

Research Paper



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ADVENTURE TOURISM IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Adventure tourism is a trip that includes at least two of the following three elements: physical activity, natural environment and cultural immersion. Observing the gaining popularity of adventure tourism in India it can be said that in coming year's adventure tourism may contribute major portion total revenue of different states of India. The factor which mostly restrains adventure tourism in India is Poor road condition and connectivity to adventure tour places. There is so much to improve but time is running out as the country is facing increasing competition from other Asian countries. It is hoped at the end that Adventure Tourism market will blossom to its full potent in upcoming time.

KEYWORDS: Adventure tourism, Physical activity, Natural environment, Cultural immersion, restrains, Blossom

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the words thrill, ecstasy, excitement are add to the dictionary to describe unexpected and bone chilling experiences, humans are attracted to do something to gain such an experience. Human's expedition to gain thrilling and exciting experiences leads to innovation of the concept of adventure tourism. Adventure Travel Trade Association defines adventure tourism as a trip that includes at least two of the following three elements: physical activity, natural environment and cultural immersion (Global Report on Adventure Tourism, 2014). Adventure Tourism is growing at a immense rate all over the world, global adventure tourism touched USD 89 million mark in 2013 and the segment had grown by 195% in next two years reaching 263 million mark in 2015 (Global Report on Adventure Tourism, 2014). Along with the rest of the world adventure tourism activities have also significantly increased in India. According to final report submitted to Ministry of Tourism of India by nielsen, estimated 3459414 tourists had visited India for adventure tourism during the year 2015, this figure includes both domestic and foreign tourists. The popular adventure tourism activities taking place in India are Wildlife Safari, Trekking, Cycling, Paragliding, Hiking, House Boat stays, Camping, Canoeing, Kayaking, Sailing, Waterskiing, Rock climbing, White Water Rafting, wind Surfing, Scuba Diving and so on. Observing the gaining popularity of adventure tourism in India it can be said that in coming year's adventure tourism may contribute major portion total revenue of different states of India. To explore this opportunity states need to make proper assessment of supporting facilities, security facilities,

safety measures and most importantly focus on availability of adventure tourism infrastructures at proper places. Jingle bell rings as private agencies recently started to make investments in adventure tourism facilities in different states.

This study is an attempt to understand current status of adventure tourism in India also there will be a brief discussion on popular adventure tour activities taking place different regions of the country. Finally the study will be concluded with identification of factors restraining adventure tourism in the country.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To briefly discuss about status adventure tourism in India.
2. To identify popular adventure tourism activities in India with reference to each region.
3. To identify factors restraining adventure tourism in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

"Adventure Tourism in India" is a descriptive study aiming to discuss about current status of adventure tourism in India and factors impacting adventure tourism of the country. A descriptive study usually endeavours to discuss about state of affairs of a variable or provide knowledge about a topic or situation without any control over it. The discussion is carried in the light of secondary information. Secondary Information means, information which are already published in news papers, magazines, journals or through websites and related with any other study (C.R. Kothari, 2011). For the purpose of the study, secondary information



are collected from various reports of international agencies and reports submitted to the Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India. Data sources are mentioned in details at the end of the study under head references.

Study area: As the title of the study suggest that it is an discussion about adventure tourism in India, hence, the geographical area cover by the study includes the whole country but in brief, in other words, study will give only an overview of adventure tourism activities taking place at different regions of the country.

Tables and Charts: All tables or Charts utilised in the study are prepared with the help of MS Word software.

Mathematical Tools: the only mathematical tool utilised in the study is percentage.

Graph and Diagrams: Graphs and diagrams used in the study are prepared with the help of MS word software.

DISCUSSION

The discussion on adventure tourism in India should be begin with the information about number of foreign adventure tourists visit various destinations, which was 458283 in 2015,

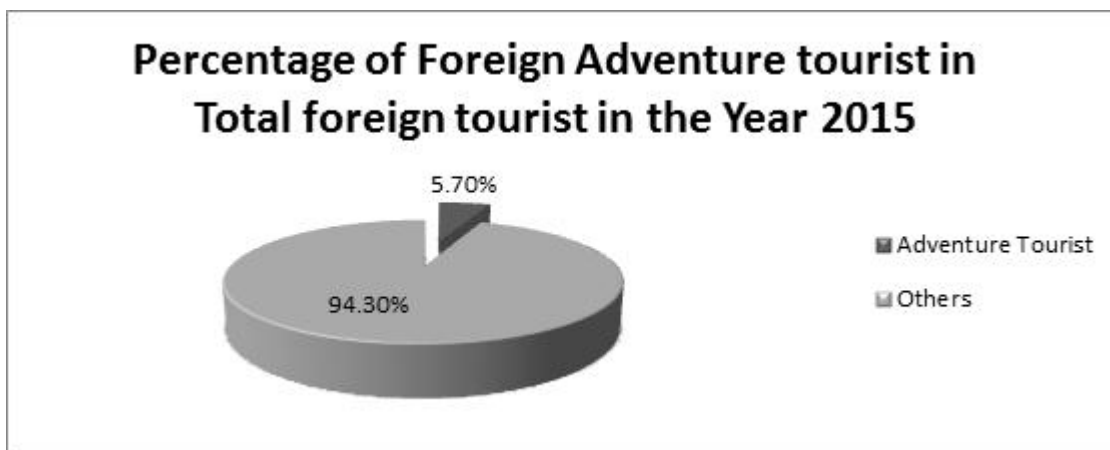
and the number of domestic adventure tourist in the same year were 3001141 as per report submitted to Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (October, 2016) by nielsen. On the other hand, the Total number foreign tourists visiting different spots in the country during the year 2015 were 8030000 (Tourism in India, Wikipedia) therefore, the percentage of adventure tourist from other countries in 2015 out of total foreign tourist was:

$$\frac{\text{Total foreign adventure tourist in 2015}}{\text{Total foreign tourist in 2015}} \times 100 = \frac{458283}{8030000} \times 100 = 5.70\% \text{ (approx)}$$

The foreign exchange earnings of the country from adventure tourism in the year 2015 was Rs 477.235 crore out of total foreign exchange generated from tourism in 2015 which was Rs 1, 35,193 crore (Tourism in India, Wikipedia).

The percentage of foreign adventure tourists in total foreign tourists, who had visited India in 2015 presented in diagram 1.

Diagram 1: Percentage of Foreign Adventure Tourist in Total Foreign Tourist in 2015



From diagram 1 it can be understand that adventure tourism is a niche segment of Indian tourism Industry which includes around 6% (5.70) of the foreign tourist visited India but this figure was from the year 2015 therefore, keeping in mind rate infrastructure development and increase in number of foreign tourists visit in last few years it can be said that above percentage has been gone higher in recent years.

The report submitted by Nielsen to Ministry of Tourism (2016) had sized up markets for adventure tourism in different states, the top 7 states with highest market size are mentioned below along with their total market size in INR (in crore)

1. Uttarakhand- Rs 485.1 crore
2. Himachal Pradesh- Rs 468.9 crore
3. Jammu and Kashmir- Rs 246.6 crore
4. Goa- Rs 107.6 crore
5. Maharashtra- Rs- 93.96 crore
6. Rajasthan- Rs 70.22 crore
7. Kerala- Rs 50.82 crore

Most of the above states with different popular destinations are also mentioned in blogs like *7 Popular Indian Adventure Travel Destinations and Attractions* (Sharell Cook, 2017) and website of Tour My India (Top Destinations for Adventure in India).

Different popular Adventure Tourism activities with reference to four different zones are disclosed with the help of Table 1.

Table 1: Popular Adventure Tourism Activities with Reference to Different Zones.

Zones	States	Activities
North Zone	Jammu & Kashmir	Trekking, Mountaineering, Water Rafting, Motorbike tour, Mountain biking, Camping, Canoeing, hiking, Kayaking, Paragliding, Rock climbing, Yak safari, Horse riding, wildlife, Elephant Safari, Jeep Safari Parasailing, Heli- skiing, Hot air balloons.
	Himachal Pradesh	
	Uttarakhand	
	Rajasthan	
West Zone	Maharashtra	Trekking, Hiking, Camping, Paragliding, Cycling, Parasailing, Bungee jumping, Water Rafting, Rapping, Hot air balloon, Scuba-diving, Bike tour, Rock climbing, Snorkelling, Artificial wall climbing, Sky diving, and Hang Gliding, Wildlife camping, Jeep Safaris, Kayaking, water Sports, Rowing
	Gujarat	
	Madhya Pradesh	
	Goa	
South Zone	Kerala	Wildlife, Rock climbing, Parasailing, Water Sports, Trekking, Hiking, Caving, Camping, Water Skiing and Boating, Cycling, Paragliding, Parasailing, House boat stays, Camping, Rock climbing, canoeing, Kayaking, Sailing, Wind surfing, Scuba diving, Motorbike tour, White water, Rafting, Rowing boats, Water scooter.
	Tamil- Nadu	
	Karnataka	
	Andhra Pradesh	
	Andaman and Nicobar	
North- East Zone	Arunachal Pradesh	Angling, Trekking, Rafting, Rock climbing, Wildlife, Jeep safaris, Boating, Elephant safaris, Motorbike tours, Hot air ballooning and River cruising, Maintaining, Camping and River rafting, Paragliding, cycling, Yak safari, canoeing, parasailing, Hiking, Caving, Hang gliding, Artificial wall climbing, Water skiing, Water zorbing, Snorkelling, Mountain biking, wind surfing.
	Meghalaya	
	Mizoram	
	Tripura	
	Manipur	
	Nagaland	
	Assam	
	Sikkim	

Source: Adventure Tourism Market Study in India. Retrieved from <http://tourism.gov.in>.

Among the adventure activities mentioned above most of are short term (taking less than 3 month). However, some of the activities attract more tourist than others and also tour operators preferred to carry some activities more

frequently due to greater public demand. The activities which have greater public demand with the respective percentage of operation are mentioned below: (activities are divided into three categories i.e. land based, air based & water based)

Land Based

1. Trekking- 88%
2. Mountaineering- 51%
3. Jeep safaris- 47%

Air Based

1. Paragliding- 71 %
2. Parasailing- 35%
3. Hot air Ballooning- 18%

Water Based

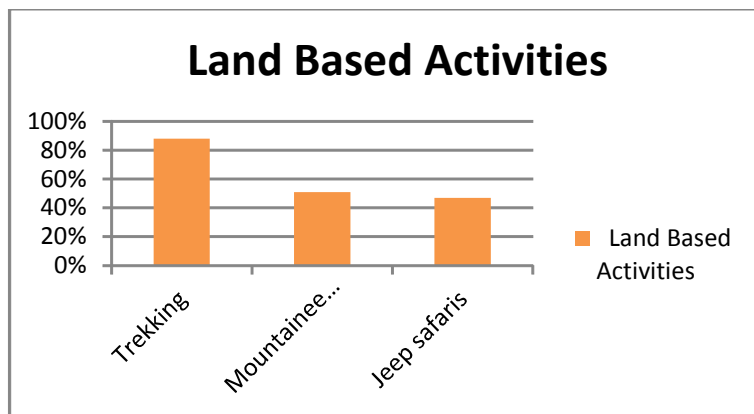
1. Water rafting- 89%
2. Kayaking- 29%
3. Scuba Diving-15%
4. Boat Safaries-15%

Note: Above percentages are overlapping because same tourist may go for more than one activity.

Source: Adventure Tourism Market Study in India. Retrieved from <http://tourism.gov.in>.

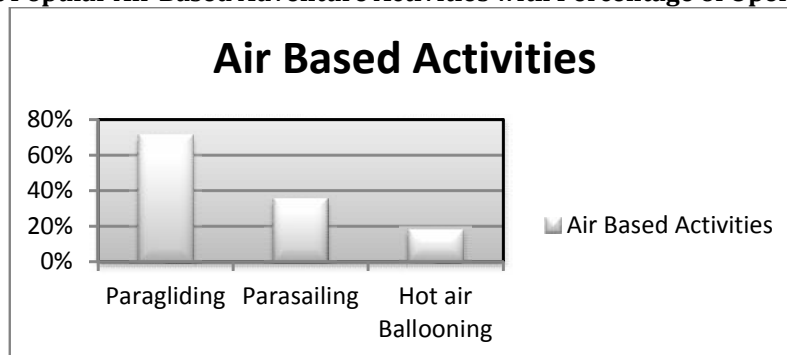
The aforesaid data are presented with the help of following graphs

Graph 1: Most Popular Land Based Adventure Activities with Percentage of Operation by Agencies.



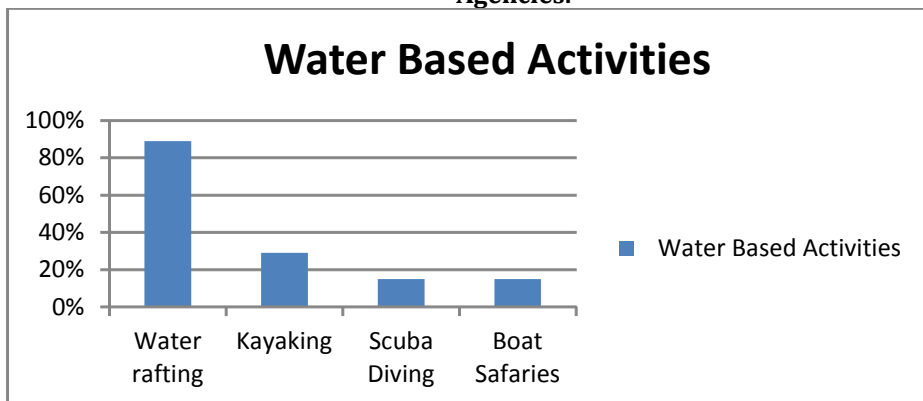
Source: Adventure Tourism Market Study in India. Retrieved from <http://tourism.gov.in>

Graph 2: Most Popular Air Based Adventure Activities with Percentage of Operation by Agencies



Source: Adventure Tourism Market Study in India. Retrieved from <http://tourism.gov.in>

Graph 3: Most Popular Water Based Adventure Activities with Percentage of Operation by Agencies.



Source: Adventure Tourism Market Study in India. Retrieved from <http://tourism.gov.in>

Although adventure tourism is gaining popularity in India there are many factors restraining the pace of growth of adventure tourism in the country, again, these factors varies from region to region and state to state which are presented with the help of a table 2.

Table 2: Factors Restraining Adventure Tourism Activities in Different Zones & States

Zones	States	Restraining Factors
North Zones	Jammu & Kashmir	Lack of standard road connectivity, limited accessibility to restricted area, poor medical facility, shortage of toilet and public water facility. Poor accessibility due to unimproved road conditions. Shortage of tour operators and guide, road conditions to be improved to tourist places. Concrete road in Ranthambore park creating problem instead of which a sandy approach may be better.
	Himachal Pradesh	
	Uttarakhand	
	Rajasthan	
West Zone	Maharashtra	Customer awareness about safety and risk assessment, availability of rescue teams at remote areas. Lack of proper medical facilities near wild life parks.
	Madhya Pradesh	
South Zone	Kerala	Poor security measures, below standard road connectivity to northern beaches, conveyance facilities are not adequate to reach the beach centres.
North East Zone	Arunachal Pradesh	Lack of clean water, no medical camps, complex and slow procedure for receiving permits. Poor connectivity and network of roads, non availability of train guides. Poor connectivity and network of roads, non availability of train guides. Permission for mountaineering in skim should be granted for the peaks which are above 7000 metre, shortage toilet and drinking water facility, permit for trek to Green Lake in Gantak should be made available by local authority i.e. Sikkim Tourism Board.
	Meghalaya	
	Mizoram	
	Sikkim	

Source: Adventure Tourism Market Study in India. Retrieved from <http://tourism.gov.in>.

Note: only vital problems are mentioned in the table apart from these there may some other local factors.

The discussion on adventure tourism in India is concluded here, the findings of the discussion will be put forwarded under the head Findings in the coming section.

FINDINGS

From the discussion and facts presented in previous section, the following information become known about Adventure Tourism in India

1. From the data about number of foreign and domestic adventure tourist visiting in 2015 India i.e. 458283 and 3001141 respectively and from their ration i.e. nearly 15:100, which represents only 6% (approx) of total foreign tourist visiting India in 2015, it can be said that gap between foreign and domestic adventure tourist is significant despite of having number of adventure tourist destinations in different states, this may happen due to weak marketing strategy in relation to the segment outside India.
2. Foreign exchange generated from Adventure tourism in 2015 is also insignificant as compared to total amount of foreign exchange earn from Tourism in 2015 and only represent 0.35% of the earnings although estimated market size of Adventure

Tourism in most potent 7 states of India cross over Rs 1520 crore which also indicate that proper focus had not been given to this segment.

3. When we look at percentages of most popular tourist activities with their respective operating percentages particularly land based activities tourist prefer physical challenges because mountaineering (88%) and trekking (51%) needs physical hard work, again, jeep safaris (47%) may be mostly preferred by mature and tourist travelling with their families.
4. Similar to popular land based activities, water based activities also involve physical work and thrill particularly, water rafting (89%), kayaking (29%) and scuba diving (15%) therefore, it can said that adventure tourist like physical challenge, thrill and they are willing to bear a certain amount of risk, hence, the restricted places for Adventure Tourism which are free from external threat like terrorism and not identified as sensitive boarder areas should be open up for Adventure Tourism.
5. The factor which mostly restrains adventure tourism in India is Poor road condition and connectivity to adventure tour places as disclose

by Table 2, this problem is almost common for each region, once again pointing at poor state of infrastructure of the country. Apart from poor roads, lack of medical, toilet and clean water facilities are also common in case of hilly states. In west zone Maharashtra is facing the problem of customer awareness about safety and risk assessment, in south zone security measures in beaches is a concern. In north eastern states, complexity in issue of permits is pushing back adventure tourism activities. The discussion under this point makes it clear that most of the problems are infrastructure related and can be solved with improvement of infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

Adventure is a need of monotonous life; people seeking adventure in India are the guest, customer and visitors of the culture of the country, therefore, it is the responsibility of people, tour agents and government of the country to provide best possible services to them. There is so much to improve but time is running out as the country is facing increasing competition from other Asian countries. It is hoped at the end that Adventure Tourism market will blossom to its full potent in upcoming years.

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