Tourism in Rajasthan – With Special Reference to Jaisalmer

Dr. (Mrs.) Prakash Sirvi
Associate Professor
Economics
SPC Govt. College
Ajmer, Rajasthan

Abstract- Jaisalmer the golden city of Rajasthan is famous for tourism. As you approach Jaisalmer you realize that your imagination is not playing tricks after all. Rising from the heart of the Thar desert etched in yellow sandstone, this citadel city stand in all its splendor. This research paper aims to focus on tourism in the state of Rajasthan, with a special reference to Jaisalmer. Its historical landmarks, and breathtaking landscapes, Jaisalmer is famous for its majestic forts, ornate havelis and mesmerizing sand dunes. This paper examine the key factor that contribute to the popularity of tourism in Rajasthan and evaluates the unique attraction and exceptional destination. Additionally it explores the challenges and opportunities facing the tourism industry in the region and proposes strategies for sustainable tourism development.

Key words- Eco tourism, heritage, socio-economic service industry, desert.

Introduction
Rajasthan is one of the leading tourism state of India. This industry is different from other service industry as tourist have to reach the places to avail the services. In 1982 the planning commission of India recognized tourism as an industry. It is a comprehensive industry including transportation, tourist destination, travel companies, hospitality, hotels etc.

Jaisalmer is popular for both domestic and international tourists. The slogan “Padharo Mhare Desh” attracts the tourists from various places. Rajasthan rank 6th in India in foreign tourist arrivals and 10th in domestic tourist arrivals. Major tourism cities in Rajasthan are Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer. Tourism industry not only boost economic activities, infrastructure development, foreign exchange but is a major source of employment generation. The other benefits of tourism is it protects rich natural habitat, bio diversity, historical architectural and cultural heritage of Rajasthan. It promotes socio economic development of the state, by minimizing the negative impact and thereby promoting sustainable development.

Jaisalmer situated in western Rajasthan, is the heart of Thar desert. The town stands on ridge of yellowish sandstone crowned by ancient Jaisalmer fort. Being an arid desert region it is prone to extremes in terms of temperature. According to 2011 census the population was 65471, around 90% of population is Hindu, 8.2%, muslim and remaining are Sikhs, Christian and Jains. Tourism is major industry of Jaisalmer. It is rich in natural gas. Musicians and dancers are a major cultural export from Jaisalmer to rest of the world. The cultural heritage is also very rich the raj mahal, Jain temple, museum, gadisar lake are worth seeing. Jaisalmer is well connected by buses, railways, luxury tourist train, palace on wheels well connects Jaisalmer with other tourist destinations of Rajasthan.

The travel industry is becoming important for generating employment and earning wealth. In today's global economy, the customer is global and is king or queen. The travel industry is one of the world's largest industry and is the most international in nature. The purpose of this industry is to create and maintain satisfied, profitable customer. The state Government has designed a pragmatic tourism policy to ensure optimum utilization to enrich tourism of the state to generate employment specially in the rural areas to develop a ready market for the rich and varied handicrafts, to preserve and to accelerate contribution to tourism industry in socio economic development of the state by making tourism a truly people's industry. In Rajasthan tourism has emerged as important instrument for sustainable human development of remote areas and including poverty alleviation, employment generation, environmental regeneration and development of remote areas and advancement of women and other disadvantaged groups in the country apart from promoting social integration and international understanding.

Jaisalmer has emerged as one of the favourite tourist destination in Rajasthan for both domestic and foreign tourists. In year 2021 the state receive 219.89 million domestic tourist, 0.35 million foreign tourist who visited Rajasthan. On an average foreign tourist spends Rs. 847 per month and domestic tourist spends Rs. 7114 per month. The average stay of the foreign tourist in the state is 2.5 days. The total spending by all is over Rs. 7961 lakhs per month. Every
rupee spent by a tourist in the state, changes hands thirteen times and every hotel room generates direct employment to three persons and indirectly to eight persons. The Annual rate of growth for domestic tourists has been 7% and for international tourists has been 5%. Jaisalmer plays an important role in all of the above aspects in the state tourism.

**Literature Review**

Rathore Ragini (2018) – in her research paper defined Tourism as temporary movement of the people to destination outside their normal place of work and residence. The activities undertaken during their stay in those destination and the facilities created to cater to their need.

Yadav Bharat and Yadav Dr. Manju (2021):- in their research paper elucidates the growth of foreign and domestic tourist arrival in Rajasthan. Tourism remain an important industry to accelerate economic growth of a state. Finding of the study shows an overall increasing trend in domestic, foreign and total tourist arrivals in Rajasthan from 2010 to 2019.

Dr. Lavcena T. Dharmwani (2013) :- in their research paper highlighted that, tourism is a triadic composition of social, natural and the cultural phenomenon, which is emerging as the world’s largest employment generating industry. Indian tourism offers unique products that make India as an ultimate tourism place in world map. Tourism in Rajasthan is famous for forts and palaces, heritage hotels, colourful fairs and festivals, local art and handicrafts. Tourism Industry in Rajasthan suffer some social and environmental problems, such as poor infrastructure, damage to heritage places, environment pollution, lack of connectivity. Rajasthan tourism policy 2020 aims to encourage new investment in the development of new tourist attraction, enhance infrastructure to boost this industry.

Jaisalmer is an important destination for growth of state tourism industry. The beginning of the organized travel marketing required the cooperation of cruise lines, Airlines, auto rental firms and passenger railways cooperatively developed package with cruise lines. This requires coordination in pricing promotion and delivery to those packages. The Govt. agencies play an important role through legislation aimed at enhancing the industry and through promotion to regions, states and nations. The tourist satisfaction is based on post buying experiences the opinions of friends and market information. The tourism industry is growing in Rajasthan and the state reflects its success by the development of Jaipur and the heritage tourism of Jaisalmer. Jaisalmer is an important destination for growth of cultural and heritage tourism.

When the sun sets every evening Jaisalmer is transformed into a magic Kingdom — the Sonar Kila. The best time to visit the golden city is during the Desert festival every February when the city reverberates with sounds and rhythms all its own.

**Prime Sites of Jaisalmer :-**

1. **The Fort:-** The golden hued fort is a sentinel to the bleak deserts cape from its 80 metre high perch on the hill, housing the entire township within its ramparts. The Fort is approached through four gateway Akshya Pol, Suraj pol, Ganesh Pol and Hawa Pol.
2. **Gopa Chowk and Havelis:-** A main market place outside the fort leads to the narrow lanes dotted with famous havelis.
3. **Gadisar Lake :-** A scenic rain water Lake with numerous beautiful shrines around and a spectacular avian variety. The lake is an idyllic spot for outings.
4. **Tazia Tower:-** A pagoda like structure looking up from the Badal Mahal with beautiful "Tazias" ornately decorated bamboo paper and tinsel replicas of bier, carried out in procession during Muharram by the Muslims.
5. **Havelis:-** Some of the most exotic mansions or havelis all intricately latticed are strewn all over Jaisalmer each with different façade.
   - Nathmalji Ki Haveli.
   - Patwon Ki Haveli.
   - Salim Singh Ki Haveli.
6. **Jain Temples:-** The fort has seven exquisitely carved Jain Temples dedicated to the Jain Tirthankaras.
7. **Gyan vihar Library:-** Some of the oldest manuscripts of India are found in this library.
8. **Amer Sagar:-** A pleasant garden beside a lake with mango and other fruit trees, beautifully carved Jain Temples, add to its splendor.
9. **Luderwa:-** The ancient capital of jaisalmer and an important pilgrim spot of the Jain community with some magnificent Jain Temples.
10. **Wood Fossil Park, Akal:-** This park takes you back to the Jurassic period (when the whole Thar region lay under the sea) with 180 million year old fossils the geological landmarks of the study of the Thar Desert.
11. **Sam Sand Dunes:-** No trip to Jaisalmer is complete without a trip to the most picturesque dunes of Sam.
12. **Bada Bagh:-** A fertile oasis on the bank of on artificial lake.
13. **Mool Raj Sager:-** The pleasant shaded grove is perfect nature spot it has now been converted into a resort.
14. Camel Safaris: This is the most interesting means to explore the desertscape and are conducted on various circuits.
15. Desert Festival: Spectacular event coinciding with the full moon in February. The rich culture of the region is on display during this three day long festival.

Objective of the study:
1. To list and evaluate existing potential tourist destinations.
2. To assess the strength of domestic and foreign tourist.
3. To identify the problems of tourism.
4. To suggest various measures for strengthening the tourism industry.

Data Collection and study period:
Secondary data has been used to conduct the research paper. Data was collected from various magazines, news papers and internet (Tourism website). The study period is 2020-21 year of domestic and foreign tourist. Domestic tourism involves residents of one country travelling within that country whereas foreign tourist involves tourist who are travelling to different countries. Domestic tourism does not much create additional income to the country but it boost local businesses and economies and redistribute money to new areas. On other hand foreign tourist increase the foreign exchange reserves.

<table>
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<th>2020 Foreign</th>
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</table>

(Source: Rajasthan Tourism Progress Report 2020-21)

Total tourist arrivals in Rajasthan in year 2021 were 220.24 million out of which Foreign Tourist arrival were 0.35 million and 219.89 million domestic tourists. The arrivals of domestic tourist increased to 44.45% in 2021 as compared to 2020.

Table 1 and figure 1 exhibits the domestic and foreign tourists in major tourist destination of Rajasthan in year 2020 and 2021. Above table shows that in all six major cities, Indian and Foreign Tourists arrivals in year 2020 and 2021. Jaipur ranked first in the year 2020. In respect to domestic tourist 614514 visited Jaipur followed by Udaipur. While with perspective to foreign tourist Jaipur again ranked first. Analysing the tourist to Thar desert Jaisalmer had more domestic and foreign tourist in year 2020 then Bikaner. The number of domestic tourists increased rapidly in year 2021 compared to 2020, but the number of Foreign tourists declined in 2021 compared to 2020 due to covid
pandemic. With special reference to Jaisalmer the Indian Tourists arrivals increased in 2021, so it shows the importance of desert destination Jaisalmer.

In spite of many qualities that make Jaisalmer a hot spot on tourism map, number of tourists coming here are less than those visiting Jaipur, Udaipur and Jodhpur. The main reasons behind this is lack of proper connectivity of Jaisalmer and few 5 star hotel facilities. But when we see only desert districts (Jaisalmer and Bikaner) then we find out that foreign tourists like Jaisalmer more than Bikaner in year 2020-2021.

Tourist arrival trends in Jaisalmer district (2017-2020)

<table>
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<th>Foreign</th>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
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</table>

The above table 2 and chart 2 shows that Indian tourist arrival in Jaisalmer is more than foreign tourist in year 2017 to 2020. The table showed that foreign tourist arrival continuously decreased from the year 2017 to 2020. Besides challenging economic environment, high inflation and spike in oil prices, global recession, uncertainty created from Russian aggression against Ukraine also had reverse impact on international tourism.

Findings:
1. Most of the domestic and foreign tourist were influenced by the Havelis of the destination.
2. Most of the tourists were satisfied by the unique heritage places in Jaisalmer.
3. The shopping of the handicrafts and souvenirs of the destination.
4. The tourists found the total package satisfactory.
5. The tourists were influenced by the food and facilities of the destination.
6. In comparison domestic tourist in both the period of study were more as compared to international tourist.

Problems of tourism in Jaisalmer:
1. Infrastructure issue especially transportation.
2. Cross border regulations
3. Taxation
4. Tourism potential has not been fully utilized
5. State government and government agencies have not played effective role in exploiting tourism potential.
6. Inadequate advertisement.
7. Insufficient accommodation.
8. Seasonal business.
Suggestions: -
Rajasthan is a natural choice for international and domestic tourist. The rate or growth of domestic tourism is expected to be 7% while foreign tourist is 5%. As study conducted by TCS projection 2020 tourism contributes 15% of SGDP. The following measures can be taken to boost tourism: -
1. Innovation of innovative tourism concept.
2. Encouraging tour packages.
3. Encouraging investment in tourism.
4. Development of historical and cultural places.
5. GST based benefits (rebates in entertainment tax, luxury tax etc)
6. Effective marketing strategy.
7. Control over malpractices
8. To promote socio economic development of Jaisalmer.
9. The number of five star hotels should be increased.
10. A destination brand can be developed in a variety of ways, more advertisement through RTDC on website.
11. Through increase an infrastructure (proper road, flights, hotels, especially RTDC etc)

Opportunities: -
Tourism in Rajasthan and in Jaisalmer is one of the fast growing industry. Forts, Palaces, Safari tours, wild life Sanctuary, Parks, heritage and pilgrimage places and lakes attracts the tourist. Desert locations especially the sand dunes is prime attraction to tourist in Jaisalmer. Traditional food served in hotels in traditional style also becomes a matter of attraction to tourist. Palace on wheels and tourist route The Golden Triangle from Delhi to Agra and to Rajasthan highly promote Tourism.

Conclusion: -
Tourism promotes economic socio and cultural development. In Jaisalmer the domestic and foreign tourists were attracted by the cultural appeal of the destination. The fascination of forts and palaces helped visitor to experience the life of kings who lived many year back. The fort Havelis and desert festival attract tourists to visit to Jaisalmer as a memorable experience. The camel safaris is the most interesting means for tourists. They were only pained by the heat of the destination. Rajasthan government has taken several measures in both development of tourism and activities related to tourism industry in Rajasthan. The new tourism policy 2020 has broad vision for boosting tourism industry.

REFERENCES: