



PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN GUJARAT- A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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Abstract

The paper discussed the prospects and challenges of tourism development in Gujarat. It has found that state is blessed with natural landscapes and historical monuments. Gujarat has rich history and have numerous places of attractions. It has popular tourist places like Dakor, Girnar, Palitana, Dwarka, and Ambaji. It is home of many pilgrimages sites. The state is home to many Buddhist monuments. It is renowned for its breath-taking views, serene surroundings, and warm hospitality. Tourist arrivals was declined in state for corona pandemic effects, but post-corona recovery are noticeable. The state has more opportunities in spiritual/wellness tourism, beach and water-based tourism, religious tourism, cuisine tourism, eco-tourism, rural tourism, heritage tourism, adventure and recreational tourism. There are many challenges before the tourism industry. Therefore, Government should implement tourism policies for development of tourist sites and comfortability of the tourists.

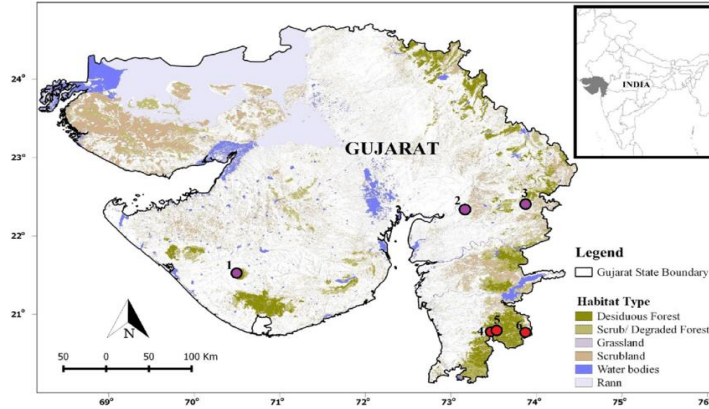
Keywords: Beaches, Revenue, Travellers, Tourist, and Tourism industry.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is familiar term in 21st century. Tourism industry refers short-term movement of people from their original location. It does not cover any movement when people stay more than one year in new place (Joshi, 2018). There are many reasons behind the movement, such as pleasure, entertainment, business, self-improvement, cultural curiosity, refreshment of body and mind, a desire to visit friends and family, or to form new relationships. It is a growing industry and economy of many countries are dependent on such industry. It is an extensive industry which included transport industry, hotel industry and several additional industries (Shukla, 2020). Tourism has multiple benefits, including the economic benefits. It increases jobs for the local residents in transport and hospitality industry, among others. It rises relationships between nation-states, cultural exchange opportunities and peoples. It increases education level, well-being, and happiness of the people (Bhayani & Rana, 2016). Transportation sector helps tourist to arrives in their destination. This sector includes sea, air, rail, and road travel services. Airline industry plays important role in tourism industry. Access to a car is vital to explore and travel freely. Rail and bus services are offering short and long-distance travel (Singh et. al., 2014). Accommodation sector is central part in travel and hospitality industry. Hotels and shared accommodation has appeared a key choice for tourists. Camping is staying outside in natural environment. Food and beverage sector are the vital part in tourism industry (Swadia, 2015). It provides essential refreshments to tourist during travel. Entertainment accessibility appeal travellers to particular tourist location. Retail and travel industries also connected with tourism industry. Travellers are cheered by local market trading and duty-free shopping (Rana, 2015).

THE STUDY AREA

Gujarat is situated in western part of India. It is bordered by Pakistani province of Sindh to the west, Madhya Pradesh to the east, Maharashtra to the southeast, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu to the south, and Rajasthan to the northeast. Total geographical area of Gujarat is 196,024 km². It is the fifth-largest Indian state by area and ninth-most populous state. Gandhinagar is the capital and Ahmedabad is the largest city. The state's official language is Gujarati. It has 250 talukas and 33 districts.



OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this paper is to study the prospects and challenges of sustainable tourism in Gujarat. The subjective objectives of the paper are: (a) to study the trends of tourist arrivals in Gujarat; (b) to examine the prospects of tourism industry in Gujarat; (c) to evaluate challenges before the tourism industry in Gujarat.

DATA USED AND METHODOLOGY

- **Design and Approach:** This study is descriptive in design and has utilized qualitative and quantitative approach. Secondary data for the study has been collected from government reports, Gujarat tourism website, report of international agencies, research papers, articles, etc.

- **Method of Analysis:** The method of qualitative and quantitative analysis comprising of descriptive analysis, regression analysis, content and text analysis have been performed to disclose the tourism practices in general and the future prospects in particular.

- **Hypothesis:**

H₀₁: There is no impact of corona pandemic on tourist arrivals in Gujarat.

H_{1a}: There is impact of corona pandemic on tourist arrivals in Gujarat.

H₀₂: There is no relation between tourist arrivals and gross domestic product in Gujrat.

H_{1b}: There is relation between tourist arrivals and gross domestic product in Gujrat.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gujarat is the land of traditions and legends. It is rich history and cultural heritages. It has long 1,600 kilometres coastline. Mahatma Gandhi was born in this state. It has ancient Indus Valley civilisation sites. The important sites are Gola Dhoro, Dholavira and Lothal. Gola Dhoro is an archaeological site that situated in Gulf of Kutch and believed to date from 2500-2000 BC. Dholavira is the largest Harappan sites that situated in Kutch District. Lothal is situated in Bhal region and considered as world's earliest known dock. There are six cultural UNESCO world heritage sites, namely Champaner Pavagadh Archaeological Park, Dholavira, Rani ni Vav, Wild Ass Sanctuary, Old Ahmedabad, and Lothal Archaeological Remain of a Harappan Fort Town. Rich history, scenic beauty, technological growth, culture and traditions are the factors responsible for growth of tourism industry.

Table 1: Number of Domestic and Foreign Tourist Arrivals in Gujrat

Year	Tourist		% Share		Rank	
	Domestic	Foreign	DTV	FTV	DTV	FTV
2008	15505264	110702	2.80	0.80	9	14
2010	18861296	130739	2.50	0.70	10	15
2011	21017478	166042	2.47	0.85	10	14
2012	24379023	174150	2.35	0.84	9	15
2013	27412517	198773	2.39	1.00	8	16
2014	30912043	235524	2.40	1.04	11	15
2015	36288463	284973	2.53	1.22	9	14
2016	42252909	343752	2.62	1.39	9	14
2017	48343131	448853	2.93	1.67	9	13
2018	54369873	513113	2.93	1.78	9	12
2019	58864661	595607	2.54	1.90	9	12
2020	19464517	210047	3.19	2.93	9	11

2021	24525210	11319	3.62	1.07	9	14
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Source: India Tourism Statistics, 2022

The table-1 discussed year-wise domestic and foreign tourist arrivals in Gujrat. It has observed that the number of tourist visits had been on rise since 2008, but was declined after 2019 due to the corona pandemic. Domestic tourist arrival was more than 5.88 crores in 2019, which dropped to only 1.94 crores in 2020. On the other hand, foreign tourist arrivals were 5.94 lakhs in 2019, and it was 2.1 lakhs in 2020 and was just 11319 in 2021. Lockdowns, and travelling restriction due to the corona pandemic are the main factors behind the sudden drop of the tourist arrivals. Therefore, the null hypothesis-1 is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted, i.e. there is impact of corona pandemic on tourist arrivals in Gujarat.

Gujarat's has the longest shoreline in India. Shivrampur Beach, Madhavpur Beach, Tithal Beach, Mandvi beach, Pingleshwar Beach, Dumas Beach, Suvali Beach, Dandi Beach, Ahmedpur Mandvi Beach, Okha Madhi Beach and Mahuva Beach are the popular beaches. It has many galleries and museums. Prabhas Patan Museum, Shyamji Krishna Varma Memorial, Bharatiya Sanskruti Darshan Museum, Kutch Museum, Sharad Bagh Palace, Prag Mahal, Patan Patola Heritage Museum, Rottary Doll Museum, Watson Museum, Laxmi Vilas Palace, Maharaja Fatehsingh Museum, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Museum are the popular museums. Gujrat is proud of its golden era of dynasties. The famous forts are Bhadra Fort, Idar Fort, Lakhpat Fort, Surat Castle, Bhujjiyo Kotho, and Uparkot Fort. The state has beautiful places, such as Laxmi Vilas Palace, Vijay Vilas Palace, Nilambag Palace, Royal Oasis Wankaner, Khirasara Palace, Riverside Palace, Orchard Palace, Hazur Palace, Kusum Vilas Palace, and Sharad Bagh Palace.

Gandhinagar is the capital of Gujrat. The other popular cities are Surat, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Rajkot, Bhavnagar, Jamnagar, Junagadh, and Gandhidham. The popular tourist places in Surat are Jagdishchandra Bose Aquarium, Gopi Talav, Kavi Narmad Central Library, ISKCON Temple, Ambika Niketan Temple, Dumas Beach, Sarthana Nature Park, Siddhnath Mahadev Temple, Sardar Patel Museum and Aquamagicaa Water Park. Ahmedabad is the largest city in Gujrat. The popular tourist places of Ahmedabad are Gandhi Ashram, Sabarmati Riverfront, Adalaj Step-well, Kankaria Lake, Hathee Singh Jain Temple, Manek Chowk, Hare Krishna Mandir, ISKCON Temple and Sidi Saiyyed Mosque. Vadodara is known for its financial superiority, classical music, and architecture. The tourist destinations in the city are Laxmi Vilas Palace, Ajwa Nimeta Garden, BAPS Sri Swaminarayan Mandir, Sursagar lake, and Sardar Patel Planetarium.

Table 2: Selected Monuments visited by tourists in Rajkot

Monuments	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		% Growth	
	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F
Asokan Rock Edict, Jungadh	6176	168	10498	16	31685	27	201.8	68.8
Buddhish Caves, Junagadh	18755	796	58	0	0	0	100.0	-
Baba Pyara Caves, Junagadh & Khapra Khodiya Caves, Junagadh	5858	142	1691	1	2715	6	60.6	500.0
TOTAL	30789	1106	12247	17	34400	33	180.9	94.1

Source: India Tourism Statistics, 2022. Note: D=Domestic tourist, F= Foreign tourist.

The table-2 depicted selected monuments visited by tourists in Rajkot. It has found that number of tourist visited monuments in Rajkot are increased after corona pandemic. Number of domestic and foreign tourist visited monuments in 2019-20 was respectively 30789 and 1106. Percentage growth of domestic and foreign tourist in 2020-21 and 2021-22 were 180.9 percent and 94.1 percent respectively. Rajkot is an important industrial and commercial centre. It is also known for traditional handicrafts, such as patola weaving, embroidery, and silver work. Khambhalida Caves, Kaba Gandhi no Delo, Pradhyuman Zoological Park, Ishwariya Park, Ranjit Vilas Palace, Jagat Mandir, Gonda, Gandhi Museum, Swaminarayan Mandir, Lalpari Lake and Watson Museum are the popular places of Rajkot.

Bhavnagar is famous for Gujarati snack 'Ganthiya' and 'Jalebi'. Its popular places of Bhavnagar are Nishkalang Mahadev Temple, Khodiyar Mandir, Shree Takhteshwar Temple, Shri Adishwar Temple, Piram Bet Island, Sampriti Raja Temple, Gaurishankar Lake, and Kuda Beach. Jamnagar is recognized as the World's Oil City. Bala Hanuman Temple, Dwarkadhish Temple, Baps Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Sivrajpur Beach, Bet Dwarka, Lakhota Talav, Adinath Mandir Jain Temple, Aradhana Dham, Ranmal Lake, Mota Ashapura Maa Temple, and Pirotan Island are the popular tourist destinations of Jamnagar.

Junagadh is the gateway to the Somnath Temple and the Gir National Park. Girnar, Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Girnar Jain Temples, Dattatreya Temple, Girnar Ropeway, Sakkarbaug Zoological Gardens, Uperkot Fort, Mahabat Maqbara, Madhavapur Beach, Ashok Shilalekh and Jain Derasar are the popular tourist destinations of Junagadh. Gandhidham have many historical sites, temples, and picturesque landscapes. Shri Chandra Prabh Labdhi Dham Teerth, Om Cineplex and Gurunanak Super Market are the popular tourist places in Gandhidham.

Sabarmati, Narmada, and Tapi are the major rivers in Gujrat. Narmada is the longest river. Gira Waterfalls, Hathni Mata, Zarwani Falls, Zanzari Waterfalls, Ninai Waterfall, Khunia Mahadev, Jamjir Waterfall, Girmal Falls, and Gaumukh Waterfalls are the popular waterfalls in the state.

Table 3: Selected Monuments visited by tourists in Vadodara

Monuments	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		% Growth	
	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F
Champaner Monuments, Pavagadh	59402	1948	39014	81	61303	43	57.1	-46.9
Sun temple, Modhera	208028	3732	85407	103	224982	603	163.4	485.4
Rani Ki-Vav, Patan	337134	3816	96900	143	268628	228	177.2	59.4
Rudabai Step Well, Adalaj	388042	7907	86840	204	267707	522	208.3	155.9
TOTAL	992606	17403	308161	531	822620	1396	166.9	162.9

Source: India Tourism Statistics, 2022, Note-D=Domestic tourist, F= Foreign tourist.

The table-3 depicted selected monuments visited by tourists in Vadodara. It has found that number of tourist visited monuments in Vadodara are increased after the corona pandemic. Number of domestic and foreign tourist visited monuments in 2019-20 was respectively 992606 and 17403. Percentage growth of domestic and foreign tourist in 2020-21 and 2021-22 was respectively 166.9 percent and 162.9 percent. Gujarat has wealthiest wildlife destinations that boasts the biodiversity. There are 21 Wildlife Sanctuaries and four National Parks. The wildlife sanctuaries such as Marine National Park, Gir National Park, Mitiyala Wildlife Sanctuary, Shoolpaneshwar Wildlife Sanctuary, Purna Wildlife Sanctuary, Jambughoda Wildlife Sanctuary, Gaga Wildlife Sanctuary, Vansda National Park, Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, Velavadar blackbuck National Park, and Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary are some of the best places to visit in Gujarat. Kachchh Biosphere Reserve, Chhari Dhand Conservation Reserve and Banni Grasslands Reserve are the other protected areas. Gujrat has caves that are mixture of meditation, mystery, spirituality, history, and adventure. Jambavan Cave, Kadia Dungar Caves, Pandava Gufa, Siyot Caves, Uperkot Caves, and Mujkund Caves are the popular caves.

There are many attractive hill stations in Gujrat. Its mountain range is covered with waterfalls, dense forests, scenic landscapes and rivers. Saputara, Wilson Hills and Don Hills Station are the popular hill stations. The popular fairs in the state are Rann Utsav, International Kite Festival, Tarnetar fair, and Dang Darbar Fair. Gujarat is hotspots for bird watching. Velvadar, Sasan Gir, Jamnagar, Nakhatrana, and Little Rann of Kutch popular inbound bird watching circuit. Sabarmati Ashram, Kochrab Ashram, National Salt Satyagraha Memorial, Kirti Mandir, Mahatma Gandhi Museum, Dandi Kutir Museum, Gandhi Smriti, Kaba Gandhi No Delo and Gujarat Vidyapeeth are integral part of Gandhi Tourism Circuit.

Gujarat has Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist pilgrimages centres. Uparkot Fort, Baba Pyare Caves, Ashoka Edicts, Khambhalida Buddhist Caves, Talaja Hills, Kadia Dungar Buddhist Cave, Siyot Caves, Buddhist Caves of Khapra Kodiya, Dev Ni Mori, Taranga Caves, and Buddhist Monastery- Vadnagar are integral part of Buddhist Circuit. Polo Forest, Don Hill Station, Sardar Sarovar, Chhari Dhand Wetland Reserve, Kilad Nature Education Campsite, Padam Dungri Eco Tourism, Vishal Khadi Eco Campsite, Mahal Eco Campsite, and Vanil Eco Den are the popular campsites and trekking sites. Kankaria Lake, Saputara Lake, Sursagar Lake, Ranmal Lake and Hamirsar Lake are the leading lakes. Mangalya Van, Moti Baug, Sneh Rashmi Botanical Garden, Ekta Nursery, Arogya Van, Butterfly Garden, Catcus Garden, Waghai Botanical Garden, Indroda Dinosaur and Fossil Park, Sabarmati Riverfront, and Sayaji Baug are the standard gardens.

Gujrat has many religious sites. Dakor, Girmar, Palitana, Dwarka, and Ambaji are the holy places of Gujarat. Golf Tourism is becoming popular in the state. The popular golf clubs are Glade One Golf Club, Gulmohar Greens Golf, Aalloa Hills Resort, The Gaekwad Baroda Golf Club, The Belvedre Golf and Country Club, and Kalhaar Blues & Greens Golf Club. Gujarat is popular for delectable and mouth-watering veg-dishes. Tribal groups like Khojas and Bohras and Muslim community offers special non-vegetarian cuisine. Traditional Gujarati Thali is the unique Gujarati Cuisine. Aamraas (Mango Pool) and Undhiyu are popular during the summer and winter seasons. Gujarat is well in Ayurveda based wellness tourism. Number of spa and Ayurveda centres are increasing.

Table 4: Relation between arrivals to tourist and Gross Domestic Product of Gujarat

Year	Arrivals of Tourist	Gross Domestic Product (Nominal)
2010-11	18992035	5,215,190
2011-12	21183520	6,156,060
2012-13	24553173	7,244,950
2013-14	27611290	8,076,230
2014-15	31147567	9,217,730
2015-16	36573435	10,290,100
2016-17	42596661	11,671,560



2017-18	48791984	13,290,950
2018-19	54882986	14,921,560
2019-20	59460268	16,171,430
2020-21	19674564	16,161,060
2021-22	24536529	19,370,660

Source: Planning Commission Government of India. Note: GSDP in ₹ millions

Table 4 (a): Summary Output

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.433534409
R Square	0.187952084
Adjusted R Square	0.106747292
Standard Error	4274392.828
Observations	12

Source: Calculated by authors.

Table 4 (b): ANOVA Analysis-I

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	4.22877E+13	4.22877E+13	2.314544251	0.159140037
Residual	10	1.82704E+14	1.82704E+13		
Total	11	2.24992E+14			

Source: Calculated by authors.

Table 4 (c): ANOVA Analysis-II

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Intercept	6751517.307	3345432.289	2.018130013	0.071202213
Arrivals of Tourist	0.138460285	0.091010705	1.52136263	0.159140037

Source: Calculated by authors.

The table (4-a) shows that R square is found to be 0.187952084, showing, that there is a degree of poor relation between the independent variable X, i.e. the arrival of tourists, and the dependent variable Y, i.e. the Gross Domestic Product of the state. Table (4-b) shows that p value (0.159) is higher than critical value at 5% level of significance ($p > 0.05$), therefore we will accept the null hypothesis-2. So, it is concluded that there is no relation between tourist arrivals and gross domestic product in Gujrat.

Gujrat tourism is also facing certain challenges. Gujrat is a dry state. Majority of people are vegetarian, so non-vegetarian restaurants are very less. Insufficient infrastructure such as accommodation options, transportation facilities, roads, and tourist amenities can hamper the development of tourism industry. Tourism in the state may be affected by seasonality. In many areas there are huge gap in tourist arrivals in peak and off period. Effective promotion and marketing are vital for attracts more tourists. There are more needs of sustainability of tourism sector so that it will not adversely affects the local communities.

State Government has taken initiatives for expansion of tourism industry in the state. Innovative products such as Palitana, Pavagadh, trekking in Dang, paragliding in Saputara, horse riding in Aravalli hill ranges, camel safari in Kutch etc. have been given priority under the current tourism policy. Private entrepreneurs and institutions are also encouraging. Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd. that working under Department of Tourism undertakes the process diversifying, identifying, and developing tourism related activities. 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme was inaugurated for development of Heritage and Buddhist Circuit. Tourism department introduced Dekho Apna Desh campaign for promoting tourist destinations. Tourism sector is a growing sector in Gujarat. It has contributed in economy of the state. For discussing the current overview of tourism sector of Gujarat, we have done the SWOT analysis.

Table 4: SWOT Analysis of Gujarat Tourism

Strengths	Weakness
Welcoming People Strong brand ambassador Lots of tourists places	Insufficient transport facilities Lack of funds Lack of information channels



Historical monuments Good Infrastructure Multi-cultural heritage	Lack of cleanliness. Lack of promotion of tourists places Lack of maintenance
Opportunities	Threats
New Tourism Products and Innovations. Rich in culture Quite an unexplored state Social media space Increased disposable incomes of people	Competition with other states Threat of terrorist's attack Environmental factors Increase in crime

Source: Singh, N. and Kaur, N. (2016). Punjab tourism: A SWOT analysis. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development. 3 (1). 133.

CONCLUSION

Gujarat is well-known for natural site, and religious environment. It is blessed with the country's longest coastline and perennial rivers. It is a home to diverse tribal communities, ethnic groups, and immigrants. Rich history, scenic beauty, technological growth, culture and traditions are the factors responsible for growth of tourism industry. Gola Dhoro, Dholavira and Lothal are the ancient Indus Valley civilisation sites. corona pandemic has negative effect on tourist arrivals at popular destinations. Gujarat has popular pilgrimages centres. The state has opportunities in spiritual/wellness tourism, beach and water-based tourism, religious tourism, cuisine tourism, eco-tourism, rural tourism, heritage tourism, adventure and recreational tourism.

Champaner Pavagadh Archaeological Park, Dholavira, Rani ni Vav, Wild Ass Sanctuary, Old Ahmedabad, and Lothal Archaeological Remain of a Harappan Fort Town are globally known tourist places. Dakor, Girnar, Palitana, Dwarka, and Ambaji are holy places. Its mountain range is covered with waterfalls, dense forests, scenic landscapes and rivers. It has wealthiest wildlife destinations that boasts of rich biodiversity. Some of the common issues faced by Gujarat in terms of tourism development include: infrastructure, seasonality, marketing and promotion, environmental sustainability, safety and security, and skill development. State Government has taken initiatives for expansion of tourism industry, such as encouraging private investment, reducing mismanagement of money, developing infrastructure, formulation of investment friendly policies, and taking necessary steps to attract investments into the State.

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