Chapter 13

Tourism Motivational Factors in Bhutan: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

The concept of tourism has become one of the vital issues of economic and social benefits to the society. This present study identifies different motivational factors which may directly or indirectly influence the tourists’ motivation. The primary objective of this study includes the growth, development and emergence of tourism potentials at Bhutan, in particular, as well as to analyze the tourist flow pattern and also examine the existing and future requirement in the motivational point of view. The major findings of this study show, in the present scenario of the above factors, how to attract more tourists for repeat visit and promoting infrastructural requirement for better tourism service to increase the level of tourists’ motivation as well. In the policy implication point of view this study is relevant for balancing the demand and supply of tourism motivational requirement indicators which can offer better service excellence in the study area.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a dynamic sector in local economics where farming, forestry or other traditional activities sustain the importance. The obvious and rapid development of tourism gains deserved attention from social science. Tourism is also an employment-oriented sector. It is estimated that hotel and catering sector provide more than 10% of the total employment generated by the tourism industry. There is an opportunity which supplies various goods, needed for tourism product may be in the position to open avenues of employment. Tourism destinations are generally following kinds of products are available, viz. historical, heritage, natural-based, religious-based, cultural-based and manmade. Tourists’ motivation has influenced by variety of factors like tourism infrastructure, civic amenities, publicity, and peoples’ ignorance in accessibility to tourist location. As a result, tourists from home country and overseas coun-

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tries prefer to visit urban tourist sites. It has tremendous potential for growth due to peoples’ interest for travel and to explore nature and religious sites. Tourism in Bhutan is expected to play a key role in the country’s economic growth, human resource, culture, wealth of the country in terms of foreign exchange earnings, etc. Simultaneously, it has a direct bearing on local culture, socio-economic pattern of life, traditions, food habit, language, values & ethics of the local people due to frequent visits of national and international tourists in attractive tourist destinations. People love to visit tourist locations to have a flavor of pilgrimage, cultural heritage, and nature or even for getting away from the monotony of the routine life. People not only rejuvenate from these visits but also directly contribute for the growth of the local economy in terms of hospitality industry, handicraft industry and secondary occupation as tourists guide, carriers, etc.

An Existing Literatures

Fisher and Price (1991) studied travel motivations and post-vacation cultural attitude change. The authors suggested that the need and desires of travel will influence tourist’s attitudes and behaviour while on a trip. Tourist motivated by a desire to meet new people and experience new culture might be different from tourists motivated by a need to relax on the beach. Differences in motivations are manifest depending upon the interaction of tourists with the host culture and the likelihood of post-vacation attitude change (Fisher & Price 1991). Also, Hirschman (1984) identified leisure motivations at a deeper level such as escaping from reality, involvement, and competitiveness. Social motivations were further divided into two dimensions: kinship and new people. Although travel motivations are different from one person to the other and from one culture to other, it may be commonly observed that tourists look for two major dimensions of leisure and pleasure travel motives – push and pull dimension. Within the context of tourism, motivation is one of the many variables that affect tourists travel decision of whether or not to go on a trip. Motivation theory suggests that travel motive is a dynamic process of internal psychological factors that generate an uncomfortable level of tension within individuals’ minds and bodies (Um and Crompton 1990; Crompton, 1992) All tourist behaviour or activity results from motivation. It is the ‘trigger’ that sets off all events in travel (Parrinello 1993) and, as such, is the very basis of the demand for tourism. Therefore, the analysis of motivational factors can help explain travel behaviour and destination choice and, in a practical sense, enable tourism organizations to satisfy the needs of tourists. Ray et al. (2012) tourism impact; Lane (1994) offers some tourism market trends that will accelerate the growth of rural tourism in the future. He points to a growing interest in rural life, including heritage and tradition, an increasing health consciousness giving a positive appeal to rural lifestyles and values, market interest in high performance outdoor equipment, search for solitude and relaxation in a quiet natural place, and an aging but active population retiring earlier but living and travelling far into old age. As increasing of attention has been paid to rural tourism as a specific form of tourism development, so too has the scope of research into tourism in rural areas become more diverse.

Objectives

Over the past decade, the concept of tourism has become one of the vital issues of economic and social benefits to the society. The main objectives of this study include the growth, development and emergence