## **CHANGING PARADIGMS IN TOURISM POLICY OF INDIA**

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Abstract: The Indian tourism sector is one of the largest service industries in the country in terms of its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and foreign exchange earnings (FEE) as well as for providing employment to millions. Natural beauty, historical monuments, heritage, vast diversity in terms of resplendent colors, culture, cuisine, pilgrimage all have immense tourism potential. In the recent past education and medical tourism, adventure, rural and eco-tourism have added newer dimension to Indian tourism industry. As per the latest data available, tourism in India has shown a phenomenal growth in the past decade contributing 6.8% to India's GDP.

Resent introduction of visa on arrival to visitors from 44 countries across the globe with the aim to extend it to another 106, launching of mobile app for list of tour operators and classifieds hotels, e-management of tourism and hospitality institute are some of the steps in the direction of promoting tourism.

The Objectives of this paper are to review the tourism policy in India and understand the role of institutions and interventions in the implementation of tourism policy in Karnataka.

The Sixth five year plan (1980-85) was a major landmark in the history of Indian Tourism. The first ever 'Tourism Policy' of the country was announced during 1982 which specified the development objectives and provided an action plan based on 'Travel Circuit' concept to maximize the benefits of tourism. A National Action Plan 1992 was announced. The objectives set out were targeted at the inadequacies of the system and incorporate all those areas which have been identified as the weakness of India's tourism development policy. In 2002, the action plan was finally translated into a tourism policy and it officially became a joint central-state government concern. The policy document projected tourism as an engine of growth. It suggested that tourism not only generates government revenue, foreign currency, but also provides an optimal use of India's scarce resources, sustainable development, high quality employment especially to youngsters, and finally peace and understanding, national unity. Karnataka government identified tourism sector as one of the key sectors propelling economic growth. Karnataka has been ranked as the 4th preferred

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destination among domestic tourists and 3rd preferred destination for investments in the tourism sector. Several innovative methods are adopted for improving the tourism sector in India. There is a paradigm shift in the tourism policy from the early objective of attracting tourists to promoting is as an engine of economic development through employment and revenue generation to eco-tourism which focuses on promoting environmental friendly tourism. Though several policies are made, the integration with other policies is not yet achieved.

**Keywords:** Tourism Policy Reviews and Implications

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian tourism sector is one of the largest service industries in the country in terms of its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and foreign exchange earnings (FEE) as well as for providing employment to millions. As per the latest data available, tourism in India has shown a phenomenal growth in the past decade contributing 6.8% to India's GDP.

Tourism industry in any country flourishes on the basis of competitiveness of facilities like infrastructure, accommodation, transport and recreation and that is where the role of various stake holders right from central and state government to entrepreneurs and society as a whole comes into play.

Tourism policy can be defined as a set of regulations, guidelines, and directives with the object of promoting and developing tourism. The country should adopt an economic policy which will take into all the sector of economy which has direct or indirect impact on developing economy. The policy should spell out national goals and objectives. It is also helps to develop a suitable strategy for brining sustainable development of tourism.

The Sixth five year plan (1980-85) was a major landmark in the history of Indian Tourism. The first ever 'Tourism Policy' of the country was announced during 1982 which specified the development objectives and provided an action plan based on 'Travel Circuit' concept to maximize the benefits of tourism.

The government polices provide a framework to promote the sector and facilitate growth. They help put in place a set of guidelines and strategies to boost inflow of tourists. They also provide access to resources and opportunities for employment. Vision of the current government is to achieve 1 % of ITA (International Tourist Arrivals) by the end of 2016-17.

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# 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ramakrishna (2012) studied Karnataka tourism policy 2009-2014. The analysis showed that tourism and travel industry play a prominent role in uplifting socio—economic condition of the dependents on tourism. According to the study state government is required to review existing tourism policy periodically in tune with the national tourism policy. India has stepped up efforts to keep new tourism policy with an aim to protect the interests of stakeholders and strived to become more pro-poor. This study was based on secondary data. The data related to foreign and domestic tourist arrivals and the foreign exchange earnings (FEE) have been collected from, the official sources. The Karnataka new tourism policy 2009-2014 states that, the policy is more pro-poor and in favor of the stakeholders. The major suggestions included strengthening the home stay policy, supporting the artisans to showcase the rural tourism, etc.

Goodwin (2006) presented a brief review and critique of current ways of measuring and reporting the economic impact of tourism on national economies in the context of changing policy environment of tourism and development. As the policy focus shifts towards the local development, traditional indicators are less useful to measure the impacts of tourism on local economies and poverty reduction in the developing world. International visitor arrivals, spending figures, tourism satellite accounts and multipliers are unable to measure the impact of tourism on local economic development in general and poverty reduction in particular. This paper concludes with some suggestions about how data collecting methodologies can be used to create a repository of comparable data.

#### 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1. To review the tourism policy in India.
- 2. To understand the institution and intervention in the implementation of tourism policy in Karnataka.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

In the present study, the following descriptive research methods are described in detail. This paper starts with a brief description of the history of tourism and tourism policy development in India and Karnataka which concludes with a summary of the most important objectives of the latest (2015) policy.

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## 5. REVIEW OF TOURISM POLICY IN INDIA

Starting with the National Tourism Policy 1982 several policies are introduced at the national level to address the issues of tourism sector. The following is a brief review of these policies.

## 5.1 The National Tourism Policy 1982

In November 1982, a tourism policy was formulated and presented to the Parliament. The objective of the policy was to develop tourism so that it.

- a. Becomes a unifying force nationally and internationally fostering a better understanding.
- b. Helps preserving Indian heritage and culture and projecting the same to the world.
- c. Brings socio-economic benefits in terms of employment, income, revenue generation and foreign exchange etc.
- d. Offers opportunities to the youth of the country, not only for employment but also for taking up activities for nation-building and character-building like sports, adventure activities etc.

The national policy highlighted the need for coordination and appropriately referred to tourism as a 'common endeavour'. A national committee on tourism was constituted and it submitted its report in 1988. The report covered all the important issues relating to the role of tourism, the need for infrastructure and development etc. Some of the crucial recommendations in the report were.

- 1. The need for re-arranging the existing organizational structure of the Department of Tourism and the need for an apex body called the National Tourism Board.
- 2. The setting up of a standing committee of Tourism Ministers for an integrated approach to tourism development and also to effectively associate the state governments.
- 3. To ensure implementation of the recommendations, a National Policy needs to be evolved, supported by comprehensive legislation.
- 4. Tourism needs to be integrated into overall plans of the country and into the area development plans. These recommendations are fundamental to any substantial tourism development strategy for the country.

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## 5.2 The New Tourism Policy (2002)

Based on the recommendations of the national committee on tourism an action plan was prepared. However, only in 2002, the action plan was finally translated into a tourism policy and it officially became a joint central-state government concern. The policy document attempted to establish tourism as a great contributor to national development and its role as an engine of growth. It suggested that tourism not only generates government revenue, foreign currency, but also provides an optimal use of India's scarce resources, sustainable development, high quality employment especially to youngsters, and finally peace and understanding towards national unity.

The policy aimed at increasing the number of domestic and international tourists. In order to do this, the government proposed to diversify the Indian tourism products and substantially improve the quality of tourism infrastructure, marketing, visa arrangements and air connectivity. Government of India launched an international marketing campaign named as Incredible India to promote tourism in India to global audience in 2002. The Incredible India campaign projected India as an attractive tourist destination by showcasing different aspects of Indian culture and history like yoga, spirituality, etc. The campaign was conducted globally and received appreciation from tourism industry observers and travelers. However, the campaign was substantially criticized from some quarters. Some experts criticized it on its failure to cover several aspects of India which could have been attractive to the average tourist.

The policy document seeks to enhance employment potential within the tourism sector. It also contemplated to foster economic integration through developing linkages with other sectors of the economy. The policy proposes to

- a. Positioning tourism as a major engine of economic growth.
- b. Harness the direct and the multiplier effects of tourism for employment generation, economic development and stimulating rural tourism.
- c. Focus domestic tourism as a major drive of tourism growth.
- d. Position India as a global brand to take advantage of the booming global brand and global travel trade and the vast untapped potential of India as a destination.
- e. Acknowledge the critical role played by private sector with government working as a facilitator and catalyst.

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- f. Increase of train facilities in tourism destinations.
- g. Create and develop integrated tourism circuits based on India's unique civilization, heritage and culture in partnership with states, private sector and other agencies.
- h. Ensure that the tourists to India get physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched, spiritually elevated and "feel India from within".

The policy document takes into consideration seven key areas that provide the thrust to tourism development. These are

- 1. Swagat (Welcome)
- 2. Soochana (Information)
- 3. Suvidha (facilitation)
- 4. Suraksha (Safety)
- 5. Sahyog (Cooperation)
- 6. Samrachana (Infrastructure development)
- 7. Safai (Cleanliness)

The tourism industry, unlike many other industries, consists of several service providers. These service providers are in private sector. Public Sector institutions like department of tourism either at the centre or at the state are involved in the planning and development of tourism process. The participation of different private and public sector agencies makes tourism industry a complex phenomenon. It requires a strong cooperation between these two sectors to develop the tourism and achieve the overall objectives.

Another significant campaign launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2009 was 'Atithi Devo Bhava' targeting the local population to educate them regarding good behaviour and etiquettes while dealing with foreign tourists. 'Atithi Devo Bhava' aimed at creating awareness about the effects of tourism and sensitizing the local population about preservation of India's heritage, culture, cleanliness and hospitality. It also attempted to reinstill a sense of responsibility towards tourists and reinforce the confidence of foreign tourists towards India as a preferred holiday destination. The concept was designed to complement the 'Incredible India' Campaign.

### 5.3 The National Tourism Policy (2015)

Subsequent to the national tourism policy 2002, several initiatives were made to promote tourism with a concentration on holistic approach. Due to these efforts the tourist arrivals

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of both foreign and domestic type increased considerably. Foreign tourist arrivals grew at a rate of 10.6% in 2014 and foreign exchange earnings increased by 11.5%. With the experience gained after introduction of new campaigns a new National Tourism Policy (2015) was announced. The new policy seeks to take advantage of new developments after the introduction of liberalization policies (Government of India Ministry of tourism, 2015). The objectives are:

- a. Increase India's share in world tourist arrivals from the present 0.68% to 1% by 2020 and increase to 2% by 2025.
- b. Position Tourism as a priority on the National political and economic agenda.
- c. Widen understanding of the benefits of the tourism sector within the wider governmental framework, especially with Government departments critical to Tourism success.
- d. Evolve a framework for tourism development, which is Government-led, private sector driven and community welfare oriented.
- e. Foster and develop a coordination mechanism between the Centre and the States / UTs and between various Ministries / Departments and create a framework for engaging with local bodies, to drive the National Tourism Agenda.
- f. Focus on the benefits of tourism for local communities and the natural and cultural environments.
- g. Directly address seasonality, creating year-round offerings for continuous tourism economic activity.
- h. Create a safe, secure, clean, hygienic and inviting environment for tourists.
- i. Innovation into integrated tourist circuits and destinations based on India's unique civilization, heritage, and culture in partnership with States / UTs, private sector and other agencies, thus spreading the reach and impacts of tourism beyond gateway cities, further across the nation and deeper into communities.
- j. Position India as a global brand and preferred tourism destination in overseas markets.
- k. Focus on domestic tourism as a major driver of tourism growth.
- I. Focus on development and promotion of the North East Region and the state of Jammu & Kashmir.

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- m. Develop quality human resources in the tourism and hospitality sectors across the spectrum of vocational to professional skills development and opportunity creation.
- n. Create an enabling environment for investment in tourism and tourism-related infrastructure.

# **5.4** Tourism Policy Initiatives

To operationalize the policies several programmes were introduced to promote tourism sector. Some of them are

- a) SWADESH DARSHAN was introduced for integrated development of theme based circuit. The five circuits initially identified under SWADEH DARSHAN were North east circuit, Coastal circuit, Himalayan circuit and Krishna circuit. Three projects, one each in North east, Buddhist and Coastal circuits were sanctioned in 2014-15.
- b) National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) for improvements and beatification of pilgrimage sites of all faiths was introduced in 2014-15. Twelve cities were initially identified under PRASAD. They are Varanasi, Amristar, Ajmer, Mathura, Gaya, Kanchipuram, Velankanni, Dwarka, Puri, Amaravathi, Kedarnath and Kamakhya. Apart from this, four projects, one each for Gaya and Puri and two for Mathura were sanctioned under PRASAD in 2014-15. This includes sanction of Rs. 50 crores for the project for infrastructure development at Puri and for the Nabakalevara ceremony at Puri.
- c) Upgradation of 24 railway stations of tourist importance on cost sharing basis (50:50) with ministry of railways at a total cost of Rs. 240 crores was undertaken.
- d) Introduction of E-Initiative which includes mobile applications for approved tour operators, travel agents and classified hotels, online tracking of hotel classification application, on line approval of travel trade services providers, E-management of tourism and hospitality institutes and programmes including Hunar Se Rozgar tak, Launch of E-book of Ministry of Tourism etc.
- e) The introduction of electronic authorization enabled tourist visa on arrivals which is now re-named as e- tourist visa was introduced to facilitate the arrival of foreign tourists.

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## **6. KARNATAKA STATE TOURISM POLICIES**

Tourism sector is placed in the concurrent list. Therefore both central and state governments are authorized to make policies addressing tourism sector. A brief review of the policies introduced in Karnataka is presented below.

- 1. Karnataka Tourism policy 2002-2007
- 2. Karnataka Tourism policy 2009-2014
- 3. Karnataka Tourism policy 2014-2019

#### 6.1 Karnataka Tourism policy (2002-2007)

It is the first comprehensive tourism policy introduced by the Government of Karnataka to provide a boost to the tourism sector. The vision statement of the policy states "to be among the pre-eminent tourist destinations in Asia, with market leadership and dominance in the following segments: Upscale tourism (both national and international), heritage tourism, ecotourism, conventions and conferences, exhibitions, Cruises - Theme Parks and to be on par with the best in the world; to excel in every facet of the tourism industry; to emerge as a benchmark for other destinations" (Karnataka Tourism Policy, 2003).

According to the policy document the priorities for the State Government Departments and concessions and incentives to the private sector with a view to enhance tourism potential and attract more private investment into the tourism sector in the state are

- Formation of a State Tourism Council headed by the Chief Minister, with all stakeholders represented in it, to take decisions on policy and strategy.
- Formation of a State Level Co-ordination Committee under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary with Secretaries of tourism-related departments as members, for effective implementation of the Tourism Policy.
- Reactivation of District Tourism Councils headed by the Deputy Commissioner with General Manager, District Industries Centre and the Assistant Director of tourism assisting the council.
- Preparations of comprehensive development plans for the development of major tourist spots in a phased manner by the Department of Tourism and also assign activities which have to be taken up by the Government as well as by the private sector.

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- In the first phase, the Department of Tourism shall prepare a comprehensive development plan for the following key destinations: Nandi Hills, Brindavan Gardens, Kemmannagundi, Jog Falls, Badami, Aihole, Pattadakal, Belur, Halebid, Shravanabelagola, Bijapur, Hampi, Gokarna, Karwar, Mysuru, Hesaraghatta, Agumbe and Nehruloka.
- The Department of Tourism shall prepare and implement a comprehensive infrastructural plan for providing connectivity and common facilities at major tourist destinations in the State with an initial out lay of Rs. 125 crores.
- The funds for this plan are to be availed from financial institutions after getting the
  projects prepared and vetted by professionals and agencies. The major components
  of this infrastructural plan are air connectivity, road, public and civic amenities,
  preparation of comprehensive plan and acquisition of land.

## **Incentives for the Participation of Private Sector**

The policy made provisions for the encouragement of private sector participation in all tourism-related activities in the state. The following incentives and concessions are offered in the policy period.

- a. Luxury tax to be charged only on room tariff above Rs. 400 and to be charged only on actual tariff collected. A cap of 10% to be placed on it.
- Additional state excise duty of 66% on imported liquor to be reduced to 25% or levied on basic rate.
- c. Motor vehicle tax levied on tourist vehicles plying between States to be rationalized on a reciprocal basis.
- d. 50%/100% stamp duty exemption for investments below/above Rs. 50 crores.
- e. Concessional registration charges of Rs.1 per Rs. 1,000.
- f. Waiver of Conversion Fee. Entry tax exemption during implementation of project for a period of three years.
- g. Entertainment tax exemption of 100% for first three years and 75% for next two years for I-Max theatres only.
- h. Tax on aviation turbine fuel is reduced to 4% and underwriting 50% of tickets of private airlines for an initial period of three years.
- i. Government land will be offered at 50% of its market value to entrepreneurs.

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### 6.2 The Karnataka Tourism Policy (2009-2014)

Karnataka tourism policy 2009-2014 is significantly aligned to the National Tourism Policy 2002 and it aims 'to ensure international, national and regional focus in attracting foreign and domestic tourists in large numbers, for extended stay and higher share of their wallet'. The vision for tourism in Karnataka as enunciated in the policy is to "make tourism Karnataka's principal and largest economic activity, as an employer, revenue generator and engine of growth, by being among the top two tourism destinations in India by 2016-17".

The unique selling proposition of Karnataka tourism is that it is a "Mini Incredible India" in its tourism offerings. It is one state with a spectrum of many tourist interests like heritage, pilgrimage, adventure tourism, coastal resorts, natural attractions etc.

In continuation of previous Tourism Policy (2002-2007) with an inside-out view and a congenial environment for private investors the present Karnataka tourism policy reshapes the same by incorporating an outside-in view to cover larger markets and higher share of the tourist's wallet. This calls for understanding the expectations of the tourists. Accordingly the emerging trends of MICE (Meeting Incentives Conferences and Exhibitions), health tourism, wellness tourism, cruise tourism, adventure tourism, Heli-tourism, Wilderness tourism, etc., were identified.

## **Strategic Objectives of the Policy**

The strategic objectives of the policy according to the Karnataka tourism policy report (2009) published by Department of Tourism Government of Karnataka are

- 1. Create an enabling condition to make Karnataka India's leading tourism destination with focus on the customer (tourist), brand strategy and source marketing.
- 2. Focus on the tourists through segmented customer approach.
- 3. Create a culture of tourism in Karnataka with active involvement of all the relevant stakeholders.
- 4. Disperse growth across the state to spread the economic and community benefits of tourism.
- 5. Tap effectively the full potential of employment, revenue-generation and growth prospects of tourism in Karnataka.

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## **Operational Objectives**

Along with the strategic objectives, the policy also proposed operational objectives. They are

- Create the institutional framework to oversee and execute the policy: including integrated inter-ministerial and inter-departmental mechanisms to realize policy targets and smooth implementation.
- 2. Create Public Private Partnership (PPP) that will drive massive investment into destination creating project as well as into regular projects through appropriate structuring and innovative financing.
- Facilitate the private sector (both international and national) to develop world- class, world-scale projects that will be developing sub-destinations on their own and bring in huge tourist flow.

### **Karnataka Tourism Vision Group (KTVG)**

The Government of Karnataka has set up a Tourism Vision group in October 2013 consisting of eminent citizens and domain specialists to advise the government on the way ahead for the Tourism sector. The Vision group of over 50 individuals met jointly in over 7 sessions during Oct-Dec 2013. The sector heads submitted their suggestions, which are part of this vision group report.

The KTVG focused on a few key areas with an emphasis on what needs to be done and the 'vehicle' to get there — Guiding principles that would act as a compass for any current or future decision regarding the Tourism sector; Governance and Implementation framework; Critical requirements at tourist locations, particularly the major attractions and criteria to determine relative importance of a location / event; Tourist circuits (Heritage, Coastal, Nature / Wild life, Adventure, Culture, Urban, Wellness, Spiritual) and Common themes that cut across the categories (Human resources, Brand, Finance, Policy, Infrastructure, Connectivity, Technology, Communication, etc.).

Government of Karnataka has also suggested setting up of vision Implementation Group to implement the recommendations of the Karnataka Tourism Vision Group. It is expected to work closely with Tourism Promotional and Infrastructure Corporation and tourism stakeholders.

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## **Karnataka Tourism Vision Group Recommendations**

- 1. Over 4 million new jobs can be created over the next decade with an emphasis on sustainable tourism development.
- 2. Generic guiding principles should be followed to achieve the overall Tourism vision.
- 3. We could go beyond our current World Heritage sites in Karnataka.
- 4. Brand Mysuru's charm through a Royal City association and leverage the extended regional attraction for wild life and eco-tourism.
- 5. Culture, Festivals and Heritage tourism has historical roots in Karnataka. They can be run more professionally with advice from knowledgeable resource persons.
- 6. Coastal tourism potential in Karnataka is currently under leveraged.
- 7. Considerable potential for Adventure, Medical and Spiritual tourism in the State.
- 8. Urban tourism around Bangalore to tap into its large visitor base and local population is necessary.
- 9. Branding and HR critical.
- 10. To achieve this, a State Tourism Governance structure under the CM's leadership imperative.

Based on the earlier Tourism policy documents and the vision 2020 document, Karnataka Tourism Master Plan 2010-20 was prepared. Subsequently, 31 detailed district-wise reports about the state potential and action plan for Tourism across Karnataka's districts was made. This exercise was completed in early 2012. Apart from these two, there are reports suggesting specific initiatives – some examples of these were the 'Site Management Plan for Sustainable Conservation and Development of Hoysala Heritage Region, Mysuru tourism promotion plan which also includes inner city development with a focus on tourist infrastructure.

### 6.3 Karnataka Tourism Policy (2014-2019)

The tourism sector has been identified as one of the key sectors propelling the country's economic growth. Karnataka has been ranked as the 4<sup>th</sup> preferred destination among domestic tourists and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferred destination for investments in the tourism sector. It is critical to focus on increasing domestic and international visitation through a collaborative approach between Government and Industry and enhancing the capacity of the sector to stimulate regional development and prosperity of the community. The thrust areas and

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strategies proposed in the policy attempt to distribute the economic benefits of this industry across a wider cross section of the society.

#### **Vision and Objectives**

The vision statement of the tourism policy 2014-19 is to develop Karnataka as a dynamic, sustainable and most-favoured tourism destination by increasing domestic and international visitations, offering high quality experience to visitors, facilitating and accelerating investments and improving livelihood opportunities at the local level.

It was estimated that the fresh employment possibilities at 4.3 million (based on global norms of 10% employment in the sector), additional revenue potential of Rs. 83,000 crores (through direct and indirect taxes) and the investments of Rs. 73,000 crores with 50% government funding (infrastructure, destination and mobility) is needed for providing a fillip to Tourism in the State by 2024.

To achieve the vision and set the direction for the tourism industry over the next five years, the following objectives are outlined (Karnataka tourism policy report 2014-19(2014), Department of Tourism Government of Karnataka).

### **Objectives**

- 1. Accelerate and facilitate private investments and promote entrepreneurship in the tourism sector.
- 2. Motivate and enthuse entities from different segments of the society with substantial incentives to contribute towards development of the sector.
- 3. Higher growth in visitations and duration of stay of different visitor segments, through improved infrastructure, products and services.
- 4. Improve 'total quality' experience to visitors, from before arrival till after departure, by providing better access to information, greater choice in destinations, compendium of services for eating, shopping, participative safe and hassle-free experience at various travel stages.
- 5. Promote effective inter-departmental coordination to streamline processes and increase sector performance.
- 6. Enhance tourism industry skills, knowledge and professionalism to provide visitors a pleasant experience and promote local employment opportunities.

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## 7. CONCLUSION

Tourism policies have shifted the focus from concentrating only on tourist arrivals to providing integrated services with the help of ICT and also in promoting ecotourism, medical tourism and education tourism etc.

It is important to understand the impact of tourism policies on other sectors before making any changes in the policies.

The existing policies have not looked into the linkages between the tourism policy and other related policies like employment policies, environmental policies etc.

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