

**Research Paper**

VLEARNY Journal of Business  
1 (3) 2024, 33-38, <https://vlearnny.com/journal/>  
© VLERNY Technology LLP.



Submitted: 22 May, 2024  
Revised: 01 June, 2024  
Accepted: 22 June, 2024  
*\*Corresponding Author*

## **TOURISM IN INDIA: A LAND OF TIMELESS BEAUTY AND ENDLESS ADVENTURE**

**Dr. S. SaiGanesh\***

Professor, School of Commerce & Management Studies, Dayananda Sagar University, Bangalore  
saiganeshrs@gmail.com; ORCID - 0009-0000-4979-8584  
<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Saiganesh-Somasekaran-2>

**S. Balaji Mallikarjun**

Researcher, MIRS, Chennai; mallikarjunbalajio@gmail.com; ORCID - 0009-0004-1890-4283

### **Abstract**

The tourist sector in India offers an intriguing challenge. Even if the "Incredible India" campaign has been successful in increasing awareness, the country still has difficulties realizing its enormous potential. This study examines the various facets of Indian tourism, emphasizing its Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and the challenges it faces. India is unique in its unmatched fusion of rich culture, ancient history, and varied landscapes. With activities ranging from hiking in the Himalayas to relaxing on immaculate beaches, the nation has much to offer. But there are still barriers in the form of severe international rivalry, inadequate infrastructure, and safety worries. India's tourism sector may reach its full potential and become a top travel destination worldwide by tackling these issues and successfully promoting its distinctive offers.

**Keywords:** Indian Tourism Industry, Incredible India Campaign, Tourist Safety, Culture Seekers

**Citation of this paper:** SaiGanesh, S., & Mallikarjun, S. B. (2024). Tourism in India: a land of timeless beauty and endless adventure. VLEARNY Journal of Business, 1(3), 33–38. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12594494>

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

From the tallest mountains in the Himalayas to the longest shorelines in the south, India is a land of enchantment. India has never failed to surprise us

with its beauty, whether it is through rich cultural habits, breath-taking sceneries or its religious diversity. It is these factors which has helped the growth of tourism and related sector in India these

days. For touring, India is open at all times of the year. This is one of the major advantages for the tourism sector of India. When one place is not visit able, another is. Different tourists prefer different climates for the place they tour. Due to India's geographical location, it has all the different climates a person can hope for. India has emerged as a major tourist destination in recent years, with a surge in foreign arrivals witnessed between 2008 and 2012. This growth, however, has encountered challenges, leading to a shift in focus towards domestic tourism. This article explores the current landscape of tourism in India, examining both the rise in international visitors and the burgeoning domestic travel market, while highlighting popular destinations and the industry's economic impact. The Indian tourism industry exhibits encouraging signs of recovery, evidenced by a substantial job creation surge of over 4 million positions within the past year. This growth, primarily driven by the hotel and tourism sector, signifies a positive trajectory towards regaining pre-pandemic employment levels. Notably, the hotel and tourism industry itself contributed a remarkable 5.4 million new jobs, surpassing the healthcare sector's contribution of approximately 1.8 million.

## 2. TOURISM – AN OVERVIEW

According to UNWTO, tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment. People travel to different places with a different motive. Some people travel to find while some other people just want to spend their time in the place they love. These different motives of people led to the creation of new varieties of tourism. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the tourism sector began its growth exponentially. As a global economy started taking shape and average earnings of the people began increasing, people needed a way to spend their money. This is what led to the growth of tourism. People began to set up shops selling souvenirs and hotels to stay just for tourists. This growth in tourism creates a new field of employment. In 2022, about 295 million people were involved directly into earning money from tourism. Recently, the developing countries have taken an interest in tourism. Many countries' governments have been supporting the growth of tourism sector in their countries. Many other facilities like the introduction of paid holidays, cheaper transport facilities and globalisation has increased the growth of tourism. Tourism Industry: A Booming Sector. By taking care of tourists and their needs, this industry

can contribute better to the GDP of the nation. Sekappa (2024) mentions how important customer experience is for tourism businesses. It's a good point, but it could be even better if it provided some specific ideas on how tourism companies can create positive experiences for their customers. For example, it could talk about going the extra mile for tourists or offering unique experiences that set them apart from the competition.

The global tourism industry is experiencing a significant boom, with the market size reaching a staggering USD 11.39 trillion in 2023. This growth is projected to continue, with experts predicting the market to reach a colossal USD 18.44 trillion by 2032, reflecting a healthy Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 5.5%. This positive outlook is fueled by several factors. Increased government support for tourism initiatives, investments in transportation infrastructure, and the digital revolution are all playing a major role. Additionally, the rise of a global middle class with a growing disposable income and a thirst for travel experiences is propelling the industry forward.

Looking ahead, the future of tourism appears bright. The increasing adoption of digital technologies will continue to streamline travel planning and booking, making it easier than ever for individuals to explore the world. Medical tourism is another sector expected to witness significant growth, with people increasingly seeking medical care abroad. International travel, in particular, is poised for a significant rise, highlighting the growing desire for global exploration and cultural immersion. The Asia Pacific region is expected to lead the charge in this global tourism surge, driven by its diverse offerings, robust infrastructure development, and growing economies.

## 3. TOURISM IN INDIA

The people of India, whether they live in cities or in the most remote villages, they make their best efforts to make tourists feel welcomed on their land. Hospitality is one of the main reasons why tourists like to visit India. India wasn't mainly dependent on tourism. That was why it didn't suffer economically during the worldwide lockdown. Still, the tourism in India has been growing. The recent growth of tourism in India is due to a variety of reasons: The growth of income of the country's middle class, increase of awareness to international tourists, government

policies, etc. The number of international tourists visiting India had been increasing until the pandemic. By 2019, the number of tourists who visited India touched a jaw dropping 17.91 million visitors. The tourism in India began to grow from 2014. There was a sudden rise of tourists from 6.97 million visitors to 13.11 million visitors in 2014 and the reason for this was change of government policy in tourism and hospitality sector. Another reason why tourists like to visit India is due to the country's better facilities at relatively cheaper prices. Let's take an example. A single person visiting the United States of America for a month, on average, spends around 8000 USD. A person visiting France for a month spends about 7500 USD. But, by touring India for a month, a person spends only around 2000 USD on average. Internationally, India is ranked as the fifth most affordable country to visit.

#### 4. TRAVEL TRENDS OF INDIA

India offers a lot of different choices for tourists to choose from. India, a land of diverse landscapes and rich cultural heritage, offers a myriad of tourism experiences that cater to various interests and preferences. From the serene beaches and majestic mountains to the vibrant festivals and ancient temples, the country's tourism industry provides unique opportunities for travellers. This diversity is reflected in the numerous types of tourism available; each offering a distinct way to explore and appreciate the multifaceted beauty of India. The 15 prominent types of tourism in India include cultural tourism, heritage tourism, religious tourism, pilgrimage tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism, rural tourism, festival tourism, yoga tourism, Ayurveda tourism, wildlife tourism, hill station tourism, beach tourism, desert tourism, and spiritual tourism. Each of these tourism types showcases a different aspect of

India's charm, inviting tourists from around the world to experience the nation's incredible variety.

India offers a diverse range of geographical features, historical forts, monuments, palaces, beautiful beaches, hill stations, and is home to 37 UNESCO World Heritage sites. The country also boasts 80 national parks and 441 wildlife sanctuaries. India's tourism and hospitality industry is projected to earn 50.9 billion USD by 2028, a significant increase from 28.9 billion USD in 2018. The overall travel industry is expected to grow from 75 billion USD in 2020 to 125 billion USD by 2027. Additionally, the number of international tourists visiting India is forecasted to rise to 30.5 million by 2028. India's tourism sector is currently supported by a comprehensive promotional campaign in key global markets under the 'Incredible India' brand, launched in 2002. This campaign aims to create a unique and attractive image for India. Since its inception, 'Incredible India' has been successful in fulfilling its promise to attract tourists to the country.

The tourism sector is a key part of the 'Make in India' initiative. In 2021, India was ranked 54th in the World Economic Forum's travel and tourism development index. Tourism significantly boosts India's foreign exchange reserves and creates jobs in both formal and informal sectors. In 2019, tourism made up 8.8% of total employment, 5.8% of total exports, and contributed 6.9% to the GDP. Tourist satisfaction is crucial as it impacts their choice to visit again. Destination loyalty, an important asset in tourism, is when tourists intend to return, share positive reviews, and recommend the place to others. This loyalty reflects their long-term commitment based on past travel experiences. Table 1.1 gives snapshot of types of tourism India can promote and increase the foreign tourist arrivals.

*Following Table 1.1 is compiled by researchers.*

**Table 1.1 Types of Tourism and Prominent Places to visit in India**

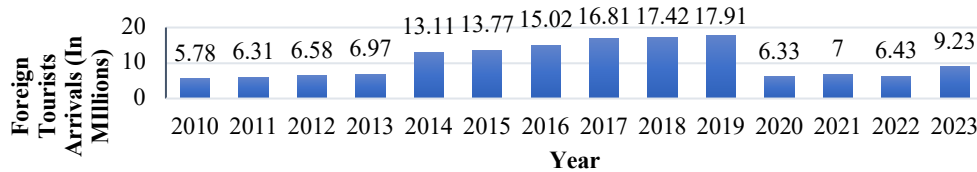
<b>Types of Tourism</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Prominent Places</b>	<b>Tourist Experience</b>
<b>Adventure Tourism</b>	Exploration of remote areas, often involving physical challenges. Promotes self-confidence and well-being.	Ladakh, Sikkim, Himalayas, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam	Trekking, white-water rafting, exploring natural beauty
<b>Cultural Tourism</b>	Experiencing diverse cultures and heritage sites. Offers escape from everyday life.	Taj Mahal (Uttar Pradesh), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Ellora Caves (Maharashtra)	Immerse in rich cultural traditions, historical landmarks
<b>Heritage Tourism</b>	Visiting historical and cultural landmarks reflecting India's past and architectural wonders.	Taj Mahal (Agra), Rajasthan forts & palaces, Hampi (Karnataka)	Journey through India's glorious past and architectural heritage
<b>Religious Tourism</b>	Visiting sacred sites and participating in spiritual practices of different religions.	Golden Temple (Amritsar), Kashi Vishwanath Temple (Varanasi), Basilica of Bom Jesus (Goa)	Deep spiritual experiences, insights into religious traditions
<b>Pilgrimage Tourism</b>	Traveling to holy sites for religious purposes, often a spiritual journey.	Char Dham (Uttarakhand), Vaishno Devi Shrine (J&K), Sabarimala Temple (Kerala)	Undertake journeys of immense spiritual significance
<b>Ecotourism</b>	Sustainable travel to natural areas, emphasizing conservation and environmental appreciation.	Western Ghats, Sundarbans, Kaziranga National Park	Wildlife safaris, bird watching, exploring pristine landscapes responsibly
<b>Rural Tourism</b>	Experiencing traditional lifestyles and cultures in rural areas, promoting village development.	Villages of Rajasthan, Kerala backwaters, rural Punjab	Participate in farming, crafts, local festivals, gain insight into rural life
<b>Festival Tourism</b>	Participating in vibrant and diverse cultural celebrations, immersing in traditions.	Diwali (North India), Durga Puja (West Bengal), Holi (all over India)	Witness cultural diversity, experience the joyous spirit of India
<b>Yoga Tourism</b>	Seeking physical and spiritual well-being through yoga and meditation practices.	Rishikesh, Kerala ashrams, Dharamshala retreats	Practice yoga, meditation, achieve holistic health in peaceful environments
<b>Ayurveda Tourism</b>	Rejuvenation and healing through traditional Indian medicine and wellness treatments.	Kerala Ayurvedic centers, Goa, Karnataka	Experience authentic Ayurvedic therapies, restore balance and health
<b>Wildlife Tourism</b>	Observing diverse flora and fauna in their natural habitats.	Ranthambore National Park (Rajasthan), Jim Corbett National Park (Uttarakhand), Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary (Kerala)	Thrilling safaris, learn about wildlife conservation
<b>Mountain Tourism</b>	Seeking respite from the plains in picturesque towns with scenic beauty and pleasant weather.	Shimla (Himachal Pradesh), Darjeeling (West Bengal), Ooty (Tamil Nadu)	Enjoy leisurely vacations, nature walks, explore colonial architecture
<b>Beach Tourism</b>	Relaxing by the sea and enjoying water sports along India's beautiful coastline.	Goa, Kovalam (Kerala), Marina Beach (Chennai), Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Sunbathe, participate in water activities, experience serene coastal beauty
<b>Desert Tourism</b>	Exploring the vast landscapes of the Thar Desert.	Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Jodhpur (Rajasthan)	Camel safaris, desert camps, experience traditional Rajasthani culture
<b>Spiritual Tourism</b>	Seeking inner peace, enlightenment, and personal growth through spiritual practices.	Varanasi, Rishikesh, Bodh Gaya	Meditate, attend spiritual lectures, participate in rituals, deepen spiritual understanding

## 5. FOREIGN TOURISTS – INDIA AS DESTINATION

India's foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) have mirrored a rollercoaster ride over the past decade. Tourist numbers saw a significant surge between 2010 and 2014, followed by a period of consistent growth. Notably, 2019 marked a peak with a record 17.91 million FTAs. However, the COVID-19 pandemic dealt a severe blow in 2020 and 2021, causing a sharp

decline in tourist arrivals. Thankfully, 2023 shows a positive trend with 9.23 million FTAs, reflecting a strong rebound compared to previous years. Despite this progress, India's tourism industry remains 15.5% below pre-pandemic levels. This data suggests the industry needs to focus on regaining its pre-COVID momentum. Figure 1.1 depicts the foreign tourists arrivals in India from the year 2010 to 2023.

**Figure 1.1 Foreign Tourists Arrivals in India** (Source:www.economictimes.com)



Building tourist destination loyalty is crucial for India's tourism industry's long-term success. This means creating positive experiences that keep visitors coming back for more. Strategies like offering unique cultural experiences beyond the usual tourist spots, catering to diverse travel styles, and ensuring smooth travel logistics can go a long way. By focusing on these aspects and exceeding visitor expectations, India can not only regain its pre-pandemic momentum but also cultivate a loyal base of international tourists.

## 6. IMPACT OF TOURISM ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

Tourism can have a significant impact on local communities, both positive and negative. On the positive side, tourism can create jobs and income for local people. It can also help to preserve local culture and heritage. However, tourism can also lead to problems such as inflation, overcrowding, and environmental degradation. This topic could look at the different ways that tourism is impacting local communities in India, and how these impacts can be managed. Tourism always has both sides. While it brings many benefits, there can also be downsides for local communities. On the positive side, responsible tourism, especially nature-based options, can be a big moneymaker for rural areas. Think tiger reserves in Madhya Pradesh - tourists come, money flows in, and the local economy gets a boost. Tourism also creates jobs in hotels, transportation, and souvenir shops, giving locals

a chance to earn a living. Plus, new roads, hotels, and restaurants often pop up to cater to tourists, which can also benefit the community.

However, there's a flip side also. If tourism grows too fast, it can sometimes weaken local cultures. Traditions might change as people cater to tourists, and outside influences can take root. Uncontrolled tourism can also hurt the environment. More tourists means more waste, more water used, and more energy needed, which can put a strain on local resources. Finally, relying too heavily on tourism can be risky. If the number of tourists suddenly drops, the whole local economy can suffer, especially in places where tourism is seasonal.

## 7. USP OF INDIAN TOURISM

India's tourism industry boasts an unrivalled tapestry of experiences. Immerse yourself in the vibrant culture, delve into the depths of ancient history, and explore a land of diverse landscapes. Unlike many destinations, India offers a kaleidoscope of adventures - trek through the majestic Himalayas, marvel at the architectural brilliance of the Mughals, or unwind on pristine beaches. It's a land steeped in spirituality, where the serenity of yoga and meditation coexists with the lively energy of bustling bazaars and vibrant festivals. This unique blend of historical treasures, spiritual havens, and breath-taking natural wonders sets India apart, crafting an unforgettable travel experience unlike any other.

## 8. CHALLENGES OF INDIAN TOURISM

Despite the captivating beauty and cultural richness India offers, its tourism industry faces a multitude of challenges that hinder its full potential. The "Incredible India" campaign, while effective in raising awareness, has struggled to overcome these hurdles. One key challenge is fierce global competition. Breathtaking landscapes, ancient ruins, and vibrant cultures can be found across the globe, making it difficult for India to stand out. Furthermore, attracting high-spending tourists from lucrative regions like Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa remains a struggle. Even for seasoned travelers, showcasing India's hidden gems beyond the usual tourist trail proves to be an obstacle. Highlighting the diverse experiences India offers, from exhilarating adventures in the Himalayas to the delectable cuisines of various regions, seems to get lost in translation.

Another significant challenge lies in infrastructure limitations. Many tourist destinations lack proper sanitation facilities, reliable transportation networks, and well-maintained tourist information centers. This can be a major deterrent for international travelers, especially those accustomed to a certain level of comfort and convenience. Bureaucratic hurdles also create friction for both tourists and travel businesses. Obtaining visas can be a time-consuming and complex process, potentially discouraging potential visitors. Additionally, navigating regulations and permits for setting up tourism-related businesses can be a tedious task for entrepreneurs. Safety concerns, especially for solo female travelers, are a lingering issue. While strides have been made in recent years, ensuring the safety and security of all tourists remains a

top priority. Finally, promoting sustainable tourism practices is crucial. Uncontrolled tourist influx can lead to environmental degradation, straining local resources and impacting natural ecosystems. Integrating sustainable practices into tourist activities and infrastructure development is essential for the long-term success of the industry. By addressing these challenges and focusing on effectively communicating India's unique offerings, the tourism industry can unlock its true potential. A renewed focus on infrastructure development, streamlined visa processes, and robust safety measures will create a more welcoming environment for international tourists. Emphasizing sustainable practices will ensure the industry thrives in harmony with India's natural beauty and cultural heritage.

## CONCLUSION

Indian tourism is expected to develop significantly in the future, but this will need to be done strategically. The industry needs to solve several major issues if it hopes to use its indisputable USP. It is imperative to prioritize tourist safety, promote sustainable practices, and streamline infrastructure development. A greater variety of foreign visitors can only be drawn to India by employing efficient communication techniques that highlight the richness and diversity of the country's historical attractions, natural beauty, and cultural tapestry. India's tourism business has the potential to become a reality by adopting innovative practices and prioritizing a comprehensive tourist experience. This would strengthen India's standing as a must-visit location for travellers seeking adventure, culture, and history.

## REFERENCES

1. <http://www.incredibleindia.org>
2. <https://skift.com/2024/03/19/ask-skift-what-are-the-top-travel-trends-in-india>  
<https://tourism.gov.in/tourism-infrastructure-development>
3. <https://tourism.gov.in>
4. <https://travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/people/the-impact-of-tourism-on-local-communities-and-conservation-efforts>
5. <https://www.deccanherald.com/india/what-steps-indian-government-can-take-to-boost-tourism-1215296.html>
6. <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/tourism>
7. <https://www.zionmarketresearch.com/>
8. Lugosi, P. (2007). Consumer participation in commercial hospitality. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 1(3), 227-236.
9. Makkalageri, S. N. (2024). Revamping the Tourism and Hospitality Industry in Karnataka through Enhanced Customer experience. *VLEARNY Journal of Business*, 1(1), 15-24.  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10540664>
10. Ni, M. S. N., & Wirawan, I. M. A. (2021). The impact of tourism on the quality of life of communities in tourist destination areas: A systematic review. *Open Access Macedonian Journal of Medical Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.3889/OAMJMS.2021.59>