

THE ROLE OF TOURISM EDUCATION AND AWARENESS IN TOURISM PROMOTION: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This study comprises a thorough examination of the efficacy of governmental strategies in advancing tourism education and awareness for the promotion of the tourism sector. This critical review delves into the nuances of the government's initiatives, scrutinizing their strengths, weaknesses, and overall impact on the tourism landscape. The paper begins by contextualizing the paramount importance of tourism education and awareness in fostering a skilled workforce and sustainable industry practices. It navigates through the multifaceted strategies implemented by the Government of India, including the establishment of specialized institutes, skill development programs, and the promotion of online learning platforms. The critical analysis dissects the alignment of education programs with industry needs, emphasizing the significance of continuous curriculum development and international collaboration. The review sheds light on the government's commitment to responsible tourism education, acknowledging the imperatives of ethical practices, cultural sensitivity, and environmental conservation. It critically evaluates the integration of technology in education and the provision of financial support for aspiring students.

Keywords: *Tourism Education, Tourism Awareness, Tourism Promotion, Government Strategies.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism education refers to the academic and professional training programs designed to provide individuals with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for a career in the tourism and hospitality industry. It encompasses a range of educational offerings, including formal degree programs, vocational training, and professional development courses. [1]

Tourism education covers a broad spectrum of topics, including tourism management, marketing, sustainability, cultural competency, and customer service. The goal is to prepare individuals for diverse careers within the dynamic and multifaceted tourism and hospitality industry. [2]

1.1. Role of tourism education and awareness in tourism promotion

The role of tourism education and awareness in tourism promotion is crucial for the sustainable development and promotion of the tourism industry. Here are key aspects of their roles: [3]

Professional Skill Development:

Tourism education equips individuals with the necessary professional skills and knowledge to excel in various roles within the industry, such as hotel management, travel planning, tour guiding, and destination marketing.

Quality Service Delivery:

Educated and trained professionals contribute to the delivery of high-quality services. Tourism education emphasizes customer service, cultural sensitivity, and other essential skills that enhance the overall tourist experience.

Destination Management:

Tourism education programs focus on destination management, helping professionals understand how to effectively plan, develop, and manage tourist destinations. This knowledge is essential for promoting destinations and ensuring sustainable tourism practices.

Innovative Marketing Strategies:

Education in tourism equips individuals with marketing skills and strategies. Awareness of the latest trends and technologies in marketing enables professionals to create innovative campaigns that attract tourists and enhance a destination's visibility. [4]

Cultural Sensitivity and Responsible Tourism:

Tourism education emphasizes cultural sensitivity and responsible tourism practices. Professionals trained in these principles contribute to promoting tourism in a sustainable manner, respecting local cultures and minimizing negative impacts on the environment.

Community Engagement:

Tourism education instills a sense of community engagement and collaboration. Professionals learn how to work with local communities to ensure that tourism benefits are distributed equitably and that communities actively participate in and support tourism initiatives.

Awareness Campaigns:

Tourism education contributes to awareness campaigns that educate both industry professionals and the general public about the importance of responsible and sustainable tourism. These campaigns can address issues such as environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and ethical tourism practices. [5]

Policy Advocacy:

Educated professionals can play a role in advocating for policies that support the responsible development of the tourism industry. They can contribute to the creation of regulations that balance the economic benefits of tourism with the need for conservation and community well-being. [6]

1.2. Strategies of the Government of India

The Government of India has implemented various strategies to promote tourism education and enhance the skills of professionals within the tourism and hospitality industry. These strategies aim to ensure the sustainable development of the sector and create a skilled workforce. Here are some key strategies: [7]

Establishment of Tourism Institutes:

The government has facilitated the establishment of specialized tourism and hospitality management institutes across the country. These institutes offer degree and diploma programs to train individuals for diverse roles in the tourism sector. [8]

National Council for Hotel Management (NCHM):

The NCHM is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. It plays a crucial role in coordinating and regulating hospitality and hotel management education in the country. [9]

Skill Development Initiatives:

The government has launched various skill development initiatives under the Skill India Mission. These initiatives focus on providing practical skills and vocational training to individuals seeking employment in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Financial Support for Education:

Financial support and scholarships are often provided to students pursuing courses in tourism and hospitality. This encourages more individuals to consider a career in the sector and makes education more accessible. [10]

Curriculum Development:

The government collaborates with academic institutions to develop and update tourism-related curricula. This ensures that education programs align with industry needs and incorporate current trends and best practices.

Promotion of Online Learning:

The government has encouraged the use of online learning platforms to make tourism education more accessible. Online courses and certifications in tourism-related subjects are promoted to reach a wider audience.

Industry-Academia Collaboration:

The government facilitates collaboration between academic institutions and the tourism industry. This involves guest lectures, industry visits, internships, and partnerships to provide students with real-world exposure and practical experiences.

International Collaboration:

The government engages in collaborations with international organizations and institutes to bring global perspectives and best practices to tourism education in India. This helps in creating a more well-rounded education system.

Promotion of Responsible Tourism:

The government emphasizes responsible tourism education to instill a sense of sustainability and ethical practices among students. This includes promoting awareness about environmental conservation, cultural sensitivity, and community engagement.

Research and Development Grants:

Grants and funding support are provided to institutions and researchers engaged in tourism-related research and development. This encourages academic institutions to contribute to the knowledge base of the industry.

These strategies collectively aim to enhance the quality of tourism education in India, create a skilled workforce, and contribute to the overall growth and sustainability of the tourism and hospitality sector.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives for this study:

1. To study the effectiveness of the Government of India's strategies in promoting tourism education for fostering a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.
2. To study the impact of tourism education and awareness initiatives on the overall promotion of tourism within the framework of the Government of India's strategies.
3. To study the alignment between tourism education programs and industry needs to ensure the relevance and adequacy of the skilled workforce in the tourism sector.
4. To study the incorporation of responsible tourism principles in the strategies, emphasizing ethical practices, cultural sensitivity, and environmental conservation within tourism education.
5. To study the role of technological integration and online learning in enhancing accessibility and quality in tourism education, as guided by the strategies of the Government of India.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following are the research questions for this study:

1. How effective are the strategies implemented by the Government of India in promoting tourism education, and what is the perceived impact on developing a skilled and knowledgeable workforce within the tourism sector?
2. What is the measurable impact of tourism education and awareness initiatives, as outlined by the Government of India's strategies, on the overall promotion and growth of the tourism industry?
3. How well do tourism education programs align with the current and future needs of the tourism industry, and what measures are in place to ensure the relevance and adequacy of the skilled workforce in this sector?
4. To what extent are responsible tourism principles incorporated into the strategies of the Government of India, and how are these principles emphasized in tourism education to promote ethical practices, cultural sensitivity, and environmental conservation?

5. What is the role of technological integration and online learning in the context of tourism education, and how do these aspects, guided by the strategies of the Government of India, contribute to enhanced accessibility and quality in tourism education?

4. LITERATURE REVIEWS

The research delves into the ways in which the Indian government and stakeholders work together to develop thorough plans that guarantee the industry's longevity. Community participation and the promotion of sustainable tourism practices are major topics covered in the research. It stresses the need of sustainable transportation, waste management, and environmentally friendly practices integrated together. To ensure that tourism helps both local communities and the national economy, the study also delves into the significance of embracing modernity while maintaining India's rich cultural legacy. In order to find out if sustainable practices in destinations or tourist operators are significantly different from non-sustainable practices, the researchers utilized a statistical technique called an independent t-test to compare the means of the two groups. Nevertheless, the research reveals a notable difference between sustainable and non-sustainable behaviors in ten Indian locations. The study also provided insight into international partnerships, talent development initiatives, and regulatory frameworks that help make India's tourist industry more competitive on a worldwide scale. Sustainable tourism practices are also addressed, along with the importance of stakeholder participation and public-private partnerships. Nevertheless, the article stresses the need of ongoing research and data analysis, as well as adapting to changing market trends, to guarantee that the sector can withstand adversities. [11]

It is often acknowledged that a vital goal in the tourist sector is the establishment of suitable policies and practices aimed at raising the competency and dedication of hospitality staff to a goal of exceptional service. The development of targeted programs with an emphasis on marketable skills is highly desirable in response to the rising demand for tourism and hospitality education brought about by the expansion of the global tourist sector. Teachers and politicians would benefit much from conducting such an investigation into the possible chasm that exists between theory and practice. [12]

The government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is considering increasing schoolchildren's and younger generations' knowledge of tourism as a strategic approach toward the 2030 vision. At order to increase students' tourism awareness, this study delves into the crucial aspects of tourism education from the perspective of social studies curriculum specialists in KSA's intermediate and secondary schools. The results show that the KSA Ministry of Education's curriculum creators and school instructors do not communicate well, and that social studies curricula do not include tourist education components from the perspective of specialists. [13]

By outlining the areas that require more attention in future education, this article hopes to draw attention to the importance of values and axiology in tourist education and research. Assuming that "transformation" means "major change in a favorable direction," then COVID-19 may really be a fortunate turn of events for the field of tourism higher education, which has long needed a significant shift. There is a separation between the internal and exterior changes that students undergo as a result of the introduction of education's transformational capabilities. While universities and colleges have the potential to bring about positive social change, critics argue that they are too mired in neoliberal ideology to provide students with the tools they need to have a positive impact upon the world after graduation. Foundational philosophies and the scholarship of education form the basis of the study. Therefore, it is an argument for the necessity to change the way education is conducted by bringing a greater awareness of lived values and aspirational values into the equation, as well as a contemplation

of the current status of education in general and tourist higher education in particular. All people behave and make plans based on their lived values, but they are seldom mentioned openly in study or everyday speech, which is why the argument is significant. The world's experienced values only become apparent after all other possibilities for the future are exhausted. [14]

During the curriculum coordination phase of course design, the current author reviewed several books and research articles that provided theoretical frameworks for tourism and hospitality education. Reading such books has not only helped the curriculum designer think more broadly, but it has also educated them on many other aspects of tourist education. Education in the tourist business is widely expected to play a pivotal role in fortifying the sector as a whole. A strict adherence to protocol is essential in the field of tourist research. The disciplinary dilemma has been exacerbated by the fact that knowledge production originates from a wide variety of fields, including but not limited to: “mono-discipline, multi-discipline, inter-discipline, trans-discipline, extra-discipline, post-discipline, anti-discipline, meta-discipline, and nomadology”. Tourism education has been the focus of numerous credible arguments that have emerged over the years. These arguments have centered on a variety of topics, including research, knowledge, phenomena, intelligence (both normative and existential), intelligence (both successful and lifelong), learning, collaboration, professionalism competences, scholarship, fields, management, social sciences, disciplinary pluralism, liberal arts, and vocational balance within the field of hospitality and tourism. [15]

Among the many fundamental benefits that contribute to the country's status as a top tourist destination are its abundant natural beauty, long coastline, and rich cultural history. In light of the positive effects that tourism has on our nation, we recognize the importance of tourist education in molding public perceptions of the industry and, by extension, fostering its growth in terms of both social and economic indicators. Consequently, we need to investigate a few factors so that we may draw conclusions that will raise our awareness of tourism. Here, we'll use statistical process control, and more especially, time series control charts, to analyze tourist data from 2005 to 2020. Annual Changes in Income from 2005-2020, Arrivals from 2010-2020, and the Average per capital expenditures from 2005-2020 are all time data that we model using the Box-Jenkins approach. In particular, we examine how sensitive the models are to finding seemingly little changes in the mean, which can be signs of financial instability. There is theoretical and practical value in this analytical method because of its broad applicability. It is possible to use this method to suggest that all grade levels should provide an introductory tourist education course. Therefore, the Greek tourist sector is anticipated to reap the monetary and broader rewards of education. [16]

The United Nations' Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 SDGs and related objectives, has shifted the world's attention to sustainability (SDGs). Also affected by this change is the field of tourist education. But studies examining secondary school tourism curricula and their inclusion of sustainability-related topics are few. Sustainable development (SD) in tourist education is highly valued by educators, students, and other interested parties, according to prior studies. However, investigations on the extent to which SD is present in cross-border and post-secondary tourist education and training (TVET) have been few. In light of this, there is an urgent need for cutting-edge, comparative study on a global scale to expand our understanding of the subject. The three SDG sustainability elements provide a framework within which this thesis investigates the incorporation of SD into the Swedish and Finnish upper secondary tourism curriculum. Content analysis was used in a comparative research. Despite a broad alignment with the SDGs sustainability characteristics, the research found

that SD is fragmented and unclear in the tourism curriculum of Finland and Sweden. The tourism curriculum should include a more comprehensive view of SD. [17]

This paper's goal is to review and analyze studies that have focused on hospitality and tourist education throughout the last decade (2005–2014) and to propose new areas of study. The research drew 644 full-length articles from 13 publications in the travel and hospitality industry. To maintain neutrality and accuracy, two analysts worked separately via a multi-stage procedure to code and evaluate each item. Five unique meta-themes, each supported by thirty sub-themes, emerged from the investigation. The following areas are covered by the observations: education environment, faculty development, student development, curriculum and programs, and teaching and learning. We highlighted areas that need further academic study under each subject. The review highlights the present knowledge on several pertinent themes and gives paths for future education research. It also provides an important reflection of the academic activity over the last decade on hospitality and tourist education. Education and business professionals involved in executive, professional, and human capital development processes will find this evaluation to be an indispensable resource. Given the ever-changing nature of both the business and higher education, it is now time for a thorough review of previous studies in the field to determine whether or not these initiatives really solve the problems. [18]

This article examines the function of sustainable development and sustainable tourism in attaining economic efficiency, focusing on their significance, economic, social, and environmental components. Sustainable tourism research in the region is also detailed, along with the challenges they face. The tourist industry is one area where the wealthiest nations often hold instructional programs. From high school to college and across all industry sectors, these programs cover it everything. Those interested in careers in the catering or leisure industries are the primary target of the first programs offered by the hospitality industry. The UN program also provides a foundation for the creation of the World Tourism Organization's Sustainable Tourism Program, which includes the STEP and TEDQUAL training standards. Supporting the growth of tourism education on a global scale has been the primary focus of its operations for the last few decades and beyond. Many different methods have been used to achieve this. In light of the worldwide pandemic and its effects on Uzbekistan's economy, sustainable tourism has emerged as a viable strategy for escaping the crisis unscathed. [19]

The study argues that tourist education—including its curriculum, program offerings, pedagogy, and learning environment—needs dramatic modifications in light of the changing economic, social, and technical surroundings. Essential components of comprehensive tourism courses include entrepreneurship, innovation, communication, data analytics, crisis management, and the humanities. Global, online, and "fluid" degrees will thrive and gain popularity. Teachers' roles will evolve in response to new educational technologies, such as knowledge co-creation learning arrangements, robot TAs, and flipped classes. Teachers' responsibilities and pedagogies will be further tested by the merging of formal and informal learning environments, facilitated by AR and VR technologies. [20]

5. DISCUSSION

In light of the positive effects that tourism has on a country. It has come to the attention of many people that the importance of tourist education in molding public perceptions of the industry and, by extension, fostering its growth in terms of both social and economic indicators. Many research papers provided in literature review has given a good amount of statistics and case studies that express how education in

the tourist business is widely expected to play a pivotal role in fortifying the sector as a whole. Multiple strategies have come out in order to aware student generation along with citizens of nation about tourism education in and outside of India which includes multiple schemes and institutions.

6. CONCLUSION

The government of India demonstrates a clear commitment to advancing tourism education, as evidenced by the establishment of specialized institutes, skill development programs, and financial support for students. These efforts reflect a recognition of the pivotal role education plays in building a skilled and competent workforce for the tourism sector. Skill development initiatives, particularly under the Skill India Mission, have been instrumental in providing practical training for individuals entering the tourism industry. The alignment of education programs with industry needs ensures that graduates are equipped with relevant skills, fostering a more seamless transition into the workforce. The critical review highlights the importance of continuous curriculum development to keep pace with evolving industry trends. Collaboration between academia and the tourism sector should be strengthened to ensure that education programs remain dynamic and responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities. The emphasis on responsible tourism education is a commendable aspect of the government's strategies. It aligns with global trends toward sustainable practices, cultural sensitivity, and environmental conservation. This focus positions India as a responsible and ethical tourism destination. The review underscores the significance of international collaboration and research grants in enhancing the quality and global relevance of tourism education. Engaging with international perspectives and best practices enriches the educational experience and prepares students for a diverse and interconnected industry. In conclusion, while the government's strategies exhibit commendable efforts to advance tourism education and awareness, there is a call for ongoing refinement. This includes continuous curriculum development, closer industry-academia collaboration, and a heightened focus on emerging areas such as digital tourism.

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