



Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits of Sports Tourism

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Introduction

Sports is the biggest social phenomenon and source of recreation for the human society. Sports tourism is recognised as a leisure tourism meant to participate or witness the games out of usual beat area by a person for non-remunerative and non- immigration purpose. According to a report by Market Analysts Future Market Insights (FMI), the total spending in the Indian sports tourism market that was pegged at \$9,469 million in 2002 is expected to rise to \$37,646.3 million in 2032 at a CAGR of 14.8 percent; during this period, the number of sports tourist will go up from 37.2 million to 213.3 million.

Definition of Sports Tourism

The concept of sport related tourism has become more prominent in the last few years as both an academic field of multidisciplinary study and an increasingly popular tourism product. (Gibson, 1998) According to Neirotti (2003), sports tourism can be broadly described as; ‘Including travel away from one’s primary residence to participate in Sports activity, for the recreation or competition purposes, travel to observe Sport at grassroots or elite level, and travel to visit a sports attraction such as a sports museum, for instance’. Hinch and Hingam (2001) defined the concept of sport tourism from the connotation and time attributes. They believe that sport tourism is carried out in a limited time, based on the characteristics of sport elements such as competition, regularity, interest, and leisure, and the coinciding with travel activities.

Physiography based Potential of Sports Activities in India-

- Long coastline of 4500 kilometers of India for sand-volleyball & Kabaddi
- Landscapes, clean beaches, sere mountain retreats for yoga and health benefit seeker of sportspersons.
- During summers enchanting retreats amid Himalayas, Western Ghats with cool trekking trails, stretches of white water for adventure seekers.



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- Lovely beaches of sun-bath of Goa & Tamilnadu in Winters
 - Winter sports of Trekking & Skiing in Kargil, Gulmerg& Sonmerg in Kashmir
 - River rafting in Haridwar & Rishikesh in Uttrakhand
 - Camel & Jeep Safari in the desert destinations like Jodhpur & Jasalmer of Rajasthan
 - Para-gliding in various destinations of Himachal Pradesh viz. Manali & Khajiar
 - Water based sports in Goa
 - Scuba-Diving in Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Benefits of Sports Tourism

It is human nature to group in mass and to co-exist collectively. Social interaction is essential to long term mental stability and well being of any individual. Societies have always found reason to form communities, first out of need for food or protection, then for a sense of belonging and trust (McMillan, 2011).

Sports tourism strives to achieve its aims and objectives by organising sports activities & events within the country, neighboring and overseas countries and conserves its sports traditions and heritage. It renews tourism and sports culture in broad perspective-

1. At present, sports tourism is on the role that it plays in the globalisation process and the impacts of global development on culture, traditions and identity, especially for regional, ethnic and minority groups. In a world that is troubled by conflicts and xenophobia often based on misunderstandings, sports tourism can facilitate cultural dialog, harmony and understanding among people: More in-depth knowledge of other people's culture will stimulate understanding and cooperation. It promotes communication and integration.

2. It enhances the awareness of the importance of the sports property resources in a more purely economic sense, with the firm belief that sports heritage plays an important role in national development and in social cohesion and that investment in the sector should be made in ways to contribute to poverty alleviation and support sustainable development worldwide. Chen (2009) believes that the features, results and values achieved the sports tourism include loyalty, socialization, self –realization, volunteering and gender equality though sports.



3. It promotes the transfer of know- how and the creation of new careers opportunities through education and training programs for communities, participants in management and capacity building, economic distribution techniques and access to technological innovation for new generations.
4. It provides an opportunity to develop living traditions and sports enterprise development and set up incentives and instruments for sports-related investments, to promote effective public-private partnership in events of sports heritage preservation in developing countries. Sports tourism is not only about visiting a place for doing a specific sport but it is a mix of culture, politics and economics.(Weed & Bull 2004)
5. The development of sports tourism for singularly touristic purposes will follow a more direct envisioned commercial direction and the experience offered to the tourists will come to be more standardized and recognizable, rebounding the tourism in old communities.



Economic, Social & Environmental Benefits of Sports Tourism

Economic Benefits	Social Benefits	Environment Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic growth of the Region• Develop tourist Infrastructure & facilities which is used by local community• Potential to attract high yield visitors & repeat visitors• Additional jobs for local people during the sports events/ competitions• Sports tourism may enforce a financial legacy for re-investment of new sport facilities• Development of new tourist destinations• Encourage Entrepreneurship in Locals & Youth welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interaction, appreciation & exposure with foreigners increase the image of local community• To integrate & develop the sense of community• Marketing of the destination with its tourist attractions, facilities & services available i.e. captions shown during the live coverage of matches• Sports tourism encourages to understand the true spirit of games among all, associated with games	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A game demands certain standard parameters of the climate & environment. Hence, fosters healthy environment for organizing sports events• Thousands of players, fans & technical & supporting staff stay during a mega-sports event, therefore sanitation & hygiene at the destinations becomes integral part of planning by the organizing agencies & cannot be overlooked• The commercialization of sports depends upon its mass media coverage and a supply of service relationships



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