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Women's participation in Tourism industry: An overview

Lakshmi S.

lakshmi.shastri2011@gmail.com

Seshadripuram Academy of Business Studies, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Dr. Padmapriya S.

padma@claretcollege.edu.in

St. Claret College, Bengaluru, Karnataka

ABSTRACT

In India, Women are termed as "Aadhi awadi" that means the half population of India but by the data of census the current Sex Ratio of India in 2015 is 943 Females/1000 Males. At the present scenario apart from gender discriminations, women have touched the new heights of success in every sector by their capabilities so Govt. of India has made many efforts of women employment for improve their financial and social status by safe working in every sector as government and private. Since the tourism industry contributes average of the country's GDP was 5.8 % and 8.3 % of total employment (ILO 2009). India is expected to be the second fastest growing (8.8%) nation in the world, over the period 2005-2015, tourism industry is one of the major employer of women, offers various job opportunities for independent income generating activities and seems to be a particularly important sector for women (46 % of the workforce are women) as their percentages of employment in most countries are higher than in the workforce in general (34 - 40 % are women, ILO data). One of the service sectors is 'Tourism', the fast-upcoming Service Industry on the economic scenario of the world and women are feeling as the "face" and "Brand image" of the industry. Here by this paper an attempt has been made to discuss the recent trends in tourism sector and to highlight the opportunity to work for women in this sector with special reference to India.

Keywords— Aadhi awadi, Sex ratio, Travel and tourism industry, GDP, Brand image

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, travel and tourism is the largest service industry in India with a contribution of 6.23% to national GDP and providing 8.78% of the total employment in the year 2011. On an average 53 more than 5 million foreign tourist arrivals and 562 million domestic tourists' visits are witnessed by India annually. According to the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index (TTCI) ranking, 2011, India is ranked 68th among the world's 139 most attractive destinations and scores very high on natural resources (ranked 8th) and cultural resources (24th); with 30 world heritage sites and strong creative industries in the country. India's air transport network is ranked 39th, the ground transport infrastructure however remains underdeveloped (ranked 43rd). India is ranked first with regard to tourism air attendance. The promotional campaigns and marketing strategies to attract tourists remain average (ranked 53rd). The World Economic Forum study states that India also benefits from excellent price competitiveness, ranked 6th overall, with low ticket- taxes and airport charges along with low prices in the economy as a whole. So in this scenario Indian tourism industry has become a profitable sector for women's employment.

Travel and tourism seem to be a particularly important sector for women (46 % of the workforce are women) as their percentages of employment in most countries are higher than in the workforce in general (34 - 40 % are women, ILO data). The numbers of women and their percentage of their workforce in tourism vary greatly between countries from 2% to up to over 80%. Though there were few obvious regional trends it would appear that in those countries where tourism is a more developed industry, women generally account for around 50% of the workforce (1).

2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study about the women participation in the tourism industry.
- To examine the factors encouraging for growth of women in the tourism industry.
- To analyze the opportunity and limitations for working of women in tourism in India.

This study is based on personal interviews and secondary sources of data by government reports, internet sources, review of some selected research articles etc.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1 Tourism Sector in India

Tourism and the Hospitality industry is known to be one of the largest segments of the services sector in India. According to the Ministry of External affairs, Govt. of India, not only is tourism known to be the third largest foreign exchange earner, it is also a key growth driver. Its contribution towards gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow at 7.8% per annum during the period 2013-2023. According to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) tourism earnings in India rose by 5.1% in 2013 and a climb to 8.2% is anticipated by the end of 2014(2).

Women's Employment status in Tourism sector According to the WTTC 2013 Economic Impact Report, Travel and Tourism directly supported over 101 million jobs, representing 3.4% of total employment. Including jobs indirectly supported by the industry, Travel and Tourism supports 1 out of 11 jobs in the world, in the industry forecast by 2023.

Travel and Tourism provides unique work opportunities for females. In 2010 the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and UN Women published a Global Report on Women in Tourism. This developed a series of indicators to monitor the role of women in tourism in developing regions. Closer to that of men than in other sectors and that Travel and Tourism provides opportunities for women as employers and for self-employed work (3).

In India, for the development of women participation in industry the Government has given much effort for women employment to improve their social and economic status and overcoming in sex discriminations since earlier times. Former Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had said "You can tell the condition of the nation by looking at the status of women." This statement alone signifies the importance of women's role in the cultural, social and economic development of any Nation.

Since the travel and tourism industry is the fastest growing industry in India for foreign exchange earnings and generating millions of jobs every year. In this context this industry is one of the major employers of women, offers various job opportunities for independent income generating activities.

For encouraging the women's participation in tourism activity, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) which has taken the theme "Tourism opens doors for women" for its celebration of the World Tourism Day on 27th September 2007, recognized that the women, with their presence in this sector, have contributed to the cause and betterment of tourism in their own unique way. One traditionally feels the presence of a woman in Tourism sector – as Air Hostess in Flights. In early Seventies, when the Tourism Industry was in a budding Stage, it was considered that only a few areas are suitable for women in this Industry. But to-day, she is everywhere from Ministers for Tourism in Several States, Bureaucrats in Ministries of Tourism in the Governments, Chairpersons and Managing Directors, managing big Hotels, marketing Aviation business, managing Travel and Visa Services, planning executing Holiday packages etc. It is amazing to note that several Indian women are heading key positions in various Tourism sectors in other countries also (4).

3.2 Why tourism sector benefits for women:

The literature on tourism and women highlights some of the benefits of tourism for women are:

- Tourism has a wide employment multiplier-effect, low barriers to entry, and is more likely to employ women and minority groups than other industries.
- Tourism home-grown entrepreneurship opportunities in handicrafts, food products, tour guiding, and many other areas.
- Tourism offers part-time and shift work that can be helpful to women with household responsibilities.
- Tourism development can help improve infrastructure for resident communities. Improving roads, water supply, health facilities, electricity, and communications can make a major difference to the lives of the poor, particularly women. Tourism, when carefully managed, is sustainable and can support conservation measures, raise incomes, and provide employment without denuding the country of its resource base(5).

3.3 Skills responsible for growth of women employee in tourism

In India, women representing as a brand image of service sector due to their pleasing nature of working. The marketing of tourism, aviation and hospitality services, women are the 'face and brand' of the sector, being the most widely-used objects in tourism promotion after natural beauty and cultural heritage. Women have been depicted as pleasure providers their images often exoticised, patronising and misleading.

The certain Skills which are responsible for the growth of women in tourism industry are:

- Social, sensitive and beautiful personality.
- Dressing sense and attractiveness.
- Adjustable and co-operative in nature
- Responsive and hardworking.
- Customer handling and caring.
- Strong communication skills etc.

4. CONCLUSION

The review of literature in this chapter has widened the horizon of understanding of the themes related to the study of women's participation in travel and tourism sector. Tourism provides significant opportunities for women's advancement through formal, informal, and supply-chain employment (UNWTO 2010). Women in tourism industry needs to be tackled not only the name of empowerment but also by building social protection mechanism like insurance, safety of women at workplace, gender justice and

except this all the drawback issues discussed in the paper. Tourism industry has also demonstrated its potential for creating jobs and encouraging income- generating activities to benefit local communities in destination areas. Women have entered into the tourism industry at different levels. Even the Govt. of India is also encouraging the involvement of women in more numbers to attract women tourists from foreign countries as well as from other parts of the country. The Govt. of India has been taking many measures to provide a safe and comfortable touring to national and international tourists.

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