
Educational Tourism: Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development with reference of Hadauti and Shekhawati Regions of Rajasthan ,India

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ABSTRACT

Rajasthan is a main tourism State in the nation. It's glorious legacy, bright living customs ,traditions, wonderful heritage, mesmerizing natural beauty ,vibrant folk, energetic people and delicious cuisines are exceptional attractions for both, domestic and foreign tourists. The substantial and indescribable tourism products of the State offer enormous potential for development of the tourism industry. Improvement of tourism assets and expanding both, domestic and international tourists' arrivals is a high need for the State especially for the important regions like Hadauti and Shekhawati. Lack of educational programs, awareness, promotion are few reasons that the regions are not able to attract the tourists towards them. In fact the tourists who are visiting Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Pushkar etc. tourist places of Rajasthan are even not aware about the hidden treasures of Hadauti and Shekhawati regions .Moreover it the regions are facing the problems related with falling prices of agricultural, economical instability ,poor infrastructure , lack of resources ,unemployment ,lack of entrepreneurship etc. In these situations it becomes more important to focus on the resource in which the regions are rich and distinct from other regions of the State. There is no doubt into the potential of tourism at Hadauti and Shekhawati regions. Tourism knowledge of these regions if provided in a learning methodology and strategically planned way these regions will make a benchmark on the State tourism. From Hedonistic tourism to spiritual every experience tourists can get at Hadoti as well as at Shekhawati region. Therefore, there is a requirement for developing Education Tourism at both the regions. It is the high time to change the present patterns of learning of tourism. The present paper is an attempt to stress upon the education tourism adoption as a growth strategy for the sustainable development of tourism in both the regions. The paper also highlights the hindrances and requirements for creating education tourism as an exclusive part of learning.

Keywords: hedonistic, spiritual, education, tourism, strategy, Hadauti, Shekhawati

INTRODUCTION

Tourism today is one of the major global industries and an important source for economic growth and employment generation. Tourism is one of the biggest-growing industries on earth and its hegemony appears secure if the current rate of growth is maintained, World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2010). International tourist arrivals have grown steadily from 25 million in 1950 to over 1.1 billion in 2014. At present, 1 in every 11 people worldwide are employed by the tourism sector, with the industry generating US\$ 7.6 trillion or 10% of the global GDP in 2014 (WTTC Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2015). Tourism in recent times has been widely seen as one which has contributed tremendously to the economy of most destination areas, improving their foreign exchange, creating jobs, creating awareness, improving standards of living and contributing to image-building of destination areas, it is pertinent to note that most developing countries in the world today benefit so much from tourism without recognizing the real impact such tourism activities has on its economy based on the trickle-down nature of tourism benefits to its host (Okech, 2008). In the economic situation of a country like India tourism can play a vital role. Tourism is one of the main sources of internal revenue generation in the world today (Ajake & Amalu, 2012a; Hinch & Butler, 2007). Without a doubt India is able to attract the tourist from all over the world. According to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2009 brought out by the World Economic Forum, the contribution of travel and tourism to gross domestic product is expected to be at US\$ 187.3 billion by 2019. The report also revealed that the real GDP growth for the travel and tourism economy is expected to achieve an average of 7.7 per cent annum over the next 10 years. Export earnings from international visitors and tourism goods are expected to generate US\$ 51.4 billion (nominal terms) by 2019. Moreover, the sector which accounted for 6.4 per cent of total employment in 2009 is estimated to rise to 7.2 per cent of the total employment by 2019. The direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP is expected to grow by 8.1% per annum INR 3414.8bn (2.0% of GDP) by 2021. By the same year Travel and Tourism account for 30,439,000 jobs directly, an increase of 5,508,000 (22.1%) over next ten years. In the last six years, it has created 11 million jobs and has the potential to create another 37 million jobs (estimated by the NSSO, Ministry of Tourism) of the 120 million projected requirement by 2020.

There is no doubt that India is able to attract many International and National tourist towards its different tourists destination. The known and famous destinations are getting popularity day by day because of it a State like Rajasthan is also started coming on tourism map. Still there is lot which is hidden in the heart of Rajasthan. Today the foreign tourists or domestic tourists are visiting to Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Pushkar and so on. Highlighting the state tourism statistics, in the 8th edition of Great Indian Travel Bazaar 2015, Vasundhara Raje Chief Minister of Rajasthan Government mentioned that the tourism sector in Rajasthan will see a major surge by 2018. "By 2018, we expect the foreign tourist arrivals to reach 2.5 million from the current 1.5 million and the domestic traffic to be around 50 million from the present 30 million." The state is having diversity in the tourism products yet it is unrevealed in a strategic manner. To make the people (tourists) more acquainted with the knowledge of the hidden treasures of Rajasthan

especially the rich circuits/regions such as Hadauti and Shekhawati education tourism can play a vital role.

Education Tourism an Approach of Learning

The term education tourism or edu-tourism refers to any "program in which participants travel to a location as a group with the primary purpose of engaging in a learning experience directly related to the location" (Rodger, 1998, p. 28). Educational tourism" is a "tourist activity undertaken by those who are undertaking an overnight vacation and those who are undertaking an excursion for whom education and learning is a primary or secondary part of their trip".(Brent Ritchie, 2009).It is comprised of several sub-types including ecotourism, heritage tourism, rural/farm tourism, and student exchanges between educational institutions. The notion of traveling for educational purposes is not new (Gibson, 1998; Holdnak & Holland, 1996; Kalinowski & Weiler, 1992) and its popularity in the tourism market is only expected to increase (Gibson, 1998; Holdnak & Holland, 1996). This type of tourism may be categorized into the following dimensions; cultural / historical, eco-tourism / nature based tourism / rural tourism, and study abroad programs (Ankomah and Larson, 2004) . ' Life Long Learning (LLL) is "all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence, within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective.(European Commission, 2003).

Curriculum and Tourism Curriculum

There is no agreed definition of curriculum, but the word curriculum derives from a Latin word, Currere, referring to the running of a course, as in a chariot race (Marsh and Willis, 2007; Hewitt, 2006). One basic view is that curriculum is "what is taught"(Geofferey Squires, *First Degree: The Undergraduate Curriculum* Buckingham, England: Society for Research into Higher Education, 1990).In the twentieth century, the term curriculum broadened to include subjects other than the classics (Marsh and Willis, 2007). Sometimes, the word curriculum is also used to describe "a discipline, a specific area of knowledge and academic study" (Hewitt, 2006, p. 406). Tourism education had its beginnings in technical or vocational schools (Airey, 2004; Lo, 2005; Inui, Wheeler, & Lankford, 2006). (Busby, 2001) with educators mainly focusing on producing skilled and knowledgeable personnel for the industry. This emphasis has given short shrift to the value or meaning of tourism education. Courses in tourism were initially introduced in technical and vocational schools. Courses were then transitioned into undergraduate and graduate programs (Ring, Dickinger, & Wober, 2009). Bodewes (1981) believes tourism is an application of established disciplines, as tourism does not have sufficient doctrinal processes to be classified as a full academic discipline.

Smith and Cooper (1999) believe curriculum must be context-related rather than context-bound. This statement urges academics to rethink appropriate curriculum designs containing the necessary content, while also providing room for knowledge flexibility (Rowntree, 1982; Scrimshaw, 1983; Lawton, 1989; Squires, 1990; Goodlad, 1995; Tribe, 2002). Lawton (1989)

said that the curriculum planning model should start with two initial stages, namely, philosophical and sociological analyses. Philosophical questions relate to the aims of education and the meaning of worthwhile education. By contrast, sociological questions relate to the present society. A tourism curriculum requires the development of a tourism society, that is not just for businesses but, rather, for all stakeholders (Tribe, 2001). Taylor and Richards (1985) explained curriculum as that which is taught. Tribe (2002) provides a more multifarious definition, curriculum is "...defined as a whole educational experience packaged as a degree program (p. 340)." Gunn (1998, p. 74) stress that the curriculum is "a series of courses of instruction that lead to graduation or certification or a degree, diploma, or similar terminal award. The UK National Liaison Group for Higher Education in Tourism (NLG) (Holloway, 1995, p. 2 cited in Tribe, 2005) aimed to seek a agreement on the body of knowledge that would be acceptable to both academics and practitioners in the tourism industry. The seven core subject areas of NLG are: (1) Meaning and nature of tourism. (2) Structure of the industry. (3) Dimensions of tourism and issue of measurement. (4) Significance and impacts of tourism. (5) Marketing of tourism. (6) Tourism planning and development. (7) Policy and management in tourism.

In 2000, the NLG held another series of consultative meetings to align the core tourism subject areas with the tourism subject community. In turn, the following subject areas were agreed upon: (1) Concept and characteristics of tourism as an area of academic and applied study. (2) Nature and characteristics of tourists. (3) Structure of and interactions in tourism industry. (4) Role of tourism in communities and environments that it affects. (5) Nature and characteristics of tourists. This core knowledge of subjects provides the main strengths in terms of avoiding the narrow confines of the tourism curriculum.

Definition of Education

Education refers to participants' experiences of formal, qualification-based and off-job study (Mallon and Walton, 2005, p.473). Education (is) imparting or acquisition of knowledge; mental or moral training; cultivation of the mind, feelings and manners. (Weyl v Commissioner of Internal Revenue, 48 F 2d. 811 (1931). Acquiring information and inspirational suggestions which cause the individual to think and act along proper lines Jones v Better Business Bureau, 123 F. 2d 767 (1941; US Court of Appeals, 10th Circuit).A fundamental process of learning which is aimed at preparing either for life in general or for a large purpose such as a particular profession or trade, and is in any event without an immediately utilitarian focus (Vancouver Society of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women v. M.N.R., [1999] 1 S.C.R. 10; also at 169 D.L.R. (4th) 34). "Education ... connotes all those processes cultivated by a given society as means for the realization in the individuals of the ideals of the community as a whole."

Statement of the Problem

Tourism is not only an economic activity it is much more than it. The present research paper has been written to highlight the major issues which are related with two important regions of the

Rajasthan State namely Hadauti and Shekhawati. It is identified that there is big gap between the promotion strategies which has been used for the tourism products available in these regions. Secondly, the society is not much aware regarding the significance of education tourism at the regions. Moreover it the educational institutions are not participating and not taking initiatives in the education tourism programs. The hidden treasures are yet to be explored in the regions. The economic conditions are again a problem for the development of the regions. The tourism sector of Hadauti and Shekhawati regions have the potential to attract the learners towards the tourism products available (explored and unexplored).

Objectives of the Paper

- To highlight the importance of Education tourism at Haduati and Shekhawati regions of Rajasthan.
- To suggest a model of integrated informal education with the formal education.
- To stress upon a new pattern of experiencing, learning and promoting the tourist destinations.
- To bring in light a pathway of International collaboration for experiencing and learning about this is yet unexplored.

Resources at Hadauti Region for Education Tourism

Hadauti region is rich in vegetation, dense forests, lush green hills and fertile farms etc. Can be seen here. Hadauti is full of surprises from every nook. Despite of its rich heritage, culture and natural beauty the region is the most unexplored area of the State. Persistent river Chambal is the life line of the region. Other than Chambal Kali Sindh, Parvati and Parwan are the important rivers in the region. The region consists of four districts –Kota, Bundi, Baran and Jhalawar.

Kota city is a beautiful combination of traditional old monuments and innovative new technologies. Amazing forts and temples are located here. Kota is famous for its Kota Doria saris. The tourist attractions are Garh Palace, Maharao Madho Singh Museum, Braj Vilas Museum, Jag Mandir, near Kota places like Kshar Bagh, Kansua, Abheda Mahal, Garadia Mahadev Temple, Badoli Temple are best examples of architecture etc. For Baran, district it is famous that the place was created from 12 meaning bara villages of Solanki rulers and therefore it is called Baran. Near this district, there are lot many places which are yet unexplored. Places like Bilasgarh and Kanyadeh is still not any status of tourist destination despite of the truth that they have some hidden treasures stone sculptures, rock painting which are having own historical importance. The stone sculptures of Bials consist the lifestyle and the life cycle of human beings. The remains tell a story of a well - planned city. The stone sculptures are not less than the famous Khajuraho Temple of Madhya Pradesh of India. The Kama Sutra, art of sex is so well defined to educate the people in that era.



The ruined Bilas's Stone Sculptures ,Hadauti Region

Source : Author (Dr.Anukrati Sharma, July 2015)

The erotic carving is so much attractive that one cannot neglect it. The architectural ruins and antiques (around 1000-1500 sculptures) are lying in a open place without any type of protection from weather (uncovered).Although when the researcher asked the local residents they told that the Government is constructing a place where these sculptures could be kept. Still there is a high need to protect and educate the people regarding the importance of these ruined sculptures.





The ruined Stone Sculptures outside and in the open area of Bilas Village ,Hadauti Region

Source : Author (Dr.Anukrati Sharma, July 2015)

On the other hand near the district Baran around 45 km ,the Sorsan Sanctuary is located. The sanctuary is a place with high potential for tourism . Around 1800 Black Bucks, 324 Chinkaras,Indian Fox, Monitor Lizard and birds like Chestnut Bellied ,Black Winged Kite Juvenile, Krestel etc. many species of birds are available here at the sanctuary .The Amalsara is a adjoining place to the sanctuary where 6 big and beautiful huts has been already constructed with an investment of Rs-50 Lakh. The sanctuary can be developed not only to viewing the animals and birds but much more could be provided at this place to any of the visitors. Brahmani Mata Temple,Amalsara Huts and Nagda all three jointly make the sanctuary a place where a tourist can view animals, stay and experience the spirituality along with the natural environment. The Brahmani Mata temple is located in a natural cave in the rocks and an unending flame in the temple has been burning from the **last 400 years**. Despite of the potential the sanctuary is neglected. People are not aware about the beauty of this place. In fact it is not well maintained. There is a high need for Education tourism for these types of sanctuaries of Hadauti region.



The Amalsara Tourists' Huts and the Sorsan Sanctuary, Baran, Hadauti Region
Source : Author (Dr. Anukrati Sharma, May 2015).

Baran is rich in heritage the Shergarh Fort, Sitabari, Bhand Deora, Nahargarh Fort, Gugor Fort are some of the forts at the near by places of Baran. Other than these places Shahbad Fort, Kakuni are few important places for learning about the rich heritage of Hadauti region.

Jhalawar is another charming landscape of Hadauti region. This place is not only different it is distinct in nature. The most important place for learning is the Buddhist caves of Kolvi and the sculpture of Surya Mandir, Jhalara Patan. Jhalara Patan is a place where 108 temples were built over a few centuries. Most of them are destroyed. The Sun temple is the only one which is in fine shape. It is evenly beautiful to the Konark Sun Temple of Orissa. Gagron Fort is among the rarest forts which have both forests and water protected area. The fort is also comes in the UNESCO World heritage sites. Hadauti has lot to offer from eco-tourism, wildlife tourism, heritage tourism to culture tourism.

RESOURCES AT SHEKHAWATI REGION FOR EDUCATION TOURISM

Shekhawati region includes of the districts of Jhunjhunu, Sikar and Churu. The region is well known for wall paintings and frescos that adorn the havelis in this region. This region is also popularly referred to as the "open art gallery". The wonderful fresco and wall paintings of the region is the most important source for education tourism. The havelies such as Ishwardas Mohandas Haveli, Jhunjhunu, havelies of Mandawa, Nawalgarh etc. are of world fame. The region consists beautiful temples such as Rani Sati, Khatu Shyam, Shakhmbhari Mata, Jeen Mata, Salasar Balaji. The region is known for its pilgrimage tourism by the domestic tourist. The paintings of the regions are of 16th century in which scenes of epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata has shown clearly. The modern inventions are also painted on the walls likewise cars, aeroplanes etc. One can learn a lot from the region about the art and culture. At the capital of Shekhawati region in the town of Jhunjhunu the participants can see Kamruddin Shah ki Dargah, Meatani Stepwell, Baadargarh Fort, Khetari Fort, Birdi Chand wall and Ranti Sati temple. Other than Jhunjhunu Mandawa, Mukundargh, Nawalgarh, Fathepur are also a good source for exploration and learning about the tradition and culture of Rajasthan.

Themes of Education Tourism

Education tourism can be developed and promoted on different themes in both the regions

Proposed themes of Education Tourism at Hadauti Region –

- Historical Tourism
- Heritage Tourism
- Archaeological Tourism
- Wildlife Tourism
- Educational Tourism
- Sports Tourism
- Farm/Agri Tourism

Proposed themes of Education Tourism at Shekhawati Region –

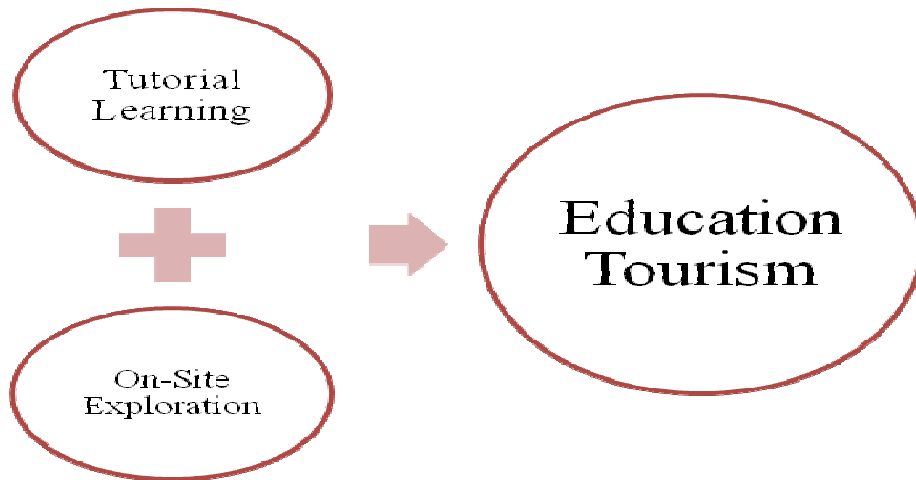
- Pilgrimage Tourism
- Eco-tourism
- Cultural tourism
- Culinary tourism
- Film tourism
- Rural tourism
- Highway Tourism

ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN EDUCATION TOURISM

The educational institutions are the backbone for the societal development of any State and country. The fortunate part with both the regions is that in these regions the status of education is quite high. The Hadauti region mainly if we will talk about Kota itself having three big Universities namely –University of Kota(the affiliating University of the region),Vardhman Mahaveer Open University and Rajasthan Technical University. Shekhawati is having more deemed and private Universities such as Mody University, Lakshmangarh, Singhania University, Sikar etc. Shekhawati University which is a Government University can also play a vital role for development of Education Tourism. The Universities may work with the different internal and external stakeholders that will produce workable and effective education tourism program. The Universities may start some program through distance learning for creating awareness and for the promotion of the tourists' destinations of the regions.

The learning model of the education tourism may consists two type of methods .It is a combination of tutorial learning as well as of onsite exploration –

Figure1: Education Tourism Model

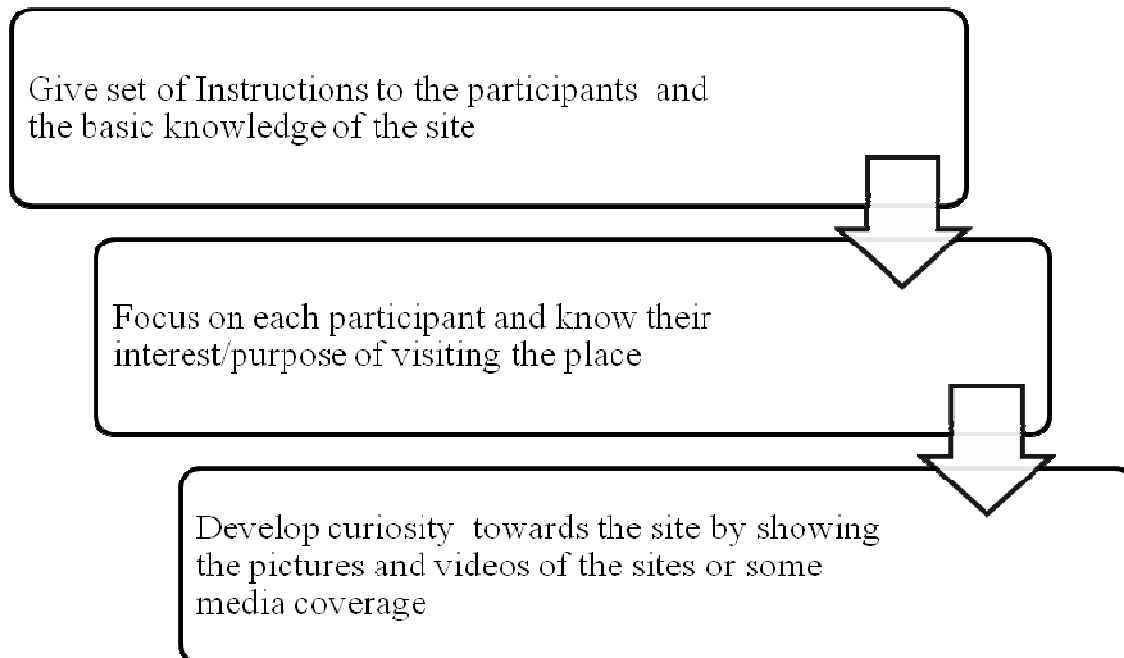


Source : Author

When we talk about the education tourism it is pre requites to decide about the line and length of the education tour program. The education tour program should be specific. For the theme and basic knowledge the participants may start from the tutorial learning and then move to the site for understanding and experiencing it. In the second step of site exploration participants will be able to grab the skills and acquaintance of the site.

In tutorial learning the trainers and mentors/educators may adopt the following steps to make the participants well versed with the tourist destination –

Figure 2: Tutorial Learning of Education Tourism



Source :Author

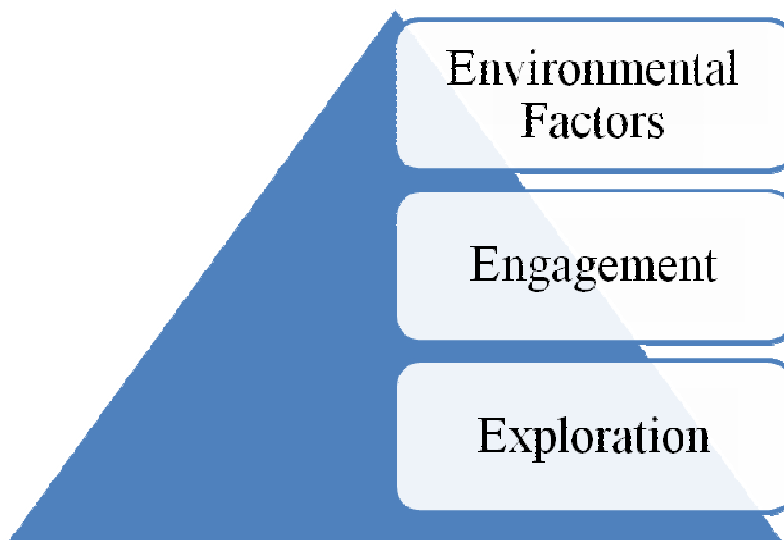
The 3 E's of Education Tourism Learning

Education tourism can avoid a large portion of negative impacts of tourism. When a tourist visits to a tourist destination he/she has to face many types of problems related with communication, cultural, safety etc. To avoid such type of problems education tourism can be a boon. As it involves cultural exchange and collaborations between different people of diverse nations. Therefore, education tourism is an actual learning process along with the safety and security of the tourists /participants. The education tourism will be beneficial only if the participants get benefits. For this while providing the learning the mentors and the organizers must keep in mind the perfect match between the 3 E's i.e. Environmental Factors – It could be the classroom/tutorial environment, ambience of the staying place etc. It is rightly said that environmental education itself provides learning. Environmental education is a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, fosters attitudes, motivations and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible actions within the environment (Ajake,2006). A study was conducted by Ashley (2000) on environmental awareness and residents' commitment to tourism. It was discovered from the study that the private sector was the main actor in creating awareness on the need to be environmentally friendly, as well as provide necessary information on environment tourism in the area. He equally observed that providing necessary information about sustainable tourism issues, encouraged people to conserve biodiversity and cultural heritage. Engagement- In terms of active

participation of the participants. They should be fully engaged without annoying their interest and preferences. Exploration –Without it the education tourism seems like body without blood. Exploration gives the practical learning to the participants about the sites.

Figure3: Learning and Education Tourism

3Es



Source: Author

Hindrances of Education Tourism

The education tourism formulation and implementation are not easy task. There are some hindrances which are associated with it.

- The first and the foremost problem is of the poor image of the regions in the tourists market.
- Lack of skilled personnel to provide training and practical exposures to the participants.
- Lack of financial assistant to run Educational tour programs.
- Lack of specialists who will be able to organize the education tours .
- Lack of people who are well versed with the foreign languages.
- No branding and promotion of the tourist destinations of the regions.
- Lack of courses and training program of tourism at the Universities level.

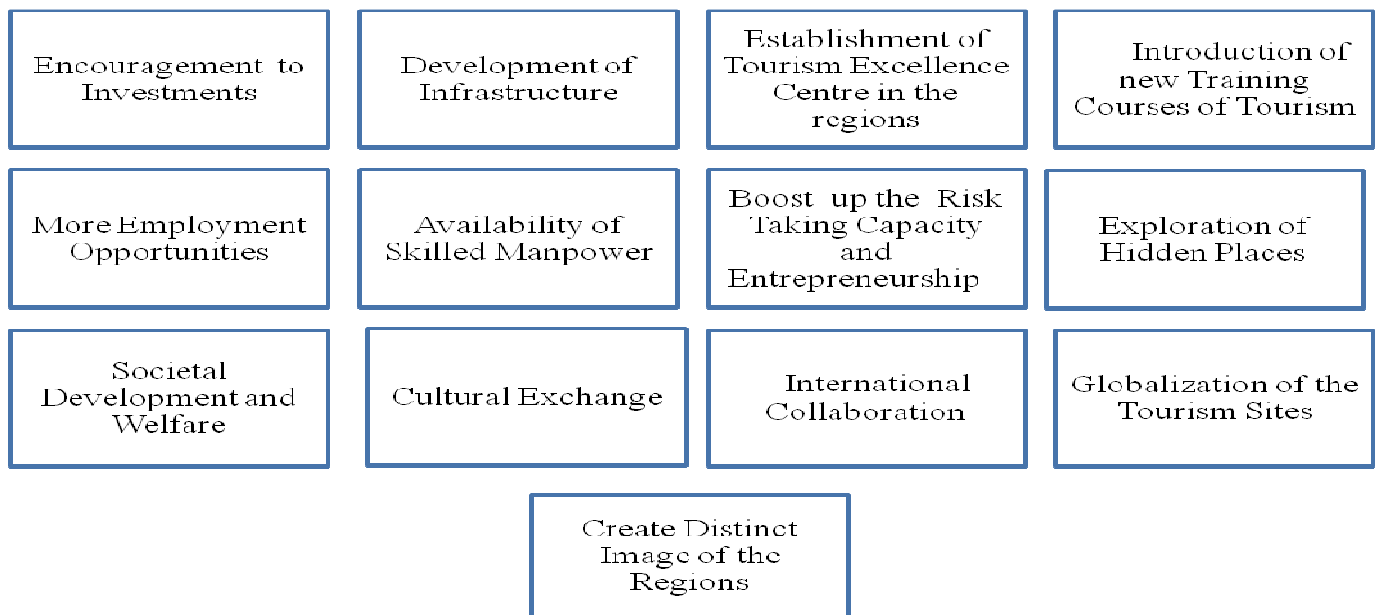
Although the regions are facing many problems regarding education tourism still if the programs will be designed strategically surly Hadauti and Shekhawati regions can make wonders. As both the regions have something to offer to everyone. The advantages which these regions are having

for education tourism such as the knowledge level of the local people is quite high regarding the tourists places of their region, the place like Kota is a education hub, transport connectivity is good from other places of India.

Benefits of Education Tourism

Education tourism is beneficial in many means for the society at large. Without any doubts education tourism is a tool to provide the development from the grass root of any region, state and country .It is a medium through which the tourists’ destinations will be able to get a identity on the global in fact the education tourism is a niche to explore the hidden treasures of a place. The figure 4 is providing a glimpse of the benefits which the Hadauti and Shekhawati Regions may get through education tourism.

Figure 4: Benefits of Education Tourism to the Hadauti and Shekhawati Regions



Source: Author

Findings and Suggestions

The education tourism is a learning process which is actually not focused on economic gains for the participants as well as for the trainers. Education tourism is more about the societal development rather than economic development. Yes off course it indirectly provides a boost to the economic status of any country. As participants visit from one place to another they stay on the destination .In the whole process the people are getting employment and business opportunities. For the regions like Hadauti and Shekhawati which are yet not fully explored it is

suggested that the Government, Private Sector and educational institutions should come forward for education tourism .In the light of it few suggestions are recommended –

- A record can be kept for education tourism. The Universities should work with the local people to know the interest of the visitors.
- Skill enhancements trips will be a wonderful way to attract and de-stress the participants.
- Encourage the local people to participate in the education tourism programs. This will give them a participative feeling as well as an earning opportunity.
- The ambiance and facilities related with accommodation, food etc. Can be offered in the local and traditional way. This will again give a excitement to the participants and they feel more closer to the place.
- Be caution while giving the training .Don't try to treat the participants as children.
- The Government should make it mandate for the Universities and educational institutions to organize at least one education tour in a year. The organizations may set free to choose the topic and the theme on which they would like to arrange the education tour.
- For encouraging the education tourism the regions may offer some summer, winter schools, invitations on special occasions such as Diwali, Holi , Christmas, Kite Flying Festival etc.

CONCLUSION

Education tourism is a mutual beneficial way for the learners and for the society at large. Education tourism is a need in present scenario for the States like Rajasthan. Moreover it the edu tourism can work as a backbone for the survival of many rural area people by generating the employment sources to their places(villages)only. Today the Indian youth is running towards the Urbanization this is again a problematic situation in terms of de-population at villages and over populated cities, high crime rates, unemployment etc. As India is a country of villages the education tourism is the source through which we may attract the Youth Back to Villages .A state like Rajasthan which is highly rich in terms of heritage, monuments, step wells, fresco paintings, forts, palaces and temples most of these are located in village areas .Therefore, it is a prime time need to concentrate on the projects and process of education tourism. So, the employment will generate at these areas and the hidden treasures will be explored. Not only will this education tourism develop the skilled manpower. The little efforts by the educational institutions, Government and private sector can make wonders in making the regions Hadauti and Shekhawati the top most choice for education tourism on the globe.

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