

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR REVIVAL OF TOURISM IN KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a growing industry across the globe and Kashmir is one of most renowned destination with ample natural and manmade resources to cater to different tourists in the world. There are many destinations in the world that are full of resources, which serves one of the prerequisites for the tourism activities but due lack of proper marketing and promotion the destinations remain unknown to the world. The research paper will review the various promotional policies formed under the various national five-year plan for the tourism development. The paper also discusses various marketing strategies that can promote and market the tourism industry of Kashmir.

Keywords: *development, strategies, politics, infrastructure, marketing*

1. INTRODUCTION

Kashmir has been a renowned destination all over the world and people across the globe visit this part of world to get the best experience of leisure and recreation. The geography, topography and the climate of the state are ideal for the tourism and scenic beauty of the place makes it more attractive and exciting for the tourists all over the world. No matter how many attractions and resources state has but without proper marketing the place remains unknown to the world. Marketing is not only selling but it is making buying process easy for people. Marketing is an ongoing process through which the stakeholders of the industry research, plan, implement, control etc. to get possible outcomes.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN INDIA UNDER FIVE YEAR PLANS

In India tourism initially started to develop in 1950 and it took decade or two for the industry to get in shape but the actual progress of industry began with the inception of 5-year plans. The tourism sector was not given any

major importance in first five-year plan, it was in second five-year plan when tourism was given due consideration in country's development.

Second five year plan (1956-1961): In second five year plan the attention was focused to tourism at national level. The outlay drafted for tourism was ₹1.58 cr. that was for the support of two schemes; (i) facility development at tourist places, (ii) development of accommodation for domestic tourists at places of religious importance.

Third Five Year Plan (1961-1966): This five-year plan placed focus on development of accommodation and transport facilities. The central scheme catered to the needs of foreign tourists and the states concentrated on domestic tourism. The plan outlay was increased from 1.58 cr. to ₹4 cr. It was during this five-year plan in 1966; Indian Tourism Development Cooperation (ITDC) was set up.

Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974): This basic objective of this five-year plan was foreign exchange earnings and additional benefit of employment generation. The outlay for this five-year plan was ₹25 cr.

Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-1977): Under this five-year plan tourism got a setback as objectives were not clearly framed for the tourism and also the finance support for five years was decreased to ₹23.62 cr.

Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-1985): This five-year plan had most for tourism, the plan got a huge increment and finance of ₹72 cr. was allocated for tourism. Now there was focus on things other than development, the era could be defined as beginning of new age for tourism. The five-year plan along with National Policy on Tourism formed in 1982 focused on following objectives.

- i. Tourism as instrument of unifying force at national and international.
- ii. Tourism helps in preserving countries culture and heritage.
- iii. Socio-economic benefits.
- iv. Income and employment benefits.
- v. Revenue and foreign exchange earnings.
- vi. Opportunity for youth to build carriers in tourism.

Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990): Major recommendations of seventh five-year plan were:

- i. Funds got increased to 138.68 cr.
- ii. Diversification of tourism product, focus on cultural and other forms of tourism.
- iii. Development on traditional forms of tourism e.g. winter sports, wildlife tourism etc.
- iv. The most important feature was setting up of Tourism finance cooperation in 1989.
- v. Enhancement of accessibility and amenities for tourist destination.

Eight Five Year Plan (1992-1997): With outlay of ₹272 cr. there was introduction of special tourism areas with all infrastructural facilities and development programs for under developed areas. Master plans were developed for tourism sector during eighth five year plan in coordination with all other concerned sectors. For realization of objectives government revolved following points:

- i. Involving private agencies in tourism promotion.

- ii. The states must limit their role to planning broad strategies of development and providing the fiscal and monetary support/incentives to create a private sector and devising regulatory and supervisory system.
- iii. Department of Tourism (DOT) drafted an action plan 'National Action Plan for Tourism' (NAPT) in 1992 having two vital objectives (i) increasing share of India in world tourism from 0.4 percent to 1 percent, (ii) foreign exchange earnings from ₹2440 cr. to Rs. 10,000 cr. by end of the century.

Ninth Five Year Plan (1998–2002): The aim was to concentrate on enhancing development in selected areas and circuits in coordination with both public and private sector to achieve synergy in promoting tourism. The ninth five-year plan also put emphasis on Rural and Village Tourism, Natural Health Tourism, Pilgrim Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Heritage Tourism and Youth and Senior Citizens Packages. The tenth five-year plan witnessed the launch of most memorable tourism campaign "Incredible India" in 2002.

Tenth Five Year Plan (2002–2007): This five-year plan focused on the following objectives:

- i. To work for national consensus on importance of tourism in development at national level.
- ii. To make public sector incentives more beneficial.
- iii. To create legislative framework and basic infrastructure for tourism development.
- iv. Improving existing tourism products.
- v. Building world class infrastructure.
- vi. Developing rural areas for tourism.

Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2008–2012): This five-year plan focused on following objectives:

- i. Making the tourist arrivals reach 10 million by end of these five years.
- ii. Increase in domestic tourist moment by 12% annually.
- iii. Increase in no. of accommodation units.

To achieve this target MOT implemented the following schemes:

- Product Infrastructure Development for Destination and Circuits (PIDDC)
- Foreign Promotion and Publicity Including Market Development Assistance.
- Assistance to IHMs / FCI / IITTM / NIWS / NIAS/ NCHMCT and Capacity Building for Service Providers.
- Domestic Promotion and Publicity
- Assistance to Large Revenue Generating Projects
- Incentives to Accommodation Infrastructure
- Creation of Land Banks
- Assistance to Central Agencies
- Market Research including Twenty Years Perspective Plan.
- Computerization and Information Technology

- Others (Externally Aided Projects and Construction of Building for IISM)

Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017): This is the latest five-year plan where economy is believed to grow by 9% annually and in order to grow at rate of 9% service and tourism sector has to grow at least at 12% annually.

GROWTH AND CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR DURING THE PERIOD FROM 2004-05 TO 2012-13: COMPARATIVE VIEW

Table 1: Yearly comparison of growth of tourism in Kashmir.

(At constant prices 2004-05)

Year	GSDP (in Rs. Millions)	Agriculture (in Rs. Millions)	Industry (in Rs. Millions)	Services (in Rs. Millions)	Tourism (in Rs. Millions)	Tourism (in Rs. Millions)
2004-05	2730460	610030	770800	1193510	4126240	6.99
2005-06	2991990	641060	856080	1324800	205637	7.11
2006-07	3323010	672450	979470	1494900	205637	7.30
2007-08	3709680	706320	1116500	1698610	249482	7.66
2008-09	4231480	742910	1261350	2017440	278736	8.04
2009-10	4838450	815460	1435300	2365770	272839	7.53
2010-11	5697590	938760	1662400	2863970	294836	7.53
2011-12	6597870	1068830	1856860	3426380	293727	7.23
2012-13	7611530	1208000	2017410	4126240	299924	6.85
Average	13.88	8.76	13.20	17.40	6.34	--
Average Annual Growth Rate						
2004-05 to 2012-13	13.88	8.76	13.20	17.40	6.34	-

(Source: Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, New Delhi and Indiatat Database)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper attempts to theoretically review studies conducted by researchers and practices followed by organizations. Secondary data was the main source for data collection. The secondary data was collected from reports, journals and magazines. Data was also collected by surfing the net and the relevant websites.

Objectives of the study

This study has been conducted to attain following objectives;

- To study the promotional policies under national five year plans for tourism.

- (ii) To develop marketing strategies for boosting tourism in Kashmir, and
- (iii) To draw conclusions and suggest measures, to revamp existing tourism sector in Kashmir.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

REVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR TOURISM SECTOR IN KASHMIR:

- a) It is important for tourism industry to clear the myths that tourists have developed about the security of Kashmir. Initiatives must be taken for proper use of tourist policing, there must be tourist police stations at every destination so as to safeguard the interest of tourists.
- b) There must be gender harassment cells and enough of women police to overcome the fear that women are facing in travelling alone.
- c) Introduction of mobile applications that can trace the tourists or apps that can directly send information about location of tourist to tourist police in case of danger.
- d) Developing guide applications of particular destination so that tourist can travel without guides to different areas that will avoid looting or negative approach of guide.
- e) Vehicles and cabs that are registered with authorities should be allowed to carry tourists.
- f) Only registered guides and escorts must be allowed to accompany tourists.
- g) Regular checks should be carried out to look violators of Travel Trade Act of J&K and ensure same is followed.
- h) TA/TO (tour operators/travel agents) must have latest sophisticated equipment's with high level of safety measures to carry their operations.
- i) Ensuring there is no harassment of tourists by locals or vice versa.

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING TOURISM IN KASHMIR:

- ***Promotion through diversification of tourism product:*** Kashmir is potentially rich in tourism and is having an ability to offer almost all forms of tourism, it is important to diversify the tourism products here so as to gain new market and give boost to industry. With competition increasing day by day and travellers exploring new destinations, it is important to diversify existing tourism product in order to keep tourism market maintained. The diversification and alteration of existing tourism products can be crucial for the competitiveness and sustainable development of tourist destinations.

Various forms of diversified tourism products that can be an opportunity and promotional strategy for tourism industry of Kashmir:

- a) Niche tourism
- b) Extending adventure and sports tourism activities to destinations Pahalgam, Sonmarg, Doodhpathri, Gangbal etc.
- c) More stress on promotion of cultural and heritage tourism as Kashmir has strong significance of culture and also home to much number of heritage sites and monuments.

- d) Promotion of tourism through cultural activities like folk music concerts, cultural dance, and exhibition of cultural dresses, and food festivals as Kashmir is world famous for its cuisine.
- e) More promotion of religious tourism as Kashmir has roots of respected religious scholars and is home so many shrines, temples and gurdwaras.
- f) Since Kashmir is already famous for Amarnath Yatra, and devotees visit in large no. TA/TO can explore the opportunity of adding some cultural events or visiting to other religious places like KherBawani to their itinerary.
- g) Advent and more stress on increase in water/river tourism as Kashmir is have abundant water resources. Offering activities like rafting, jet skiing, motor boating etc on large scale can attract huge number of tourists.
- h) Mountaineering courses and expedition is recent trend among the youths, with towering mountains all around, the marketing of such expeditions can result a huge tourist inflow.
- i) Reduction or offering discounts the prices of package in during off season in order to attract tourists.
- j) Destination like Pahalgam should be accessible to tourists round the year so that tourists get an opportunity to visit other places apart from Gulmarg and it will also maintain carrying capacity of Gulmarg.

Promotion of Kashmir as a safe, secure and with most offerings for tourism can be done throughout with various initiatives by DOT (directorate of tourism) or MOT (ministry of tourism). Various possible ways of promotion are;

- ✓ Road shows in tourist generating markets.
- ✓ Weekly bulletins.
- ✓ Inviting foreign or domestic stakeholders of tourism industry.
- ✓ Collaborations with different tour operators across the globe.
- ✓ Campaigns like “incredible India or athithi devo bawa”.
- ✓ Special discounts or customised tourism activities for college or university students.
- ✓ Online promotion.
- ✓ Journals, magazines and print media.
- ✓ Word of mouth.
- **Role of media:**Media plays a vital role in boosting the tourism, as Kashmir has been projected as conflict zone. Therefore positive and true news of ground situation can help in revival of tourism in Kashmir. The media can take positives from Kashmir (like the way locals help amaranth shrine pilgrims) and present them to the world which can lessen the fear psyche among people intending to visit here and will eventually boost tourism sector. The huge potential for range of tourism activities that Kashmir has could be promoted through media.
- **Infrastructural development:**The infrastructure development is one of important factor for increasing the tourist inflow. The sound infrastructure helps to cater more tourists in best possible way. There is a need to develop the railway networking that can help low end tourists to visit Kashmir, and can increase accessibility

to remote areas. The enhancement of technology used, more sophisticated accommodations, better hotel services.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Having high budget hotels for high end tourists and vice versa.
- b) Developing technical infrastructure that holds key in promotion in present day world.
- c) Making JK tourism website more active and attaching all the details regarding prime destinations and full details about packages.
- d) Construction of public conveniences with proper STP (sewage treatment plant).
- e) Macadamising all the roads leading or connecting tourist spots.
- f) Frequent cab services from hotels and airports.
- g) Mobile medical facilities.
- h) Mere buildings or having high standard hotels won't develop infrastructure, there is a need of skilled human resource.
- i) Having sophisticated or well-advanced travel and hospitality institutes that offers variety of courses (short term and long term) in different aspects of tourism and hospitality so that well trained and skilled manpower is produced to perform tourism operations professionally.
- j) Capacity building programs for locals in collaboration with IHM (Institute of Hotel Management).
- k) Trainings to local guides and specialisation in at least one foreign language.
- l) Travel/ tour operators must be fully equipped to carry adventure and sports tourism activities.

5. CONCLUSION

The Kashmir is called Paradise on the Earth and is full of resources that have ability to cater to all the forms of tourism activities. But due to various factors the place has suffered in getting proper attention. There is a need of properly developing tourism by its proper marketing and proper implementation of plans. The development in infrastructure will help in enhancing the satisfaction level of the tourists. The stakeholders need to look for the proper use of the resources available and need to go for proper marketing programs so that more tourists explore the place.

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