Chapter 4

Cultural Connect for Tourism Development in BRIC Nations

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ABSTRACT

BRIC forum is a word used to denote the four countries of the world, that is, Brazil, Russia, India, and China, and was created to strengthen the cultural cooperation between these nations vis-à-vis building political and economic areas. Lately South Africa also joined as a member in 2010. The BRIC Nations are expected to be the primary drivers of tourism growth. And one aspect of tourism growth that cannot be left out is the cultural connect. Therefore, this paper is a conceptual examination of how strong the cultures of the countries under the BRICs umbrella and what potential and opportunities does these Nations have to develop a cultural connect for tourism. The results of the study show that these nations are well endowed with good weather, extensive cultural and natural attractions, wildlife and a host of other opportunities. And in order to boost this industry, cultural coordination amongst all these nations is required, which can be achieved through establishing cultural circuit vis-a-vis establishing various international cultural events, may be in the form of business events. This will not only enhance the tourism but will also have a positive effect on the economy of these BRIC nations. Already the governments of all these nations are taking considerable steps in facilitating the tourists to visit these nations, which in turn is promoting tourism as well business.

INTRODUCTION

BRIC forum is a word used to denote the four countries of the world i.e. Brazil, Russia, India and china, and was created to strengthen the cultural cooperation between these nations vis-à-vis building political and economical areas. As it is a known fact that the tourism has a great economic importance, this step of BRIC forum will eventually lead to a boost in the tourism sector, thereby increasing the economic revenue. South Africa, after joining as a member in 2010, has seen an increase in tourist arrivals form
BRIC countries which grew by 20.8% since 2010 (BRICS Tourism Analysis). These Nations are expected to be the primary drivers of tourism growth globally in the next five years, according to a report from Euromonitor International (Amster, 2013). The BRICS countries possess enormous potential for tourism; with coordination between them and provisions of better infrastructure and communication, tourism can be a major revenue earner. The intra-group flow of tourists will itself, as these countries comprise about 40 percent of world population, be a significant gain for economic development of the members (Mahapatra, 2013).

**CULTURE IN BRIC NATIONS**

Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Culture is like a wheel which rotates the wheel of life of man on this planet. Culture includes the moral ideas which are universally acceptable.

Since last few decades the role of heritage and culture has been the subject of debate. There is a new trend of the marketing and commoditization of past and heritage as an experience to be consumed has been at the forefront, a trend towards culture consumption and strongly related to many tourism and leisure activities. As cited earlier that potential for tourism growth among these nations is enormous. These nations are well endowed with good weather, extensive cultural and natural attractions, wildlife and a host of other opportunities. Cultural attractions that stir movements of persons from their residence, passing experiences and factual information that satisfy the cultural needs are critical for the development of tourism at local, regional, national and international levels. Promoting communal cultures and traditions as well as preserving our national heritage is paramount in protecting the various traditions from disappearing.

The BRIC nations also have a huge tourism potential. Culture is a particularly opportune area because most BRICS countries have historical or even ancient ties with one another. For example, the Chinese scholar Xuanzang journeyed through India for 17 years between 600-700 AD. The famous Wild Goose Pagoda in Xian, which was built to honor Xuanzang, is where Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi started his China visit in May. Many other BRICS members boast of traditional and historical links. For instance, India, China and Russia were all connected by the ancient Silk Route, which was a corridor not only for trade, but also for religions and philosophies. Brazil and India were linked 500 years ago by Portuguese marine expansion. More recently, BRICS countries have participated in cultural exchange programs through reciprocal visits by performing artists or exchanges of art works. Often, however, these exchanges are burdened by an “exotica” tag and tend to target only the cognoscenti. At times, they also get lost in the procession of routine exchanges with non-BRICS members.

**Brazil**

Brazil’s recent emergence as one of the BRICS countries, whose economy is the world’s seventh largest by purchasing power parity, has made it increasingly attractive to the governments, business sectors and citizens of other regions as a trading partner and power to be reckoned with. This heightened world interest in Brazil applies to the cultural realm as well and the country’s cultural actors, both governmental and non-governmental, are increasingly sought after as participants in cultural events and projects elsewhere. Brazil, also called the “land of contrasts” is among the most attractive places in the world hosts
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