

A Study on Green Tourism and its impact on Sustainability in Indian Society

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper seeks to analyse the notion of green tourism, green tourism certification and its processes, as well as describe comparative approaches to green tourism in India against the other countries who are already exercising Green Tourism. Finally, with green labelling, the sector may legitimately open up new regions for a more selective and diverse market, and tourists or visitors can enjoy their desired vacation with a clear conscience. This study also tries to provide strategies and activities that might stimulate Green Tourism in such a manner that people do not see it as a liability but as a chance to contribute to the sustainability of the ecosystem as a responsible citizen. This study report is useful for all tourist organisations in greening their policies and encouraging all tourists to adopt green tourism in order to increase nations' sustainability.

Research design: The article used an exploratory research based on the open-ended technique of grounded theory, which included depth interviews with 50 respondents and expert group discussions with regular travellers. The respondents for this study will be 50 people from varied backgrounds who want to travel regularly and live in the state of Maharashtra. The questionnaire will be distributed to them on a 5-point scale.

To address the issue, the researchers will develop a research model.

Findings: The report presents empirical insights into the analysis of whether the efficiency of travellers is increased by implementing Green Tourism practises at wellknown tourist destinations. This research will also help to determine whether it is decreasing the expenses associated with a procedure such as travel, accommodations, food services, and so on.

Research Limitations: This research will be conducted in a few key cities around the state of Maharashtra. The questionnaire was distributed to just 50 frequent group of travellers.

Practical Implications: The study discusses the implications for the development of green tourism policies and practises. It will be adopted by many tourism companies as well as by tourists who wish to help to the

sustainable growth of the ecosystem while also benefiting from the desired experiences that may be exercised in India versus nations that are already engaged in Green Tourism.

Originality: This paper fulfils an identified need to study how the implementation of Green Tourism in Indian society can enable sustainability in the process.

Article Type: Research Paper

Keywords: Green Tourism, sustainability, environment, eco-friendly, ecotourism, Green Labelling, Green Tourism practices.

Introduction

One of the most notable shifts in worldwide economic activity has been the growth of tourism as a significant business. Tourism is the world's third largest economic activity (after oil and autos), and it is one of the fastest growing. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's Economic Impact 2019 report, India's Travel & Tourism GDP contribution increased by 4.9 percent, ranking third only to China and the Philippines. The Ministry of Tourism has developed a policy to promote and expand caravan and camping sites. Mr. Prahlad Singh Patel, Union Tourism and Culture Minister, unveiled a proposal on January 25, 2021, to construct an international-level infrastructure in Kargil (Ladakh) to encourage adventure tourism and winter sports. The travel and tourism industry contributed US\$ 121.9 billion to GDP in 2020, and this figure is predicted to rise to US\$ 512 billion by 2028. In India, the industry's direct contribution to GDP is predicted to expand at a 10.35 percent annual pace between 2019 and 2028.

The Indian travel industry is expected to grow to US\$ 125 billion by FY27, up from an estimated US\$ 75 billion in FY20.

The Indian airline travel market is estimated to be worth US\$ 20 billion, and it is expected to quadruple in size by FY27 as airport infrastructure improves and access to passports expands.

Because of increased consumer spending, there has been a surge in demand for luxury stays among Indian customers. As a result, significant businesses are extending their footprint to meet this need.

Firms such as Accor and Wyndham Hotels and Resorts revealed plans to establish new hotels and resorts in India in October 2021 in order to grow their footprint in the nation. Bengaluru Airport (29.96 percent) had the highest percentage share of FTAs in India in April 2021, followed by Mumbai Airport (17.48 percent), Ahmedabad Airport (15.72 percent), Delhi Airport (9.21 percent), Cochin Airport (4.91 percent), Chennai

Airport (4.04 percent), Hyderabad Airport (3.34 percent), Lucknow Airport (2.40 percent), Bhavnagar Seaport (2.37 percent), Kolkata Airport (2.11 percent), Calicut Airport (1.41 percent) (0.72 percent). With the growth of special interest tourism, such as green tourism, during the last two decades, there has been an increasing interest in the link between tourism development and environmental quality.

Green Tourism Concept:

The notion of a green product is easier to apply than to describe. Green tourism refers to ecologically friendly tourism, however it has varied foci and meanings. Such assertions frequently reveal the emptiness of the claim being made. These phrases are employed for two goals. The first is to inform clients that the vacation spot they are visiting is lovely and unspoiled. Green tourism, or similar word connected to environmental concern, is commonly used to describe nature vacations to exotic locations. Second, green tourism claims can be used to indicate that tourist operations in that location are not harmful to the environment.

In general, a product or service is considered to be green if it benefits both the producer and the user while not damaging the environment. The challenge arises when a stakeholder wants to quantify the negative environmental consequences of their activity. Even when measurement appears to be feasible, the next challenge is deciding on the criteria to be examined and the threshold levels of undesirable impacts. Tourism has generally been regarded as a reasonably green business, excluding its consequences for transportation and land development, and as a result, it has only lately been a source of worry.

Green tourism, an essential element of sustainable tourism, is described as "travel to areas where the principal attractions are flora, wildlife, and cultural heritage." This concept is broadened to encompass ecologically friendly travel to areas where climatic impacts are reduced with the goal of conserving and protecting natural resources, as well as modifying programmes to match the context of vulnerable resources. Green tourism is crucial for encouraging travel that supports natural and cultural features, as well as for increasing respect for the protection of urban resources and cultural diversity.

Literature Review

As per (Vazhakkatte Thazhathethil and Bindu), Any resort with a vulnerable ecosystem may lose its original character and resources if tourist growth is unchecked in the region. Tourism growth in the region may result in the degradation and exploitation of the natural resources that support the local tourism business. As a result, it is critical to promote sustainable development in the destination.

As per (Chee Hua, Chee Ling Chin, and Winnie Poh Ming Wong), Tourism is now dealing with a number of difficulties (Freya 2017). As a result, in order to be sustainable, the definition of tourism must be enlarged. The concept of sustainable tourism is still in its infancy, and it must grow and mature in order to rescue the environment. Sustainable tourism growth necessitates the participation of all stakeholders, as well as the crucial role of political leadership, in order to establish wide engagement and consensus. Continuous impact evaluations, as well as the execution of suitable preventative actions, are essential to accomplish the aims of sustainable tourism. In order for tourism to be sustainable, tourist satisfaction must be maintained at a high level. It should provide visitors a remarkable experience. It is critical that they become more aware of environmental issues and promote sustainable tourism. Green tourism (GT) takes into account the environment's current and future demands, as well as the needs of people, companies, and tourists. The 'green' notion may be used to any form of specialised tourist sector, from large to small, rural to urban.

As per the analysis of (McWilliams, Abigail, and Donald Siegel), Environmental stewardship has emerged as a critical concern for today's company image and longterm commercial performance. Customers' ethical expectations and wishes for more ethical business are always evolving. The CSR agenda and the need for CSR activities in responsible tourism arose as a result of this requirement. CSR is defined as a firm or entity's or organization's commitment to all of its stakeholders in its operations and activities in order to achieve long-term success.

As a consequence of its progress in numerous strands of study, RT has now been publicly embraced and supported by many significant tourism destinations, marketers, politicians, and academic research groups all around the world. They feel that the RT concept has the inherent capacity to better cope with tourism's environmental problems. Rather than being a form of tourist literature, the RT appears to have grown into a type of model and a trip route. It is simple to assume that RT is about reverence, understanding, and education through local identity and engagement with local people with whom tourists may experience a sense of reciprocity and connection. As a consequence, the concept has been embraced by a number of places as mentioned by (Clifton, Julian, and Angela Benson).

As per (George, Richard, and N. Frey), South Africa and India were among the first to implement responsible tourism policies. Kerala, the state of Kerala in India, has made considerable strides in adopting responsible tourism. The Kerala Department of Tourist, the International Centre for Responsible Tourism, and EQUATIONS (a nongovernmental activist group and "hard campaigner on tourism issues") all sponsored the state-level inauguration on February 2nd and 3rd, 2007 in Thiruvananthapuram. It was an attempt to examine many various areas of responsible tourism, with a focus on local self-government and civil society groups, the tourism industry, and state government agencies and organisations.

Kerala's responsible tourism mission adopted this strategy to execute RT programmes in numerous regions of Kerala. The objective incorporated the "triple bottom line" mission concept, which combines economic, social, and environmental responsibilities. The purpose of responsible tourism is to utilise tourism as a tool to assist villages and local communities thrive and eradicate poverty, while also highlighting the ideals of green economy and sustainable development. Farmers, traditional artisans, and disadvantaged people benefit from more money and a better way of life as a consequence of the mission, which also promotes social and environmental balance.

Objective

- To comprehend and identify Green Tourism practises in worldwide.
- To examine Green Tourism practises and their influence on the sustainability of India's ecosystem.
- To become acquainted with the characteristics and principles of green tourism
- To comprehend the connection between Green and Sustainable Tourism.

Research Methodology

The researchers created a questionnaire and performed the data analysis after gathering data using the convenience sampling approach. The questionnaire was distributed to 50 groups of frequent travellers as respondents for this study article, following which the analysis was completed. For data analysis, the statistical software SPSS was employed. The entire research report was created using both primary and secondary research. The questionnaire contains a 5-point scale, with 5 points given to 'Strongly Agree,' 4 points provided to 'Agree,' 3 points given to 'Neither Agree nor Disagree,' 2 points given to 'Disagree,' and 1 point given to 'Strongly Disagree.'

In the questionnaire, 12 parameters were investigated. In addition, the demographic profile was researched and the numerous effects on it were analysed in the study report. The major objective was to assess how many are aware of Green Tourism and the value of it. Also, if they are aware of Green Tourism, do they engage in it?

To meet the aims of this research study, primary and secondary data were utilised.

Green tourism practices in Nation and worldwide

Green Tourism in Worldwide nations:

In the United Kingdom, The Green Tourism Business Scheme was founded in 1997 and spans the entire country. It is the world's largest and most established plan of its kind, with the main goal of keeping the nation in the forefront of sustainable tourism in the future. Visitors or tourists may be certain that certain environmental standards have been satisfied by the hotel facilities that they pick if they use firms accredited by the Green Tourism Business Scheme for their holiday or overnight stay. Every two years, the enterprises will be evaluated against stringent standards in areas such as energy efficiency, waste minimisation and recycling, usage of local products, and support for public transportation. Businesses who satisfy the required criteria are recognised with a bronze, silver, or gold medal, depending on their degree of success. Improving sustainability while still providing a high-quality service is critical, and all lodging providers must first get a star rating before being eligible for a green rating.

In Malaysia, the concept of green tourism is very new and confined to encouraging the use of green products, offering environmental management training programmes, and introducing waste management strategies like as recycling, notably by participating resorts. Green tourism resorts trained and educated its workers to be eco-friendly, albeit the breadth of the training programme varied amongst resorts. The primary goals are to preserve water, electricity, and trash, and resorts that regularly monitored this technique were able to significantly reduce their operating expenses. Switching to energy-efficient equipment, employing key cards, building a water treatment plant, segregating solid and liquid waste, and recycling are a few examples. With a sign in the room, resort visitors were also urged to reuse their towels and bed sheets in order to preserve resources such as water and washing detergent. In the architectural concepts and construction of several resorts, sustainable building materials and local resources were also utilised.

Some resorts include organic gardens or nurseries, and one resort even has a structure that encourages each department to take turns caring for the garden. The Frangipani Langkawi Resort and Spa is a good example of sustainable management practises, as it implements a water treatment plant to recycle the resort's waste water, uses more sustainable building materials to reduce energy needs, creates an organic garden to produce fresh vegetables for guests' consumption, and recycles or reuses existing leftover materials in other forms. It also makes use of solar panels and grows organic plants on the resort's grounds.

Green Tourism in India

The study was conducted in the Wayanad district of Kerala. The triple bottom line concept underpins responsible tourism in Wayanad (economic, social, and environmental aims). Wayanad's responsible tourism programme attempts to mitigate the negative consequences of tourism while simultaneously appreciating and maintaining natural resources. Wayanad's responsible tourism activities foster longterm green tourist growth. The formation of a price-fixing committee and a quality committee in Wayanad benefited in the efficient distribution of items. Ethnic food establishments around the Edakkal Caves and Pookot Lake were one of Wayanad's model attempts. The former was in charge of the tribal community, while the latter was in charge of Kudumbashree. The cultural food corner in Edakkal, which offered tribal, ethnic, and indigenous snacks, earned Rs. 1.25 lakhs in a month. The Samrudhi store sells things from around 20 Kudumbashree units, farmers, and ten handicraft businesses. According to the income figures provided on the Kerala responsible tourism website, Samrudhi made a total revenue of Rs.7, 22,460/- between March 2009 and May 2010.

Among the different projects are the mission's festival calendar, which includes a number of pilgrim centres, fairs, and festivals. The RT mission also conducted ethnic food, safety, and local cuisine studies, as well as developing a code of conduct, assessing infrastructure gaps, creating a destination directory, identifying community-based tourism products, developing Wayanad souvenirs, and conducting social surveys, resource mapping, core destination surveys, and labour directories. Sugandhagiri and Pozhuthana Grama Panchayaths were also formed by the RT mission to aid visitors in learning about and purchasing traditional items manufactured from local resources like as bamboo, clay, and theruva grass.

Objectives of Green Tourism

Characteristics of Green Tourism

- Sustainable tourism makes every effort to preserve the relevance of local culture and tradition.
- Sustainable tourism is informative because it not only informs visitors about the destinations, but it also informs locals about the culture and civilization of tourists.
- This type of tourism aims to preserve the resources of the locations to which one travels.
- Sustainable tourism promotes a greater participation of communities in order to give opportunities for residents to earn a living. Above all, Sustainable Tourism emphasises the integrity of tourist destinations.

Principles of Green Tourism

With growing visitor footfalls, there is a pressing need now for tourism, like any other industry, to be well planned and managed. Tourism can only expand sustainably if certain of its standards and concepts are followed.

- Tourism should be established in any place with the assistance of the local people. The engagement of the local community aids in the maintenance of proper tourist development.
- The local community must meet the direct advantage of thriving tourism in their region. Local people benefit economically as a result of the link between local business and tourism.
- To achieve significant growth in sustainable development, codes, ethics, and some fair principles must be established.

To increase the value of historic and natural resources and improve their management, a training and education programme should be implemented.

Relationship between Green Tourism and Sustainable Tourism

Green tourism is primarily concerned with nature-based tourism, with the goal of "conserving the environment and improving the well-being of local people." Sustainable tourism, on the other hand, encompasses all aspects of tourism and serves the same purpose as ecotourism — to protect resources while increasing the local cultural and traditional value. Though the aims of ecotourism and sustainable tourism are fairly similar, the latter is far wider and encompasses many areas and types of tourism.

Challenges while practising Green Tourism

Even after taking into account all of the factors, there is still a long way to go to attain economic vitality because there is little proof of the destination's long-term economic development. This will also be determined by the lifetime of the tourist goods in each place.

- It is the outcome of ongoing natural disasters, such as floods in 2017 and 2018, and landslides caused by severe rain.
- Another cause for this is pandemics like Nipah and the COVID-19 epidemic.
- Furthermore, the level of support for the growth of responsible tourism was extremely low, with little local aid and support, notably for the development of the Samrudhi group.
- Because the Samrudhi group lacked local backing and money to start and operate their small-scale companies, banks may play an important role in assisting them to retain and expand their operations by offering new bank loans with reduced interest rates.
- Lack of stakeholder participation, cooperation, and awareness, lack of funding for SHGs (self-help groups—small groups of impoverished people, also known as Kudumbasrees) to start small businesses, lack of government coordination of the "idea," underutilization of skill sets of local resources, and so on are some of the major gaps that must be filled in order to achieve the desired results of responsible tourism.

Data Analysis of the Respondents

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	32	64.0	64.0	64.0
	Female	18	36.0	36.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High School	1	2.0	2.0	2.0
	UG	15	30.0	30.0	32.0
	PG	28	56.0	56.0	88.0
	Doctorate	6	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	16	32.0	32.0	32.0
	Single	34	68.0	68.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Have you used any tourism who are working on the principle of green tourism? (For eg: the hotel are using solar panel, 2t using plastic)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	52.0	52.0	52.0
	No	24	48.0	48.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Do you think Green Tourism can bring a change in ecosystem?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	20	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Agree	21	42.0	42.0	82.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	9	18.0	18.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Do you think practising Green Tourism can impact the price package of Tourism?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	20	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Agree	19	38.0	38.0	78.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	10	20.0	20.0	98.0
	Disagree	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Do you think India is currently practicing Green Tourism?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	9	18.0	18.0	18.0
	Agree	20	40.0	40.0	58.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	18	36.0	36.0	94.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 20	4	8.0	8.0	8.0
	21-30	27	54.0	54.0	62.0
	31-40	15	30.0	30.0	92.0
	41-50	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Have you ever practiced Green Tourism

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	52.0	52.0	52.0
	No	24	48.0	48.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Do you want the tourism service provider to practice green tourism?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	70.0	70.0	70.0
	No	15	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Do you think practicing Green Tourism is important in India?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	16	32.0	32.0	32.0
	Agree	21	42.0	42.0	74.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	12	24.0	24.0	98.0
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Do you think India is having the accurate resources and tech2logy to switch to Green Tourism?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	14	28.0	28.0	28.0
	Agree	26	52.0	52.0	80.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	7	14.0	14.0	94.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Do you think practicing Green Tourism can boost India's eco2mic growth?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	19	38.0	38.0	38.0
	Agree	19	38.0	38.0	76.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	12	24.0	24.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

- I. When we analysed the gender of the respondents, it is observed that 64% are male travellers where as 36% are females. So, we can deduce to the fact that male travel more than females.
- II. When we analysed the age group of the respondents, it is observed that 54% of the respondents are between 21-30 which is the highest followed by age group between 31-40 which is 30%. Therefore, we can deduce the fact that age group between 21-30 is more into travelling.
- III. When we analysed the education background, it is observed that 56% are PG students followed by UG students which is 30%. Therefore, we can say that from our respondents PG students travel more frequently than other groups.
- IV. When we analysed the marital status of the respondents, it is observed that 68% were single and rest were married. Therefore, we can say that from our observation married people travel less frequently than bachelors.
- V. When we asked whether they practice Green Tourism or not, it is observed that 52% respondents practice Green Tourism and therefore we can deduce the fact that more than half of the respondents are aware about Green Tourism and they are already practicing Green Tourism. The rest 48% either not aware of what Green Tourism is or they are not practicing Green Tourism.
- VI. When we asked whether they have used any tourism who are working on the principle of green tourism (For example: the hotels are using solar panel, not using plastic) 52% have positive responses.
- VII. When we asked whether they want the tourism service provider to practice green tourism, 70% of the respondents have positive response.
- VIII. When we asked whether they think practicing Green Tourism is important in India, 74% of the respondents have positive responses either by agree or strongly agree.
- IX. When we asked whether they think Green Tourism can bring a change in ecosystem, 84% of the respondents have positive responses either by agree or strongly agree.
- X. When we asked whether they think practising Green Tourism can impact the price package of Tourism, 78% of the respondents have positive responses either by agree or strongly agree.
- XI. When we asked whether they think India is currently practicing Green Tourism, 58% of the respondents have positive responses either by agree or strongly agree.
- XII. When we asked whether they think India is having the accurate resources and technology to switch to Green Tourism, 80% of the respondents have positive responses either by agree or strongly agree.

XIII. When we asked whether they think practicing Green Tourism can boost India's economic growth, 76% of the respondents have positive responses either by agree or strongly agree.

Conclusion

With this green designation, the sector may legitimately open up new regions for a more selective and diverse market, and travellers can enjoy the vacation they desire with a clear conscience. Despite this, just half of the green tourism product claims made during the World Congress of Adventure Travel and Ecotourism were substantiated by accurate information, and no advertisers made monetary donations to conservation. One major issue is that few customers comprehend environmental statements, and many of these claims are not regulated. Customers utilise brands and labelling to create opinions about the environmental friendliness of such items. However, it is usual in the tourism business to include descriptive information about tourism products as well as eco-denominations for tourist products such as green, soft, sustainable, or eco in the form of ecologically labelled items. As a result, many product claims are unverifiable and/or ambiguous, fuzzy, specious, or deceptive. The majority are accompanied with a confusing array of logos and emblems.

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