## EEFECTIVE COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MARKETING: A STRTEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Dr.Neetu Singh**
Associate Professor
Allenhouse Institute of Technology
Rooma ,Kanpur
Email-neetu_mba@yahoo.com
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**Abstract**

"Sustainable development is growth that meets the desires of the current without compromising the capability of upcoming generations to meet their own needs."Brundtland Report, 1987. Development in any pace of life must be sustainable. The wanton development of tourism industry has caused gargantuan socio-cultural as well as economic impacts in many parts of the world. People's capability and tendency to travel domestically and internationally has been further reinforced by increasing level of optional incomes, times coupled with new socio-cultural norms. There have been a wide spread concern and debate over socio-cultural and environmental effect of tourism development. Community based tourism enables tourists to discover local habitats and wildlife, and celebrates and respects traditional cultures; rituals and wisdom. Community participation has come up as quite essential for sustainable tourism planning and maximizing the benefit destination and its residents. Whilst much attention is paid on advanced tourism planning during recent years, a much advanced form of tourism marketing with local community involvement in marketing, with local community involvement in marketing and managing their place appears to be in its infancy stage. This paper proposed a strategy for developing a sustainable tourism through community participation in decision making process even in building and implementing plans and strategies. It is an attempt to integrate community based tourism planning with marketing strategies.

**Key words:** - Sustainable tourism, Community development, Tourism marketing, Tourism planning

**Introduction**

Sustainable tourism has to meet social, cultural, ecological and economic requirements. Sustainable tourism holds a long-term view, for present and future generations, ethically and socially just and culturally adapted, ecologically viable and economically sensible and productive." (The German Forum on Environment and Development). The basic ideas and principles of sustainable development have been applied to tourism (Hunter and Green, 1995) and sustainable tourism (ST) has been broadly defined as, "tourism which is economically viable but does not destroy the resources on which the future of tourism will depend, notably the physical environment and the social fabric of the host community" (Swarbrooke, 1999:13).Suitable tourism development plans should takes the community's and tourists' needs into consideration with an emphasis on natural and environmental conservation. As it cannot be said whether sustainable approaches designed today will really prove to be sustainable within 25 years, "sustainability" has to be taken to mean future-oriented requirement rather than a fixed plan. This means that its contents need to be redefined from

time to time and that futurologists have to learn to consider unpredictable factors. So it can be commented critically that real "Sustainable Tourism" is almost impossible; what is possible and highly desirable however "More Sustainable Tourism" or "Sustainable Tourism Development" is.

Community-based tourism has, for over three decades, been promoted as a means of development whereby the social, environmental and economic needs of local communities are met through the offering of a tourism product. The community will be aware of the commercial and social value placed on their natural and cultural heritage through tourism, and this will foster community based conservation of these resources. The residents earn income as land managers, entrepreneurs, service and produce providers, and employees. At least part of the tourist income is set aside for projects which provide benefits to the community as a whole.

**Figure: 1 Pillars of Sustainable Tourism**



**Source: www.tourism.nic.in**

**Literature Review**

Tourism has undoubtedly had a profound impact on destinations all over the world. Murphy (1985) finds, tourism was seized upon with little forethought concerning a viable tourism product, the social and environmental consequences of development, or the spillover effects in surrounding areas. Therefore, Hall (1998) quite rightly states that, tourism cannot be allowed to progress in an ad hoc manner without an overall guiding framework and predetermined strategies toward development objectives. A number of different planning approaches have evolved to meet the changing development demands and characteristics of the tourism industry and the global increase in visitor numbers (Hall, 1998). Tourism planning generally involved detailed surveys and appraisals of the physical resources of the country or region with little or no concern about possible spin-off effects of proposals and projects on adjacent areas or environments (Baud- Bovy, 1982; Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1971; Choy, 1991; Getz, 1986; Murphy, 1985). The community approach to tourism planning stemmed from the realization that tourism was having irreversible and damaging effects to the communities and cultures that were exposed to tourism and that alternative planning and management was needed to develop more socially acceptable guidelines for tourism expansion (Blank, 1989; Murphy, 1985). The community approach, essentially a form of "bottom up' planning, emphasized development in the community rather than development of the community (Hall, 1998).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) is considered one of the first efforts to link the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity to the improvement of the livelihoods of communities living in and around protected areas (UNESCO 2006). The Biosphere Reserve model aims to transform reserves into ‚models of sustainable development in actionʻ in part by including integrated rural development projects into reserve management plans (Sundberg 1998). Simpson (2001) identifies two key precursors to a sustainable approach to tourism planning: multiple stakeholder participation in the planning process and a need for a more strategic and long-term orientation in tourism planning. The achievement of sustainable development objectives hinges on the adoption of a participatory model, involving the meaningful engagement of the community, along with industry stakeholders and relevant government agencies, which in turn will lead to agreement on planning directions and goals (Faulkner, 2003).

The concept of Community-based Tourism (CBT) can be found in the work of Murphy (1985), where aspects concerning tourism and developing local communities are analysed, and in a further study by the same author in 2004 (Murphy and Murphy, 2004). CBT is based on the active participation of the local community. This is why the creation of community events which may favour this type of tourism, while at the same time helping to create a relationship between the local community and visitors, is so important.. "All travel is linked with communities no matter how urban or remote the purpose may be. This inescapable fact can be a blessing or a curse depending upon how well a community accepts its tourism role and maintains a balance between traveller and resident development and management" (Gunn, 1988: 241) According to Nyaupane *et al.* (2006), the main limitations local communities have to face when implementing tourism projects are the following: lack of financial resources, infrastructure or know-how; limitations of a cultural kind; and potential conflicts between the different public administrations.

## Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine potentials of the economy to promote the community-based sustainable tourism to improve the well-being of the community. The specific objective of this study is:

- ℘ To evaluate the tourism potentials and find out suitable strategies that may promote CBST satisfying the community's needs, expectations and its well-being through their active and productive participation and also by ensuring the ecological balance and tourist satisfaction.
- ℘ To integrate community based tourism planning with marketing strategies.

## Research Methodology

Methodology used here is secondary data and discursive analysis. Secondary data was accumulated through various sources like internet, reference materials, newspapers, magazines, Published reports; news reports of news channels, articles in journals were used.

## New Forms of Tourism

Tourism can be considered one of the most remarkable socio-economic phenomena of the twentieth century. From an activity "enjoyed by only a small group of relatively well-off people" It now reaches an increasingly larger number of people throughout the world and can be considered a vital dimension of global integration. Tourism development must be based on sustainability criteria, be long term bearable economically and ethically and socially equitable for the local populations of the destinations. Tourism forms identified by the literature as being "sustainable" are numerous: ecological tourism (ecotourism), green tourism, soft, rural tourism and agro tourism, community tourism, solidarity and responsible tourism, all these opposing to the traditional, mass tourism. The concept of sustainable tourism, as developed by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in the context of the United Nations sustainable development process, refers to tourist activities "leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems" (UN, 2001a)

## Community Based Toursim

Community is a very elusive and vague term. It is used to refer to not only a locality (e.g. a village community) but also a network of relationships (e.g. cyberspace communities). According to The Community Tourism Guide for example, a community can be described as "a mutually supportive, geographically specific, social unit such as a village or tribe where people identify themselves as community members and where there is usually some form of communal decision-making" (Mann, 2000, p. 18). Such a notion of community evokes a group of people who have something in common and who are actively engaged with one another in a benign fashion, and such sentiments may be used rhetorically to generate some kind of share did entity where it was only latent (Anderson,1991). Interestingly, community, "unlike all other terms of social organization (state, nation, society, etc.) seems never to be used unfavourably" (Williams, 1976, p. 76).

The anticipated benefits of CBT are three (Rozemeijer, 2001, p. 13):

(1) CBT generates income and employment and, as such, contributes to rural development – a benefits that especially applies in remote areas;
(2) The benefits derived from the use of natural resources for tourism will prompt the community to use these valuable resources in a sustainable way; and
(3) CBT adds value to the national tourism product through diversification of tourism, increasing volume and economies of scale.

## Benefits of Community Based Toursim

Community based tourism has been popular as a means of supporting biodiversity conservation particularly in APEC developing countries and linking livelihoods with preserving biodiversity whilst reducing rural poverty and achieving both objectives sustainably (Kiss 2004). A number of risks associated with the developing CBT particularly where it is introduced to provide a 'quick fix' for communities without diverse livelihoods, resources or capacity. This manual will assist in identifying the important enabling factors for effective CBT, assisting communities to develop them, and identifying the conditions and situations under which CBT can be problematic. The **Table 1 shows th**e Enabling conditions

and barriers for CBT outlines the potential enabling conditions for CBT as well as the potential barriers to the development of CBT.

**Table 1: Enabling conditions for good practice and Barriers to the development of CBT**

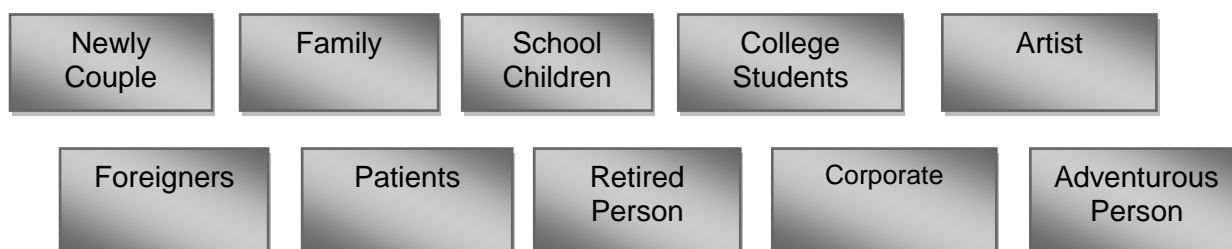| Enabling conditions for good practice CBT | Barriers to the development of CBT |
|---|---|
| The community is already well planned And organized. | The foundations of the community and men's, women's and youth organisations Are fragmented and unorganized. |
| Land ownership and other 'resource' Issues are clear and well defined. | Land and supply disputes are rife and Recurrent. |
| CBT is part of a broader/wider community development plan. | CBT is seen as a immediate fix 'way up and out' of a poverty series. |
| There is good accessible infrastructure to Access the product. | Infrastructure is inadequate and there is No potential for investment. |
| CBT is part of a broader/wider community development strategy. | CBT is seen as a quick fix 'way up and out' of a poverty cycle |
| The activity is supported by good marketing mechanisms. | Little marketing or misplaced marketing. |
| High participation levels. | Participation wanes during implementation of the CBT facility. |
| When community members, women, men and youth are, widely involved in decision making processes, and financial Management around the CBT. | Decision-making is purely the domain of Influential individuals (usually males), and the benefits are not equitably distributed. |
| A strong plan for expansion, and/or to limit visitor numbers in balance with the carrying capacity of the community and environment to avoid adverse affects on **both.** | When people think they can invite tourists then sit back and 'the money will roll in' and there is a lack of future planning. |

**Source: (Adapted From Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre 2010)**

**Different Segments for Community Based Toursim**

Marketing of tourism is a specialist job. Tourism people have to surrender themselves to professional marketers who understand the complexity of their task. The business depends on the development of networks, creation of trust and loyalty, and information systems, all of which take money and time to develop, which is beyond the resources of most individuals. A

specialized skill is necessary for marketing a tourism product. It is virtually impossible to-do-it-alone. This is because tourism draws on so many industries - the hospitality, entertainment, transport, catering, education, accommodation, retailing, hiring, as well as marketing, and because you cannot be expected to be an expert in all of these. It is necessary, therefore, to exchange the resources. Thus there is a need of ability to co-operate with each other towards achieving common goals. **Figure 2** shows the different basis of segmenting the tourism market. Tourism should develop different strategy for different segment to make it successful. To be effective and successful, marketer need to focus on particular segment or segments at a time.

**Figure 2: Basis of Segmentation**

| Newly Couple | Family | School Children | College Students | Artist |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Foreigners | Patients | Retired Person | Corporate | Adventurous Person |

**Source: Author**

**Different Tourism Products**

In the tourism industry, destination is a product which is offered to the tourists and hence it has to be developed and marketed well to accomplish the desired objectives. Strategies for development of these destinations according to different tourism themes are discussed below:

**i) Religious Tourism**
Each of these has its historical significance. Improving basic civic amenities at the places of religious importance and publicity of these places will attract more tourists to these places.

**(ii) Leisure Tourism**
This type of tourism can be easily promoted by creation of manmade facilities like Amusement parks, Water sports complex, Ropeways, Golf Course etc

**(iii) Heritage Tourism**
A large number of old palaces, havelis and sarais exist in this. The historical buildings can be converted into heritage hotels, restaurants or museums by providing suitable incentives to owners. Development of this sub-sector will not only attract foreign tourists but also provide encouragement and support to the heritage structures of the state. Development of these structures can also help to market the local culture, arts and crafts.

**(iv) Business Tourism**
The business tourists frequently visit the destinations Extending entertainment options in location like multiplexes, air conditioned shopping malls, Golf Course etc. will lead to increase in tourist related activities in locations.

**(v) Highway Tourism**
There is a good network of State and National highways that criss-cross the State and a large number of travelers prefer road journey. There is a need for creating necessary facilities like

hotels, restaurants, picnic spots, water parks etc. along the highways at suitable intervals for the highway travelers to relax. In fact, travelers can be induced to follow certain traffic routes if such facilities are better developed. State should encourage private investors to create such facilities on highways.

**(vi) Tourism based on Traditional Art, Craft and Cultural Activities**
There are several pockets in the State, which are known for their handicrafts and other craftsmanship. Similarly, there are many fairs that are celebrated throughout the year with enthusiasm. These need to be systematically promoted and marketed among the domestic and foreign tourists.

**(vii) Rural Tourism**
Punjab has a unique culture and it is famous for its hospitality throughout the world. Rural tourism clubbed with festivals and other cultural events will give a significant boost to the inflow of domestic and foreign tourists.

**(viii) Nature Tourism**
The state has the famous wetlands, which can be developed judiciously to promote nature tourism.

**(ix)Health Tourism**
Health Tourism is concerned with health, yoga and ayurvedic treatments.

**(x)Ecotourism**
This is a responsible type of tourism which preserves natural resources as well as maintaining the well-being and social values of the local population

**Strategies for Sustainable Tourism through Community Participation**

Dynamics of market are differing from other market types and similarly marketing strategies are also significantly different from the marketing strategies aimed at urban and industrial consmer.Community based tourism involves a number of strategies which are:

**Figure: 4 Different Strategies Used By Communities for the Development of Tourism**

To promote tourism in the community in such a way that it will contribute to the development of employment, economic growth and more importantly bringing the tourist close to the culture

To position every region as a tourist centre different from another, culture and heritage, as religious centre.

To promote private sector participation with the help of government to develop necessary infrastructure in the state that will help the state to promote tourism.

To position the tourist map of India with the demand created by travel & trade market and by tapping the untapped potential of various heritage monuments.

To provide quality service to all domestic and international consumers and stake holders

To diversify, expand and market the tourism products in the state along with preserving the cultural monuments from any kind of decay

To develop shopping complexes of high standard at prominent tourist centres catering to all class of tourists.

To encourage people's participation in tourism promotion and to provide economic benefits to the people through such participation

**Source: www.punjab.gov.in**

**TRENDS IN TOURIST ARRIVALS AND GROWTHS / TOURIST DESTINANTION ATTRACTION**

The tourists look for quality environment and meaningful experience. Especially to those area where there is beauty of natural elements like mountains, forests, sea, lakes etc. Along with that traditional customs, handicraft of the rural flock, traditional foods and their hosting style and the cultural programmes to attract the attention of the tourist. If they can provide a meaningful holiday and fulfill the expectation of tourist at a reasonable price there is a higher chance that the tourists will make a return visit in future. The different types of tourist attractions spread all over the State can be grouped as under:

- Internal Transport System
- Hotels Accommodation Facilities for Tourists
- Entertainment & Recreational Avenues
- Restaurants
- Shopping Arcades, Emporia, Souvenir/Gifts Shops etc.
- Tourism Information Centres
- Facilities for Elders / Disabled and Families with Young Children

**Growth of Tourism in India**

The growth of tourism in India can be discussed on the following grounds:

**Table: 2 Number Of Domestic Tourist Visits To All States/ UTs In India, 2001-2011**

Legend:
- NO. OF DOMESTIC TOURIST VISITS (in millions) TO STATES/Uts
- PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR
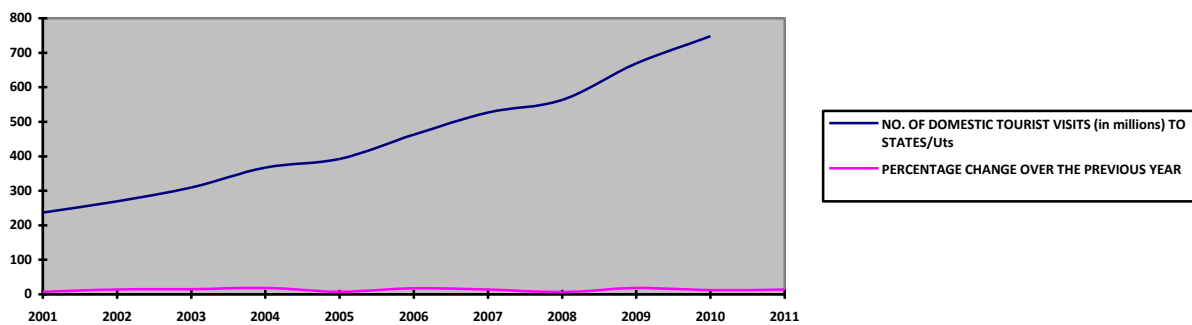
**Source: Report on Indian Tourism Statistics 2012**

**Findings**

There are several reasons for the tourism development of community based:
- Cooperative and constructive participation of the community in the industry.
- New employment opportunities for the community and a well-earned market for their tourism related products.
- Preserving and promotion of the local culture, historical heritage and natural resources.
- Improved socio-economic infrastructure facilities in remote localities.
- New sources of income for local authorities and governments
- Exploitation of underutilized/unutilized community based resources.
- Develop inter and intra-cultural relations and links.
- Innovations of heterogeneous, high quality, consumer-need driven, environmentally and culturally friendly and responsible tourism products.
- Well developed hosts-guests relationships
- Integrate local tourism development with national planning and objectives

**Recommendations**

A Strategic Planning should be used by the Communities for Sustainable Tourism in India. Strategies need to be focused on the development of these destinations having the existing tourist attractions. The community does not have much to offer so far as natural resources are concerned. Hence, some manmade features/attractions (Amusement Parks/.Water Parks/Restaurants) need to be created in the state to attract tourists.

**Figure 5: Summary of Potential Guiding Elements for Tourism Planning**

| | |
|---|---|
| Inclusive Cooperation | 1.Using tourism planning to "pull together" local residents;<br>2.Including broad stakeholder input and Clarifying co-operative stakeholder roles sooner rather than later;<br>3.Preparing children/youth with values & skills for tourism and community stewardship;<br>4. Creating a more unified local voice for external relations and communication. |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Understanding & Shaping Implications and Expectations | 5.Better understanding the implications, potential, demands, and expectations of tourism;; <br> 6.Ensuring the safety of tourists and locals; and Communicating clear community messages to tourists; <br> 7.Encouraging friendly and respectful attitudes between residents and tourists; <br> 8.Setting local land and marine stewardship examples by residents; <br> 9Shaping appropriate tourist expectations to match local realities; <br> 10. Respecting resident and tourist privacy while also influencing tourism activities and behaviors. |
| Local Maintenance & Enhancement | 11.Maintaining the ability to keep living and working in the area; and Managing for gradual growth that matches local capacity; <br> 12.Showing pride in the area and in cultural backgrounds; <br> 13.Protecting the wilderness and waters as primary resources for all local economies; <br> 14.Protecting the mystique, freedom, and other features attractive to locals and tourists alike; and <br> 15. Treating all local resources as a complete system. |

**Source: Author**

**Conclusion**

If a proper marketing plan is done tourism, it could bring lots of benefit to our society. It could be a sustainable revenue generating project for development of our government. It can help inflow to resources to economy. Both short-term and long-term planning, implementing and monitoring are vital in avoiding damage to areas. Environmental management, local involvement, sound legislation, sustainable marketing, and realistic planning are crucial for development of tourism.

Local level participation is essential for achieving the global goal of sustainable development. However, such involvement often involves a shift of power from local authorities to local actors. Moreover, real consensus and true local control is not always possible, practical or even desired by some of the communities that develop CBT. Planners need insight in this complex web of shifting power relations as well as in the ways different stakeholders imagine CBT. There is clearly a need for fundamental education and training in target communities to accompany tourism development. Local communities must develop strategies for receiving and interacting with tourists as well as displaying themselves and their visible culture (Reid, 2002). This involves finding the right balance between economic gain and cultural integrity.

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