



## Research trends in the geography of tourism in India

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### Abstract

Geographical research on tourism has been developing in India for ages. The concept and pattern of tourism have changed with time and space. As tourism is an interdisciplinary concept. The research on tourism has been done in geography, history, economics, and other social sciences too. This paper attempts to examine the trends of tourism research in India in the geographical domain. Several areas have been found for tourism research in geography such as; sustainable tourism, impact of tourism on the environment, tourists' behaviour with space, international tourism, new tourism, etc. To complete the paper, the researcher has reviewed 25 scholarly research papers in relevant fields, through Google Scholar. It is revealed from the review of research papers that geographical research on tourism in India requires more utilization of research tools and geospatial technology and more national organization should promote geographical research on tourism.

**Keywords:** Tourism, geography, space, environment

### Introduction

Tourism is an interdisciplinary concept, and is associated with geography, economics, history, commerce, trade transport, environment, etc. Tourism and geography have a long historical relationship. In 1933, the first article on tourism was published in a geographic journal in the United States. International Geographical Union provided another strong evidence of the growing demand for geographical tourism by establishing a working group in tourism and recreation in 1972. The academic and research field of tourism geography has evolved creating opportunities for geographers. There are a few key concepts associated with the geography of tourism namely space, location, the importance of physical factors in tourism, and spatial interaction between the components of the tourism system. A recent trend in research in the geography of tourism is the environmental impact of tourism, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, eco-tourism, etc.

### Objective & Methodology

The main objective of the research paper is to study the research trends of the geography of tourism in India & Its influence on the tourism industry. The study is based on secondary information only. Google scholar has been used to apply the systematic search method and 25 relevant research papers, books, and case studies have been reviewed to justify the research.

### Trends of Tourism Research in India

Tourism is one of the oldest activities known to human beings in India. During the prehistoric period, people used to travel from one place to another place basically for food and shelter. Slowly travel has become a leisure activity to take a break from our day-to-day hectic life. However, with time many people have shifted from the concept of mass tourism to alternative tourism. Available literature shows various aspects of tourism addressed in geography. Indian geographers are interested in explaining the importance of the spatial dimension of tourism (Mir, 2016). The historical perspective of tourism is explained with space and time (B.P. George, 2005) [1] from ancient times to the medieval period and the development of mass tourism. Hill and

mountain tourism is another important avenue for Indian geographers. Impacts and prospects of tourism development in hilly areas of India were carried out by Chander (1995) [2] and Arora (1998). Studies on different hill resorts were carried out by Pradhan (2000), and Negi (2002) [15]. The aspect of sustainable management of tourism in Nepal was explained by Lamichhane and Singh (2002). Modern geographers explain tourism in the arena of resource planning and development, environmental management, and mapping techniques which will help in policymakers and decision-makers (Singh, T.V., 2014) [14]. T.V. & Dharmendra K examined how Kerala is working towards the core mission of sustainable development to achieve economic, socio-cultural and environmental development of tourist destinations. Recent study proposed a framework by predicting the role played by individual and their intention to adopt sustainable tourism in India (Garg, P., & Pandey A., 2020) [5]. As tourism is an interdisciplinary concept, hence in geography of tourism also has a specific area due to the cross-cutting issues. Some major trends of research are notified under the geography of tourism which is as follows:

- Geographical research on sustainable tourism development.
- Geographical research on tourists' behaviour.
- Geographical research on Tourism and its impact on the environment.
- Geographical research on international tourism.
- Geographical tourism on new tourism.

### Geographical research on sustainable tourism development

All stakeholders in the tourism industry are recommending that sustainable tourism can help the development of a region. Academicians and researchers are interested in working more towards the sustainability of tourism. Joseph, E.K. *et al.* (2020) studied the sustainable tourism in the backwaters of south Kerala. The study explained the role of various stakeholders in the management of waste to develop a strong perspective of sustainable tourism development in that area. Suroshi, Vijay, N., (2012) [18], in their study revealed that tourism in Parner thasil can be well developed

as a tourist destination with a sustainable plan and can support 5 to 6 lakh tourists over there.

### Geographical research on tourists' behaviour

Few researchers have analyzed the spatial dimension of tourist activities to evaluate the behaviour of the tourists and their movements. D' Silva, B. & D'Silva S., (2008) <sup>[4]</sup> studied the perception of tourist while choosing India as a tourist destination. Another study on the identification of the factors, that influence leisure destination choices in domestic tourism in India done by Madhavan H., & Rastogi R, 2011 <sup>[11]</sup>

### Geographical research on Tourism and its impact on the environment

Geneletti D., Dawa, D., (2009) <sup>[6]</sup> studied the pattern of tourism-induced environmental degradation in Ladakh, Indian Himalaya, and the requirement of a suitable policy for maintaining the sustainability of the mountains. Ahmad, B.B. *et al.* (2017) studied the tourism potential in Kashmir Valley and its relation to biophysical carrying capacity to the environment. Hence they propose sustainable tourism policy should be adopted for Kashmir Valley. Jayasinghe M., & Selvanathan E.A., (2021) <sup>[9]</sup> in their research paper showed how the tourism industry helping towards economic growth and increases the consumption of energy and emission of CO<sub>2</sub> in India.

### Geographical research on international tourism

Many geographical research work has been done on the development of international tourism in India. Since last two decades the number of international tourists has increased. Gupta, S.K. (2016) <sup>[7]</sup> studied the performance of international tourism over the years and the perception of foreign tourists on various aspects of tourism in India. Matley, Ian, M., explained in their book about the geography of international tourism and how different international, national, and regional organizations promote tourism study.

### Geographical research on new tourism

Geographical research on new tourism or alternative tourism is gaining popularity in India such as eco-tourism, agro-tourism, rural tourism, etc. Singh K, *et al.* (2016) <sup>[16]</sup> studied the need, scope, and marketing strategy of rural tourism in India. Chaudhury K, and Dutta P (2018) <sup>[3]</sup> studied how rural tourism helps to generate sustainable livelihood in North-East India. Jagdale U.G. *et al* (2014) <sup>[8]</sup>, examined the importance of agro-tourism in Junnar Tahsil and the success story of agro-tourism

### Discussion and Conclusion

It is clear from the review of research papers that tourism is an important activity with the spatial movement. Alternative tourism has gaining popularity as compared to mass tourism. According to various research papers and case studies, tourism research is conducted using a multidimensional perspective. In recent years the tourism research has been increasing in many folds but it's not confined only to geography. Geographical research on tourism in India will become more intensive with the utilization of statistics, research tools and geo spatial technology. More number of these studies can contribute to the development of regional geography of India.

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