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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

India's tourist sector plays a major role in the nation's cultural variety and economic expansion. The industry offers a special chance to advance women's empowerment and gender equality as it grows. A number of programs and regulations have been put in place to encourage women's active involvement in this booming sector in recognition of their capacity to propel sustainable development. The present research covers core components of women empowerment and what are the steps taken by the government of India in enhancing participation of women in the tourism industry in India.



KEYWORDS: tourist, economic, women empowerment, sustainable development, participation.

INTRODUCTION:

As a multifaceted social fabric, tourism has significant financial, cultural, and economic ramifications. In addition to being a worldwide pastime, tourism opens doors for women to find work, provides chances for personal development, and helps enhance local communities and women in impoverished countries. Nonetheless, the gender dynamics that are present in the tourism industry are crucial in determining the roles that travelers and tourism product providers take on. The complex effects of tourism on women are influenced by a number of variables, including cultural quirks, geographic location, and race.

Discussions about opening doors for women started in a number of civil society organizations on World Tourism Day in 2007. However, there was criticism that access alone was insufficient, and there wasn't any data to show that women in the tourism industry would actually gain from it. UNWTO and United Nations Women recently released the Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010, which provides quantifiable information on "the status of women working in tourism worldwide." It supports the idea that, in comparison to other economic sectors, tourism offers greater opportunity for women to participate in the workforce, build friendships, and take on leadership responsibilities. However, underrepresentation, underutilization, and underpaid status remain problems for women in the tourism industry.

Tourism has the potential to pave the way for success for women, as indicated by key findings in the report:

- ✓ Women play a significant role, making substantial contributions and creating formal workplaces in the tourism industry.
- ✓ Women excel in clerical job roles but are inadequately represented in professional positions.
- ✓ Earnings of women in tourism are, on average, 15% less than their male counterparts.

- ✓ The tourism sector employs a higher percentage of women compared to other industries.
- ✓ Surveys reveal that only one in five tourism ministers worldwide is a woman.
- ✓ Women contribute significantly as self-employed workers in the tourism sector compared to other home-based sectors.
- ✓ A considerable amount of unpaid work is undertaken by women in the overall tourism business.

Objectives of the study

1. To understand the core components of women's empowerment
2. To know the steps taken by the Government of India to enhance the participation of women in tourism sector.

Research methodology

Researcher used secondary data for obtain the related information from various publications, journals, thesis, books, articles and bulletins from Ministry of Tourism , Government of India etc...

COMPONENTS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The five core components of women's empowerment, as defined by the UN, focus on inner strength, choice, control, access, and societal influence: a woman's self-worth, her right to determine choices, her power to control her life, access to opportunities and resources, and the ability to influence social change for a fairer world. These interconnected elements allow women to gain power and agency over their lives and surroundings, fostering personal and collective advancement.

Here are the 5 components:

- ✓ **Sense of Self-Worth:** A woman's belief in her own value, capabilities, and the right to assert herself and her needs.
- ✓ **Right to Determine Choices:** Freedom to make decisions about personal matters like education, career, marriage, and health.
- ✓ **Power to Control Life:** Authority to make decisions and have agency within and outside the home, challenging traditional power imbalances.
- ✓ **Access to Opportunities & Resources:** Equitable access to essential resources like education, healthcare, economic assets, and technology.
- ✓ **Ability to Influence Social Change:** Capacity to challenge existing norms, policies, and structures that perpetuate inequality, working towards a more just society.

These components are often supported by broader factors like education, economic independence, political participation, and freedom from violence, all contributing to a holistic empowerment framework.

STEPS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO ENHANCE THE PARTICIPATION IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

1. Government of India has signed a MoU with Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) & FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) on 21st August 2020 to promote tourism as sustainable livelihood model for women's economic empowerment.
2. The MoU was signed with the objective of increasing the participation of women in the tourism sector. The State Chapters of FLO and TAAI will create awareness, along with state tourism departments and state tourism corporations, to highlight the vital role, the tourism industry can play as a model for sustainable livelihood for women and ensure their economic upliftment. Some of the main components proposed under the initiative are:
 - (i) Encourage travel to at least 15 destinations within the country under the Dekho Apna Desh initiative.
 - (ii) Conduct community-based tourism activities around one Iconic Monument or Tourist Landmark in each state. Women will be the tour guides, run food stalls, souvenir stalls with their own arts & crafts, handle the overall accounts and running of the landmark.

- (iii) Women to be engaged and sensitised about the Atithi Devo Bhava motto through workshops to be organised by NGOs, implementing agencies, travel industry associations etc.
 - (iv) Create community-driven and women-led initiatives for rural and urban homestays to provide livelihood opportunities for women.
 - (v) Create awareness about the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF) Certification Programme.
3. To encourage the share of female employment, a 50% concession in course fee is being extended to all women applicants/candidates towards the enrolment fee for the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification Programme, which is a digital initiative of Ministry of Tourism aimed at creating an online learning platform with the objective of creating a pool of well trained and professional Tourist Facilitators across the country, including in remote areas with tourism potential. The candidates can pursue these online courses from anywhere and at any time and at their own pace. The programme is being conducted by the Indian Institute of Travel and Tourism Management (IITTM) w.e.f 01.01.2020.
4. Ministry of Tourism has formulated a National Strategy and Roadmap for Development of Rural Tourism in India in consultation with line Ministries including Ministry of Women & Child Development, all State Governments and Industry Stakeholders. The Strategy document aims at convergence of various schemes relating to, inter alia, empowerment of women so that opportunities in rural tourism are availed by women and tourism is able to act as a vehicle for development and empowerment of women.

Apart from the above, Ministry of Tourism has also formulated a National Strategy for Promotion of Rural Homestays which, inter alia, envisages the role of Self-Help Groups for Women in running Rural Homestays.

CONCLUSION

In addition to being a question of gender equality, women's empowerment in India's tourist sector is essential for long-term economic growth and development. The industry grows more diverse, inclusive, and flexible in response to shifting trends as more women assume leadership positions. India's tourist sector can fully utilize women's potential and build a better, more successful future for the country as a whole by offering equal opportunities, skill development, and assistance. Women's empowerment in the tourist sector will only fully grow and have a long-lasting effect on India's social and economic landscape if governments, organizations, and society work together.

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