

TREND AND PROGRESS OF TOURISM IN INDIA: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: *The importance of tourism in India can by no means be underestimated. It helps the tourists to get use to with the culture, customs and conventions, language and mode of living of the people at destination. The most important benefits of tourism include job creation, foreign currency earnings, infrastructure development, poverty eradication, inequality reduction and balanced regional development. In addition, tourism is critical for increasing world peace. Thus, we have studied the trend and progress of tourism in India over the period spanning from 1995 to 2015. All tourism indicators except total contribution of travel and tourism to employment have been showing an increasing trend in India over the sample period. All these have been possible due to the constructive efforts made by the Centre and State governments over years. The government of India understands the importance of tourism in building a vibrant sustainable economy in the long-run. Thus, from time to time increasing importance has been attached to this service sector. Several plans, policies, projects, and schemes have been launched for the development of tourism sector activities in India. India is therefore, hopeful to accrue the benefits of multiplier effects of tourism in coming days.*

Key Words: *Tourism, India, Trend Analysis, Role of Government*

JEL Classification: *L83, Z32, Z39*

1. INTRODUCTION

In India tourism has become the most vibrant service sector activity and a multi-billion industry over years (Patel, 2012). Tourism has been recognised as the as an engine of economic growth and development. Its role and importance in generating employment opportunities and contributing to national income has well been agreed worldwide (Vethirajan and Nagavalli, 2014). Besides tourism is the significant contributor to the foreign exchange reserves of a country (Fayissa *et al.* 2007; Mishra *et al.* 2011; Mishra

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