
Augmentation of Tourism and Hospitality Sector in India

Ankit Sharma

Student

St. Joseph's Degree and PG College, Hyderabad

Abstract: *Tourism is a practice of travelling for recreational or leisure purpose. It has become a popular global leisure activity. It is a short term and temporary movement of people. It provides a source of income for the country. It includes “travel” and “stay” in the place outside the usual environment. Hospitality is the relationship between a guest and a host. Hospitality is the act or practice of being hospitable. Hospitality reflects courtesy and respect to the guest. It is the business of providing catering, lodging and entertainment service and welcoming, receiving, hosting, or entertaining guests. Tourism and hospitality industry are related to each other. Tourism has created new waves on the world horizon. It has made the world a truly global village. Tourism industry has contributed immensely to the Indian economy. Tourism in India has seen exponential growth in the recent years. Indian tourism industry has acquired a significant place all over the world. The study will probe at the growth and challenges faced by this sector in India. Special focus has been given on the ways in which this sector can see a growth in the coming years. The contribution of this study is to widen the debate surrounding the role of tourism and hospitality in the development of the economy.*

Key words: *Tourism, Hospitality, Employment, Skills.*

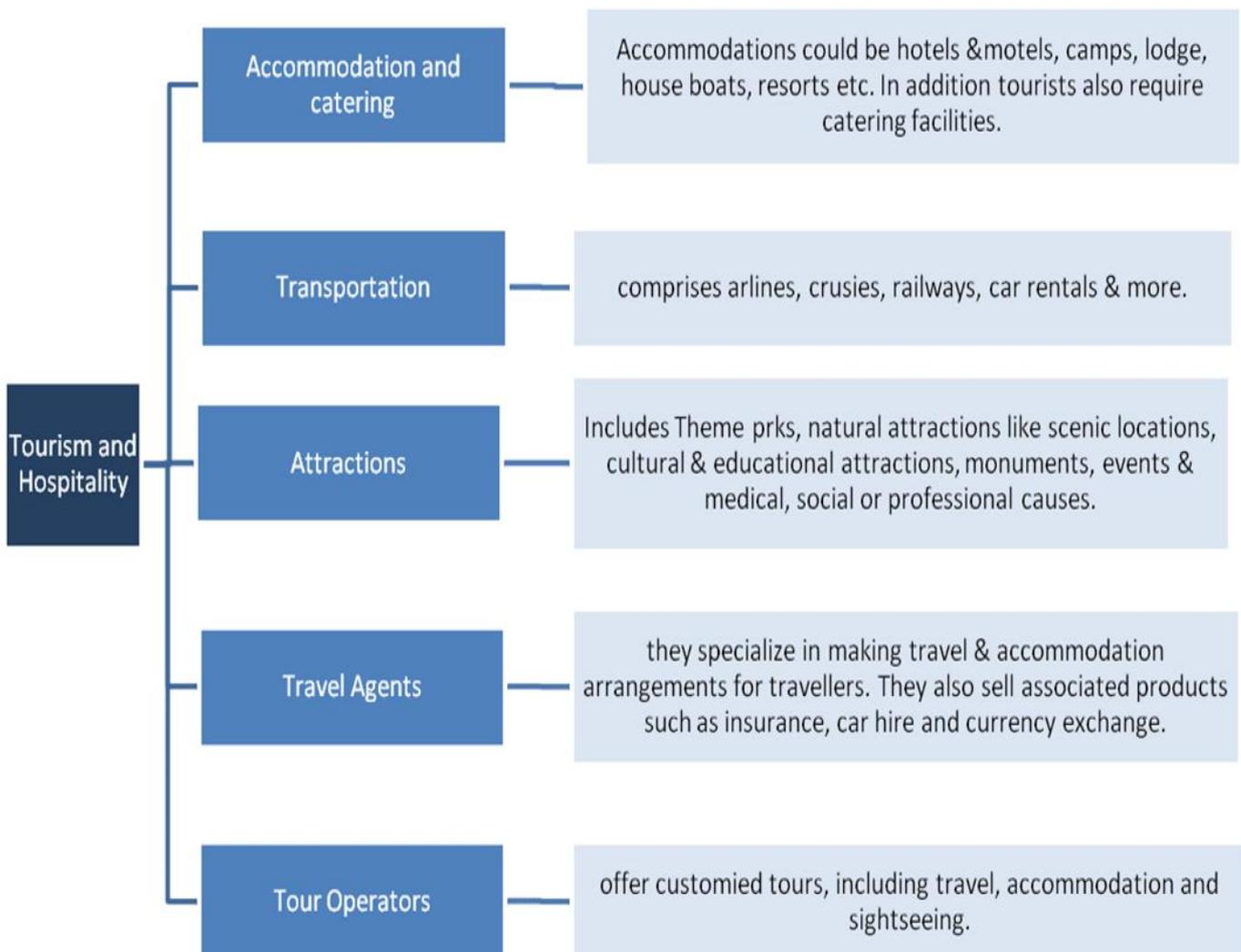
INTRODUCTION:

Tourism is one of the main economic engines for nations with total contribution of 9.5% to global GDP and 8.9% of total employment in 2013. Tourism can only flourish if the industry can employ qualified staff or sustainable workforce which is the heart for excellent and prompt service delivery system. Tourism and hospitality creates diversified employment opportunities in different sectors like accommodation, food and beverage establishments, transportation services, travel agencies, tour operation companies, natural and cultural attractions sites. The challenges are poor pay and working conditions, sexual harassment, discrimination, unequal treatment, low education and training, undemocratic and rigid corporate culture, seasonality and political instability which drastically reduce the number of visitors which in turn brings high employees' turn over. Concerned stakeholders including, academicians, policy makers and business owners of tourism and hospitality shall take actions to bring sustainable work force for the development tourism and hospitality sectors. Tourism and hospitality industries create many employment opportunities in different areas like accommodations, transportation, attractions sites. Therefore, the availability of skilled and trained manpower is a crucial element in the success of any tourism development plan or programme, hence employees is a sine qua non of tourism industry. However, the constraints of employment in tourism industry are unstable employment, low job status, long antisocial working hours and low pay. The immediate and most obvious consequences of such a situation is the difficulty of recruiting suitable staff and high staff turnover, these are costly to the success of the industry.

Indeed, less due attentions have been given to employees working in tourism and hospitality sectors. However, staffs are the heart for excellent and prompt service delivery system. Thus, such staffs are arguably the most indispensable assets of the organization. The relationship between human resources and tourism can be expressed in two main aspects. First, tourism can only flourish if the industry can employ an adequate supply of good quality staff or sustainable workforce. The other issue is that the way in which staffs are treated by both managers and customers and vice versa should be in line with social equality and justice. Equally important, the quality of tourists' experiences and images in a destination is highly depending on employees' professionalism. Therefore, this review paper is aimed to give summarized information on the issues of employment opportunities and challenges the tourism and hospitality industry face in India.

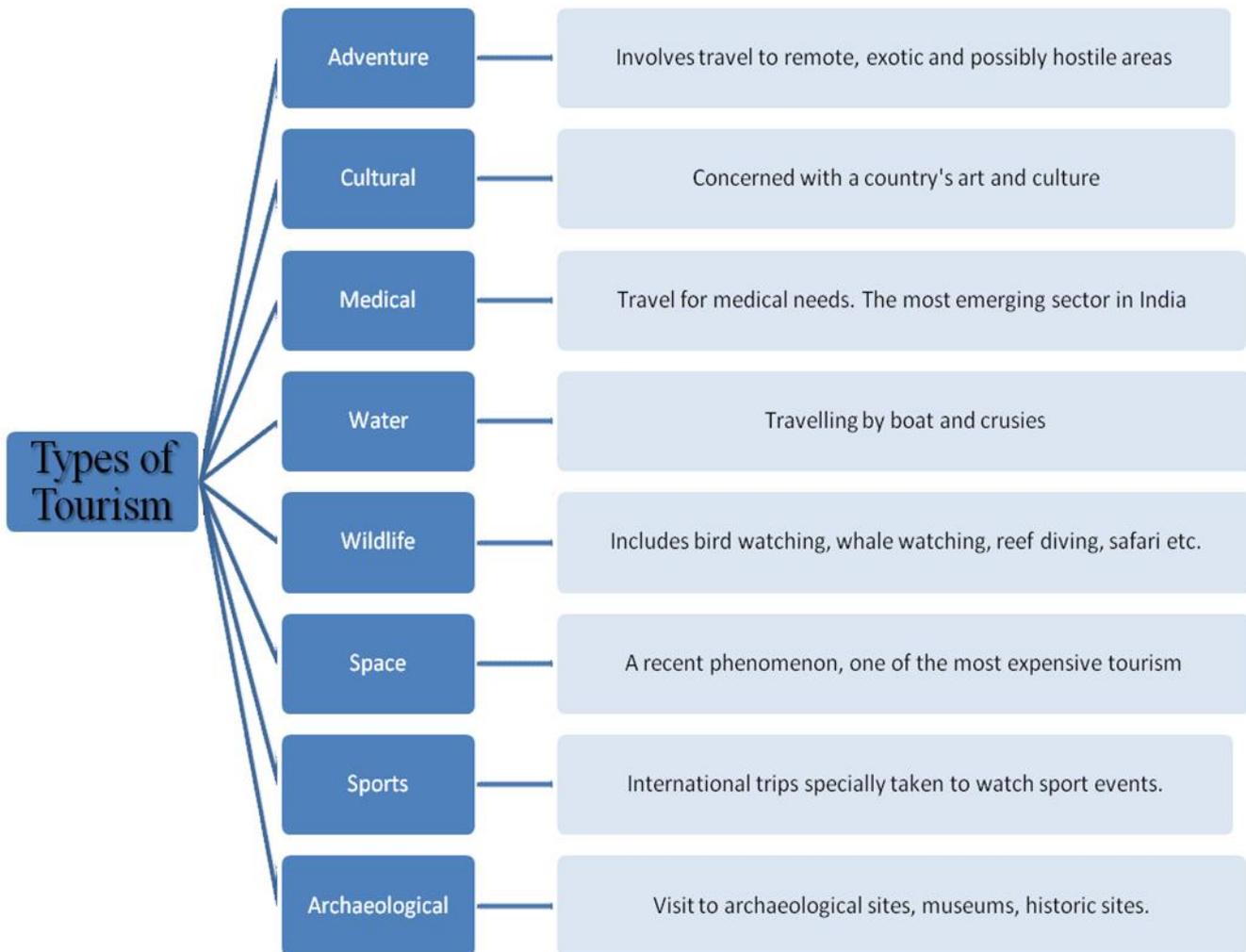
In this research, the findings of different studies related to opportunities and challenges of tourism and hospitality sectors were reviewed that address the question: what are the challenges in tourism and hospitality? And what are the employment opportunities available for the tourism and hospitality sectors? Academic articles, grey literature, and media sources were gathered in a comprehensive fashion in order to answer this question. The present study is based on the secondary data published by various agencies and organizations. The study makes use of data and information provided by, UNWTO, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Newspapers, Magazines, Books, Economic journals and Internet etc.

SEGMENTS OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY



TYPES OF TOURISM:

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM SECTOR IN INDIA:



Tourism in India has received a boost in the past few years as the Indian government has realised the importance of tourism for the economic development. Tourism is the largest service industry in India with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and 8.78% of the total employment in India

After independence government was focusing on development of the key areas like agriculture, industry, infrastructure, etc in urban and rural India. Tourism was never seen as a potential business.

Indian tourism and hospitality sector has reached new heights today. There are different ways to attract domestic and foreign tourists. The impact of tourism on national economies is becoming increasingly

important today because of the growing size of the tourist market. It is recognised so by the World Bank and the World Tourism Organisation. 27 September has been earmarked as World Tourism Day.

India has now been striving to get some share of this industry. It plays a vital role in achieving the national objectives of promoting social and cultural cohesion and national integration. Its contribution to generation of employment is very high. With the increase in income levels and emergence of a powerful middle class, the potential for domestic tourism has grown substantially during the last few years.

India has the potential to become the number one tourist destination in the world with the demand growing at 10.1 per cent per annum. The upward trend is expected to remain firm in the coming years. Tourism is the third largest net earner of foreign exchange for the country recording earnings of US \$ 5731 million in 2005. Foreign tourist arrivals in July 2008 were 4.29 lakh where as in July 2009 it was 4.32 lakh. This shows advancement in growth in Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India. The Tourism sector witnessed a positive growth in 2009-10 (Apr–Dec) with foreign tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings registering growth of 1.1 percent and 10.9 percent respectively.

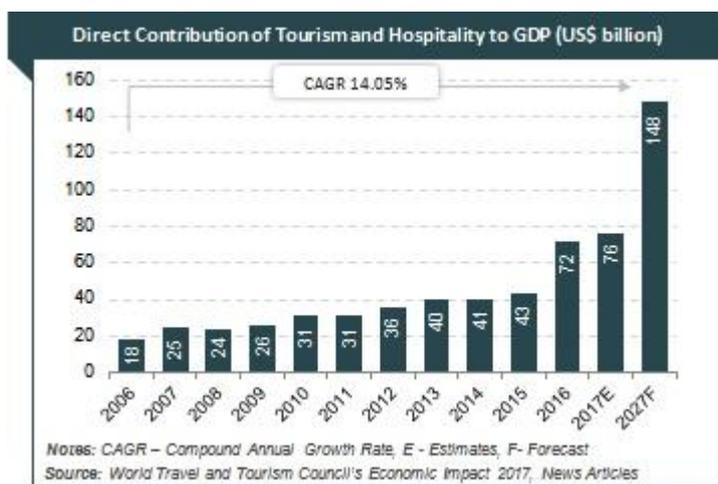
Tourism in India has received a major boost in the past decade since the Indian Government realized the great potential of tourism of India during vacations. Tourism of India during vacations has grown by leaps and bounds with a great influx of tourists from throughout the world.

Tourism in India accounts for 9.6 per cent of the GDP and is the 3rd largest foreign exchange earner for the country.

The tourism and hospitality sector's direct contribution to GDP in 2016, was US\$ 71.53 billion.

During 2006–17E, direct contribution of tourism and hospitality to GDP is expected to register a CAGR of 14.05 per cent.

The direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP is expected to reach US\$ 147.96 billion by 2027.



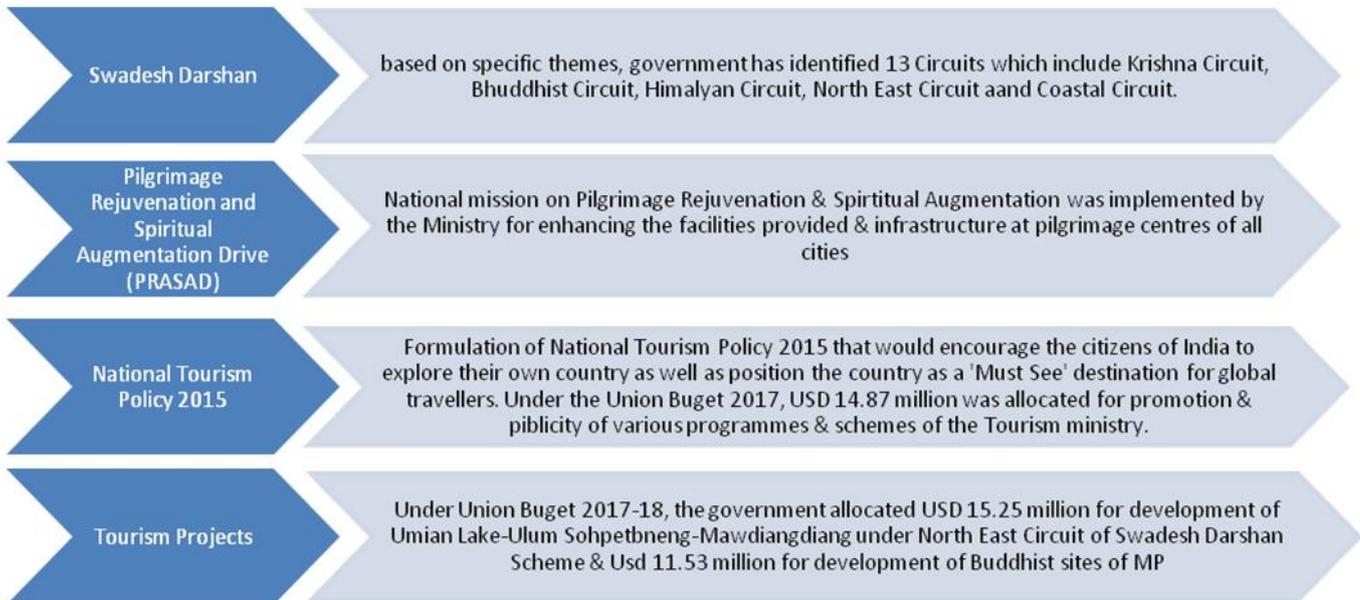
Notes: CAGR – Compound Annual Growth Rate, E - Estimates, GDP stands for Gross Domestic Product,

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council's Economic Impact 2017, News Articles

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to major Hospitality and Tourism Industries which is playing a vast role in the economy of India and the data is from a limited period. One more limitation is that the collected data is related with selected key players of the hospitality industry only.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES



FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Travel and tourism is the largest earner of foreign exchange world-wide and employs millions of people directly or indirectly through associated service industries

) This industry includes everything from the government tourism departments and major multinational companies to the small scale private travel agents

) While working in this industry, one provides services to people who are travelling for business or holiday or both, thus catering to tour packages, pilgrim travel, adventure travel or casual sightseeing

At almost every point of work in this field, employees need to interact personally with the customers and understand their needs while making them comfortable, so as to be able to provide the best service in terms of travel options and arrangements.

Perks and payment:

Salary is not a concern in the travel and tourism industry. Moreover, you get added perks such as free travel or reduced rates for you and your family. Salaries are higher in foreign based airlines or travel agencies. Peak seasons might bring added bonuses and commission.

Courses in travel and tourism:

Experience is the most important factor in the field of Tourism and Hospitality. However, there are many colleges, universities and private institutions that offer Bachelor's or Master's degrees, diplomas, certificates or distance learning courses in various sectors of travel and tourism such as management in tourism, travel or hotels, tour operation or airline management, destination management, airline ticketing, travel administration etc.

) You can join an undergraduate course right after completing class 12

) The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India approved post-graduation degree in this field which is a two-year full time programme that gets you an MTA degree, a Master of Tourism Administration. Certain universities such as the Indian Institution of Tourism and Travel offer this degree

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-) A post graduate degree can be helpful in getting into Positions as managers or in administration
 -) Short term training programmes are offered by many travel agencies. Most candidates are absorbed by the end of the programmes
 -) You can also opt for vocational courses to get a B Voc degree.

Required skill set

-) Keeping in view the expected boom, the travel and tourism industry needs to focus on developing an efficient infrastructure and increase the intake of skilled personnel. Anyone working in the travel and tourism industry needs to ideally be armed with knowledge of the global culture and all aspects of travel business
-) He/she also needs to be completely aware of how to ensure customer satisfaction, while managing a large volume of business
-) A strong knowledge in history, geography, art and architecture of India are preferred
-) Employees in this industry need to be skilled, confident, well-groomed, should be able to handle people very well, and possess good interpersonal skills
-) It is preferable that employees know at least one foreign language apart from English
-) A diploma in public relations or advertising would prove to be helpful in building a career in this field
-) Employees must be ready to work long or odd hours
-) Employees must be completely aware and up-to-date on all the rules and regulations concerning ticket booking or reservation, passports, visas, cargo and even fines where applicable, so that they can assist in getting paperwork and documentation done.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Allow corporate sponsorship for heritage buildings

One of the biggest charms of Indian tourism is its architecture and wealth of historic monuments. And there's a long list of heritage monuments that are still sitting in squalid environments. An effective solution for this would be to outsource the maintenance and exterior lighting of the heritage monument to corporate giants in return for some branding opportunity at the monument. Many think of this as outright commercialisation but, this is a much better option than leaving it in an abandoned state to let it decay.

2. Create experiences, not sightseeing spots

If you closely notice, many tourist destinations around the world are merely made up of created experiences. Be it botanical gardens, architectural monuments, backwaters, the Himalayas, the tourism ministry should see the potential of a place to attract tourists rather than merely banking on the natural beauty of a place. The tourism industry which includes the government and private players, need to manipulate destinations as experiences and not sightseeing point alone.

For instance, steps can be taken to make the tour replete with tour guides, activities for the children, culinary tours, interactivity for the tourist with the culture of the place etc.

3. Build better roads and access points

It wouldn't be completely wrong on anyone's part to simply say 'Create better infrastructure'. This is a very generic statement. But it is critical to build good roads and approach points to a certain tourist destination. For foreign and domestic tourists alike, a bumpy ride with potholes and a punctured tire only to reach an exotic Indian destination is no good.

Packaged train travel, easy bus connections and safe car hire services with knowledgeable personnel combined with great freeways and highways may sound utopian but are critical features for an unmatched tourist experience.

4. Aggressive tourism marketing strategies

Many people seem to be having a problem with eroticizing India to the West but at some point if that strategy allows for the raking in of mullah, then why not? We're not promoting India as the land of snakes and charmers anymore, but the tourism ministry should surely pursue aggressive online and other marketing strategies to promote India as a must-visit location. Whether it is broadcasting 'Incredible India' campaigns abroad, holding tourism seminars or offering Indian locations with facilities to promote foreign film productions in the country, aggressive marketing is absolutely critical to be seen and heard well.

5. Sell niche tourism areas separately

India is currently in a position where it can make a cash cow out of selling customized experiences, luxury spa sessions, rare animal sanctuaries, religious pilgrimage tours and extreme Himalaya tours. With too many points of differentiation available, Indian tourism should focus on how it has something on offer for everyone in every category with all budgets. India on shoestring, India in luxury, the royal India, urban India, the common man's India, historical India and much more.

6. The way information is packaged and distributed can go a long way in improving tourist traffic in the country.

Although the government has already started making a lot of improvements in this area, we still have a long way to go to let tourism alone generate significant revenue for the country.

We need to capitalize on India as a destination where the royal Bengal tiger, a common labourer, a few millionaires, religious dichotomies, exotic culinary treasures and some of the most expensive spas of the world co-exist in perfect synchrony and harmony.

7. Safety of travellers with special care for female travellers.

With the growing tourism sector, special care has to be taken in maintaining the safety of travellers. In recent times, many foreign travellers have been subjected to discrimination and misbehaviour in the hands of the locals. This only paints a negative image of the country for future travellers and has an adverse effect on the tourism sector. Special care has to be taken for female travellers as well. Recent cases have made it unsafe for females to travel alone. However, this is not a conducive environment for the tourism sector. Safeguarding the travellers will not only increase the tourism activities, it will also paint a positive image in the foreign market to attract more crowd.

CONCLUSION:

Today, Tourism and Hospitality sectors are the foremost sectors of the world economy. It improves balance of payments as well as income creation and employment opportunities. Recent data showed that tourism and travel creating over 276 million jobs and generating 9.8% global GDP in 2014. Besides, tourism can be also nurturing socio cultural amplification of the people, empowering women and disabled communities by creating favourable job options. Due to this, both developed and developing countries give due attention for creating quality staff for quality tourism and hospitality industries to step on the sectors contribution for the country's development.

Unfair treatment among men and women employees; untrained workforce, poor working condition, seasonality of the sectors, sexual harassment and stress; high working hours without overtime payment, the sector is low paid salary payer and other socio-cultural related factors are some to be noted as challenges for employment condition in tourism and hospitality business.

The tourism and hospitality sector can grow abundantly with right use of resources. The right strategic planning could lead to plethora of growth and wealth for the country as a whole through this sector. Better utilisation of human resource, technology, advertisement, with creation of experience would prove a boon for this industry and would contribute to its growth.

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