design and management. Integrated research in sciences of tourism planning and management particularly in terms of the causes of impacts rather than effects is to be done. Real impacts of tourism and the level of sustainability achieved requires social auditing. Planning of the environmental, social and cultural context of tourism at the destination is vital. The relationship between tourism and environment is mediated by planning and management. Discussion on tourism at the 1992 Rio-de-Janeiro earth summit and the 2002 Johannesburg world summit on sustainable development had debated about environment.

#### VI. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable tourism is becoming integral to tourism. The year 2017 is the international year of sustainable tourism for development. In recent years the negative downstream effects of tourism on environment and society are set in force. Rise of environmentalism and green consciousness among tourists set forth a reassessment of role and value of tourism. The most valuable outcome of the reassessment is sustainable development concept. The concept is meeting the needs of the

present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (world commission on environment and development 1987). It is a tradeoff between present and future needs.

- ✓ The number of initiatives undertaken in this direction are:
- ✓ Public agencies are issuing guidelines for the ethical consumption of tourism
- ✓ Industry organizations have developed sustainable auditing procedures for destinations
- ✓ Pressure groups and professional societies have devised code of conduct for visitors and travelers
- ✓ The private sector is developing responsible tourism policies for the operation of their companies

*“UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) is guided by the belief that tourism can make a meaningful contribution to people’s lives and our planet. This conviction is at the very heart of the global code of ethics for tourism, a road map for tourism development, I call on all to read, circulate and adapt the code for the benefit of tourists, tourist operators, host communities and their environments world wide”* – said Taleb Rifai, UNWTO Secretary General

For responsible and sustainable tourism the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET) is a comprehensive set of principles designed to guide key players in tourism development. It aims to help maximize the benefits while minimizing its potentially negative impact on the environment, cultural heritage and societies across the globe.

#### A. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF GCET TO TRAVEL AND TOURISM COVERING ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENT COMPONENTS ARE

- ✓ Tourism’s contribution to mutual understanding and respect between people and societies
- ✓ Tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfillment
- ✓ Tourism a factor of sustainable development
- ✓ Tourism a user of the cultural heritage of mankind and contributor to its enhancement
- ✓ Tourism a beneficial activity for host countries and communities
- ✓ Obligations of stake holders in tourism development
- ✓ Right to tourism
- ✓ Liberty of tourist movements
- ✓ Rights of the workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry
- ✓ Implementation of the principles of the GCET

The above principles are adopted in 1999 by the general assembly of UNWTO, these are not legally binding and are voluntary implementation mechanisms.

The diversity of our world unites us and give us the chance to explore, engage, and experience the best that local culture and communities have to offer. Respecting our world and all that makes us different and unique will enhance travel experience and there exist abundant gain from travel, and at the same time the host country needs to be respected.

#### B. THE PRACTICAL STEPS, A TRAVELER IS REQUIRED TO FOLLOW TO MAKE THE TRAVEL REWARDING AND GRATIFYING ARE

- ✓ Honor the hosts and common heritage
- ✓ Protect the plain from abuse
- ✓ Local community needs to be sufficiently supported
- ✓ To be an informed traveler
- ✓ Be a respectful traveler

#### VII. CONCLUSION

Tourism industry is growing all over the globe, efforts are on to propagate and embrace sustainable tourism with a view to fulfill the needs of the present without compromising the requirements of future generation. The guiding principles of UNWTO and other world bodies may be adhered. The activity of tourism is bound to create impacts and consequences. We need to plan and manage to minimize the negative impacts, and accentuate the positive impacts of tourism. These impacts happen since tourism (both international and domestic) intermingles the people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Range of variables like volume and profile characteristics of the tourists are to be considered for determining the impacts of tourism. Continued pressure for sustainable tourism among various stakeholders will change the perceived balance between the positive and negative impacts of tourism. Tourism creates positive and negative impacts in the destination country or region. Thoughtful policy making and planning can minimize or even remove negative impacts. Tourism can be a very positive means of increasing the economic, social, cultural and environmental life of a country.

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