



OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA

Prof. V. Shireesha¹

Government City College (A), Department: Commerce and Management
studies

Mob. No. 9959284848, shireeshachakry@gmail.com

Florence Pasula²

Government City College (A), Department: Commerce and Management
studies

Mob. No. 9603812622, Florence.pasula@gmail.com

Abstract:

Sustainable tourism is called as eco-responsible tourism very popular as an unique business development model for tourism industry which consider the present and future social, economic and environmental aspect of the industry. The major aim of sustainable tourism is minimization of negative effect of pollution and economic leakage and maximization of positive result such as job creation, culture preservation and support to local communities. The sustainable tourism addresses the issues of low inclusive growth, poor interest on heritage, low accessibility and concerns of climate change. In India, ministry of tourism framed a policy for encouragement and promotion of sustainable tourism in the country as wide reach. Thus, present study provides valuable insights towards principles, objectives, opportunities, challenges and strategies towards sustainable tourism in the country.

Keywords: Sustainable tourism, eco-responsible tourism, green tourism,

¹ **College:** Government City College (A), **Department:** Commerce and Management studies
Mob. No.: 9959284848, shireeshachakry@gmail.com

² **College:** Government City College (A), **Department:** Commerce and Management studies
Mob. No.: 9603812622, Florence.pasula@gmail.com



Introduction

Sustainable tourism is concerned as sustainable practices of the tourism industry which aim to maximize positive result such as job creation, preservation cultural heritage and wild life, on the other hand, minimization of the negative effects such as economic leakage, overcrowding and natural environment damage. The UN Environment Program and UN World Tourism Organization defined sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.” Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) framed standard criteria for sustainable practices. This is categorized into four groups such as Industry criteria, destination criteria, MICE criteria and Attraction Criteria. As per industry criteria sustainable practices included private sector industry travel business, specially emphasized on hotels and tour operators. Destination criteria included tourism destinations; MICE criteria included venues, event & exhibitions and finally attraction criteria included sustainable management of attractions, businesses, theme parks, national parks and museums. The sustainable tourism is classified as eco-tourism, community tourism, and cultural tourism.

The sustainable tourism offers wide variety benefits to various stakeholders such as environmental, community and cultural benefits, Industry and Economic benefits. The environmental benefits included protection of biodiversity, natural habitats, endangered species and reserves, maximum avoiding of pollution, effective utilization of resources and attract the investments in renewable energy, water conservation etc. Community and cultural benefits included creation of jobs, promotion of local business, generation of income, improvement of standards of living and promotion of cultural exchange etc. Sustainable tourism offers benefits to industry and

economy such as creation of long term and viable tourism, consistent income to local people and offering authentication experience to the tourists.

The global sustainable tourism market size was 3.4 trillion dollars in 2024 and was expected to reach to 13 trillion dollars by the end of 2033 with CAGR of 13.5 %. The major driving factors for world sustainable tourism are growing awareness among travellers towards eco-friendly tourism, change in travellers preferences like cultural enrichment, wild life protection, community engagement etc. cultural exchanges by interacting with more communities, demand for authentication with nature and the local community and finally adoption to trends. In India, the market size of sustainable tourism is 26.01 million dollars in 2022 and is expected to reach 151.88 million dollars by the end of 2032 with CAGR of 19.30 % (KPMG). This is mainly attributable to the increasing awareness in travellers, government imitation and special emphasize on biodiversity and culture.

According to the UN environment programme major goals of sustainable tourism included creation of economic viability in tourism destinations, businesses and achieve long term success, increasing local prosperity, creation of safe and quality employment, promotion of social equity and living standards in local communities, enrichment of cultural enrichment, biological diversity and effective utilization of resources and ultimately promotion of environmental purity.

Principles of Sustainable Tourism

The four basic principles working as pillars in the development of the concept of sustainable development as included

- The first principle is environmental sustainability that deals with the development which is to be compatible with the maintenance of vital ecological processes, biological diversity and biological resources,

- The second principle is social sustainability deals with the development be compatible by traditional values of a community along with strengthening of their identity,
- The third principle is sustainability concerned with cultural development to be compatible with the cultural values of human community,
- The final principle is economic sustainability deal with minimization of cost and effective utilization of resource in a way people can use them for present and future.

The concept of sustainable tourism development involves more dimensions showing the relationship of economic, social and cultural development and its compliance with the needs and constraints of the environment

Statement of The Problem:

To attain the goal of high-quality engagement and enrichment of values and label in sustainable tourism it is pivotal to maintain sustainability in tourism. This is a best practice in the minds of tourist patron and necessity to have regular usage of manmade and natural available resources for increasing the satisfaction of tourists. Thus, sustainable tourism is future of tourism industry in India in protection of nature, environment and development of local community and improvement of their living standards. Indian government also initiated various policy reforms towards promotion of sustainable tourism. However, still the growth of sustainable tourism in India very slow due to low public awareness, non-availability of eco-friendly resources and low literacy of local community. Therefore, present research paper addressed various challenges and opportunities in sustainable tourism from the point of India.

Objectives of The Study: Present study aimed at

- To study the importance of sustainable tourism
- To identify the opportunities in sustainable tourism in India

- To explore the challenges in sustainable tourism practices in India
- To provide the suitable strategies for development sustainable tourism in India

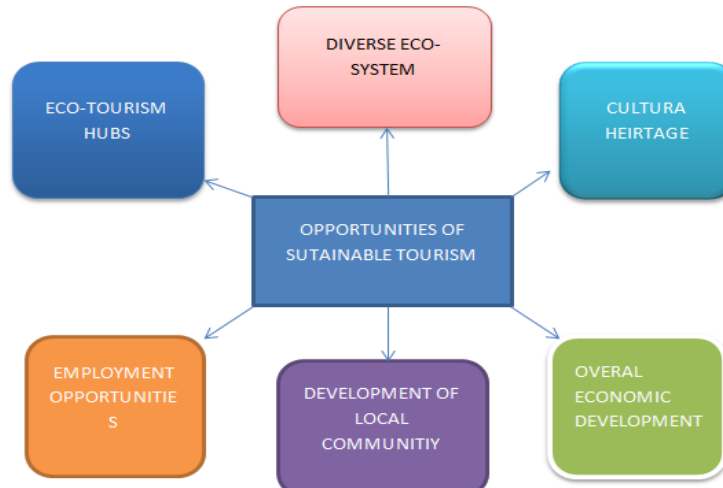
Research Methodology:

Present study is a descriptive in nature. The entire study used in the study is secondary in nature and collected from various reliable and authenticated published resources. The data sources included previously published research articles published reputed journals, articles published in business magazines. The study does not used primary data. The study also used data collected from the various government reports on their tourism policy. In the study opportunities, challenges and strategies for promotion of sustainable tourism is explained in systematic manner.

Opportunities in Sustainable Tourism In India:

In India, there are plenty of opportunities for promotion of Sustainable tourism which not only preserve the environment but also causes for socio-economic development of the local community and regions. The India's diverse ecosystem has unique advantage of promotion of sustainable tourism due to ranging from the Himalayan in the north to the coastal ecosystems in the south. By careful planning and effective implementation, ecotourism can contribute significantly to sustainable development while creating a lasting impact on the environment, economy, and society.

IMAGE 01: OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA



- **Diverse Eco-System:** In world, India is home to most diverse ecosystems with over 566 wildlife sanctuaries, 100 national parks and 18 biosphere reserves. These areas cater ideal destination for sustainable tourism activities like wildlife safaris, bird watching, and trekking. Destinations like the Sundarbans, Western Ghats, Seshalam forest, Ramappa temple, Hampi recognized as UNESCO World Heritage site rich in endemic species, offer plenty opportunities sustainable tourism.
- **Cultural Heritage:** In India, sustainable tourism is limited not only to natural landscapes but also encompasses cultural heritage. In India, still old age traditions and customs are in practice by various rural and local community people which make them as custodian of the culture and heritage. Cultural tourism not only supports these communities economically but also ensures the continuity of their heritage.
- **Eco-Tourism Hubs:** The eco-tourism hubs in states like Kerala, Meghalaya and Sikkim proved successful development in community participation and sustainability in the country. Thus, establishment of these type of hubs promote

regional development in lesser-known areas can alleviate These hubs can attract travellers seeking offbeat and environmentally conscious travel experiences.

- **Employment Opportunities:** Sustainable tourism generates plenty job opportunities, exclusively in rural and remote areas. They creates employment opportunities to local people in the form of homestays, guiding services, handicrafts, and traditional cuisines to travellers. Women also can easily often find income and job opportunities in sustainable tourism through cottage industries and cultural performances etc.
- **Development of Local Coomunity:** As compared to general tourism industry sustainable tourism generates a sense of accountability among travellers toward the environment and local communities. By engaging in sustainable travel practices, eco-tourists contribute to the preservation of ecosystems and cultural heritage. Besides, eco-tourism acts as an educational tool, raising awareness about environmental issues such as deforestation, climate change, and wildlife conservation.
- **Overall Economic Development In The Country:** Sustainable tourism play key role in overall economic development of the country and regions through protection of nature, environment, promotion of natural products, regional development, employment generation and development local people income levels.

Challenges of Sustainable Tourism In India

- The lack of adequate and official real data for tourist facilities available at tourism is major obstacle for sustainable tourism development in India. Besides, many tourists places are in unorganized sector.
- In tourism destination place poor awareness among the local people about the benefits such as development of community and region, and employment opportunities. is another obstacle for growth sustainable tourism in India.

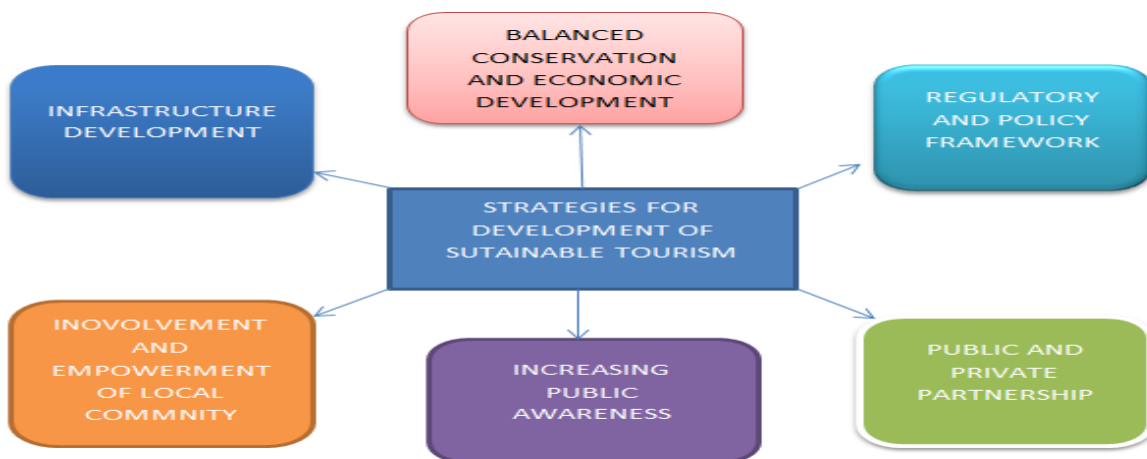
- The initiations taken by the ministry of tourism for development of sustainable tourism are inadequate and insufficient and count not addressed the many challenges of sustainable tourism.
- In India, very few States started framing their own policies and strategies for sustainable development of tourism but at national level there is no such strategy or policy. . The ministry of tourism has to take care of the implementation of the strategies.
- Poor organization and coordination among the various functionaries in tourism sector: is one of the biggest issues what the tourism industry is facing
- There is poor or inadequate support from media support in promotion of innovative ideas and initiatives for sustainable tourism development in the country.
- Ministry of tourism is implementing the development plans and programmes very slow at the national level.
- Lack of public, business and civil society about the importance of the authenticity of the cultural, natural heritage, environment and sustainability.
- Seasonality: Seasonality in tourism is one of the major problems which needs to be overcome and is also one of the challenges in sustainable tourism development.
- Lack of proper infrastructure and amenities: The destinations are lacking in terms of Connectivity and basic amenities like electricity, drinking water facility and parking area for visitors.
- The dealing with cultural Barriers of local community is also another issue which causes low awareness in terms of the benefits the tourism provides.
- In India, the majority of tourism destinations are Unregistered and not covered by taxes like hotels, local shops, home stays, travel agency, parking places, and tour operators etc.

- **No or Inactive Private Partnership:** in India, government providing inadequate opportunity for private sectors to participate in the tourism destination promotion and sustainable development of the destination which shown negative impact on the fast development of sustainable tourism in the country.

Strategies For Sustainable Eco-Tourism

In India, long-term viability of sustainable tourism is essential to adopt strategies that development of local community, achievement of balanced conservation and satisfaction traveller. A well-rounded approach, involving all stakeholders along with strong sustainable practices makes sustainable tourism as a powerful tool for environmental preservation and socio-economic growth. In the present study some of strategies for attainment of sustainable tourism are mentioned.

**IMAGE 02: STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM IN INDIA**



1. **Balanced Conservation And Economic Development.** Sustainable tourism activities should planned with emphasize on protecting the destinations natural and cultural heritage. This included determination of maximum number of visitors an area can sustain without causing ecological degradation. Besides, government policies and regulations should be enforced not go for over

construction and tourism activities in eco-sensitive zones which ensures health environment should without cost of development.

2. **Infrastructure Development:** The infrastructure development of tourist destinations should use of renewable energy sources, harvesting systems, and eco-friendly building materials for accommodations. Besides, should promote waste management systems, such as composting and recycling, should be implemented to minimize the environmental footprint of tourism.
3. **Active Participation And Empowerment of Local Communities:** The active involvement of local community is at the heart of sustainable tourism development. Thus, Government should encourage community-based tourism models for socio-economic wellbeing of local communities by providing them with opportunities to participate in and gain from tourism activities such as hospitality, guiding, and sustainable practices can help communities manage eco-tourism enterprises effectively.
4. **Raising Awareness:** The awareness among stakeholder's tourists, local communities, and government officials should increase significantly which play crucial for the success of sustainable tourism. Besides, educational campaigns should organize and inform travellers about responsible tourism practices, such as respect towards wildlife, avoiding single-use plastics, and supporting local businesses. Policymaker.
5. **Regulatory And Policy Framework:** A robust policy framework is essential for regulating eco-tourism activities and ensuring their sustainability. The government must create clear guidelines for the development and management of eco-tourism destinations, with a focus on conservation, community involvement, and visitor management. Strict monitoring and enforcement mechanisms should be in place to prevent illegal activities, such as encroachment, poaching, or unregulated construction.

6. **Public And Private Partnership:** Collaboration between the government, private sector, and NGOs can drive sustainable ecotourism initiatives. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can provide the necessary resources, expertise, and infrastructure to develop eco-tourism destinations responsibly. For instance, private sector investments in eco-friendly resorts and facilities can complement government efforts in promoting sustainability.

Conclusion:

Sustainable tourism is future of Indian tourism Industry. This tourism very popular as an unique business development model for tourism industry which consider the present and future social, economic and environmental aspect of the industry. The major aim of sustainable tourism is minimization of negative effect of pollution and economic leakage and maximization of positive result such as job creation, culture preservation and support to local communities. The sustainable tourism addresses the issues of low inclusive growth, poor interest on heritage, low accessibility and concerns of climate change. In India, ministry of tourism framed a policy for encouragement and promotion of sustainable tourism in the country as wide reach. Thus, present study provides valuable insights towards principles, objectives, opportunities, challenges and strategies towards sustainable tourism in the country. The sustainable opportunities included diverse eco-system, cultural heritage, eco-tourism hubs, local community. The challenges included, inadequate data availability on facilities, poor government initiations, low public awareness, slow development phase, poor infrastructure and unregistered tourist destinations. The strategies included balanced conservation and economic development, infrastructure development, involvement and empowerment of local community, increase in public awareness, regulatory and policy framework and public and private partnership.



References:

- Kumar, O., & Singh, S. (2023). Community-Based Ecotourism in Rural India: A Case Study of Environmental Conservation and Economic Empowerment.
- Bhattacharya, D. (2023). Tribes, Tourism, and Sustainability: A Case Study from Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu, India.
- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. (2022). National Strategy for Ecotourism.
- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). (2021). Guidelines on Sustainable Eco-Tourism in Forest and Wildlife Areas.
- Manoharan, T. R., & Ramakrishnan, B. (2020). Ecology and Economy: A Case Study on Thenmala Ecotourism in Kerala, India.
- Dehghan, M., (2005). Sustainable tourism development. Scientific, agricultural and environmental Monthly Report.
- Brokaj, R. (2014). Local Government's role in the sustainable tourism development of a destination. European Scientific Journal, 10(31), 103 117