



## **The Socio- Economic Benefits of Tourism- A Case Study of ‘The Statue of Unity’ in Gujrat**

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### **Introduction**

‘The Statue’ tourism is gaining more popularity after a number of global statues & towers like Spring Temple of Buddha in China, Statue of Liberty in United States, Christ The Redeemer in Brazil has successfully attracted millions of tourist annually . On the similar lines, the construction of the World’s highest Statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, in the vicinity of the river Narmada in Gujrat , dignifies India as the emerging economic and political power in the World .This 182 meter height statue reflects the contribution & Statesmanship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in uniting all 562 princely states of the country to build Republic of India. Another 216 feet tall ‘The Statue of Equality’ is constructed in Hyderabad of south India to commemorate 11<sup>th</sup> century Bhakti saint and social reformer Ramanujacharya . Based on the public-private partnership model at a distance of 3.5 km from Kevadia town, this new tourist attraction will work as a catalyst in the promotion of tourism of this region. The Exhibition Hall, The Museum, Wall of Unity, Laser Light & Sound Show in the Evening, Tour of Valley of Flowers and Sardar Sarovar Dam, Helicopter ride, sight- seeing of Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary and Temple, trekking in Zarvani Eco- tourism area, bird watching and shopping the major touristic activities in and around the corridor.

### **Social and Economic Benefit of Tourism**

Tourism is the backbone of the economy of almost each country of the world. It affects the social & economic lives of communities and proves to be a life support system for many destinations. Bires, Z., and Raj, S. (2020) observed that tourism is seen as a poverty alleviation, economic diversification and inter-cultural strategy in most regions of the world. It had been described as one of the fastest-growing industry in terms of revenue generation and employment opportunities. During the previous decade, tourism has been a major contributor to the increased economic mettle & activity throughout the world.



## **Social Benefits of Tourism**

### **National Integration**

Tourism can play a vital role in strengthening social bonding in various communities in country. No other activity has the ability for breaking & removing the social fractions and barriers of caste & creed, motivation linguistic groups to communicate with one another and promoter inter & intra-regional understanding. Swadesh Paryaten initiative by the Union Government of India is a strive to give different streams of civilization an opportunity to intermingle with one another and appreciate the social and cultural diversity of the country.

### **International Understanding & World Peace**

Tourism can be used as an instrument for National & International understanding and world peace. Through tourism people can achieve better understanding and appreciate the culture, history, geography, social, political, educational, and economic systems of other countries. Tourism gives an opportunity to express and explain the philosophy and principals a community & creed and hence leaves no space for ambiguity and mis-understanding. The opening of Kartarpur Corridor in 2019 between India & Pakistan is a very recent and strong example of social interaction and appreciation for the people of both sides and fosters respect for social sentiments for each other.

### **Development and Preservation of Local Culture**

Tourism provides an opportunity to interface structural and cultural exchange. Gujrat tourism encourages & preserves the local handicrafts, language, traditions, gastronomy, art & folk arts, various architecture and music & dance styles including concerts (performing colourful Garba dance around festival of Dussehra), paintings and sculptures.

### **Improved Infrastructure**

Tourism brings advanced & improved in infrastructure in the region. It provides better services and infrastructure in the form of power, water, health, telecommunication , rail ,road and air connectivity, increase the services of banking & insurance and new national & international



investments viz .Foreign Direct Investment, all serve to enhance & improve the lifestyle of communities in Kevadia Region.

### **Bring Sense of National & Community Pride**

Tourism fosters National pride & integrity among locals. The community of the tourist destination recognise the special features of their society and feel proud. Well maintained tourist infrastructure & facilities reflects the sensitivity of local population towards natural & cultural environment and respect for tourist.

### **Economic Benefits of Tourism**

Tourism bring massive economic benefits to the host country, especially in developing countries, one of the main region to promote itself as a tourist destinations. The economic benefits of tourism are generally measured at local, regional and national level.

### **Foreign Exchange Earning**

The expenditure done by the tourist on buying various services & facilities and the import & export of tourism related goods generate income to the nations. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ‘an important indicator of the role of international tourism is its generation of foreign exchange earnings. Tourism is one of the top five exports categories for as many as 83 percent of countries and is main source of foreign exchange for atleast of 38 percent of countries’. The foreign exchange earnings from Tourism stood US\$ 28.7 billion in India during 2017-18 . (Source : Ministry of Tourism , Government of India)

### **Contribution to the Government Revenues**

The revenue generation emanating from international tourism is roughly 1.5 trillion USD annually Kozhokulov, S., Chen, X., Yang, D., Issanova, G., Samarkhanov, K., and Aliyeva, S. (2019). Tourism generates revenues to the government in the form of taxes (income, service, transportation, Import, Excise tax etc) and entry fee charged from tourist on visiting a historical monument & building, Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks etc. The government run handicraft emporium at



destinations, duty free shops, hotels, coach services etc which increases the government revenues. According to Gujrat Tourism Department 26 lakhs of tourist visited the place of 'The Statue of Unity' and contributed 57 crores of rupees to the government revenues in during 2018-19.

### **Employment Generation**

Tourism is labour- intensive & service Industry. It has the capacity to create employment for large number of people depending on different levels of education & skills, from unskilled to managerial levels. Tourism industry largely depends on human workforce rather than machines like in other manufacturing industries. Presently, tourism industry contributes 6.23 percent of GDP and about 9 percent of the total employment in India. The Industry directly provided more than 22 millions jobs. Tourism provides employment to primary, secondary & territory sectors of the economy through direct, indirect and induced employment.

### **Development of Regional Infrastructure**

One of the characteristics of underdevelopment is deficiency in infrastructure. Tourism development in region is possible, by providing the best and varied accommodation, transportation, shopping, communication network and other recreational services & activities to the tourist. This will persuade the government and private entrepreneurs to invest & develop necessary facilities & service for the tourists and take economic gains. It results to economic and entrepreneurial development of the area. The tourist services & amenities will also be utilized by the local community residents.

### **Multiplier Effect of Tourism**

Multiplier effect means the flow of money earned from tourist expending multiply as it passes through various sectors of the economy. Interestingly, in many studies, tourism multiplier is found high in comparison to other sectors of economy. Expenditure of tourism activities in a destination creates new incomes and output in the region which in return produces further sectoral investment and incomes. This re- spending of incomes by the destination beneficiaries creates additional incomes in the form of multiplier effect.



## Conclusion

To begin with this niche tourism is a milestone & achievement of all the stakeholders of this project. This statue will particularly accelerate the tourism activities in Narmada river belt and socio-economic development of Gujrat. The tourism business should be planned in such a way that it minimises the social and environmental impacts and provides full economic benefit for society. It makes the economy growth in society. (Shapley & Telfer 2002.) Tourism promotes cultural diversity & spirituality, increase tourism receipts; generate employment opportunities and exchange of values, cultures, traditions and way of living between tourist and host community. Further, emphasis on this typology of tourism through proper policy interventions is also expected in integrating regions having socio-cultural and economic diversity in the country.

## References

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