

Ecotourism Research in India-A Review Study

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UNWTO has recognized ecotourism as a means of education, employment, protection of biodiversity and improves the wellbeing of local communities by sustainable development. The number of ecotourist and nature based tourists is growing three times faster than other tourists. There is 20-34% growth in ecotourism per year since 1990. But only the overview of ecotourism in India is presented by tourism organizations, government and researchers. The purpose of this review paper is to investigate the major research themes and methods used in ecotourism research in India. This review paper is conducted on 40 published research papers in Academic Journals of discipline carried out in different parts of India. All papers were reviewed on the basis of parameters like purpose of study, range of research methods used in papers, findings, research settings and year of study etc. Content analysis method was used to analyze the studies. The research papers aimed at finding the potential, scope and status of ecotourism in India, and identify impacts of ecotourism on environment and economy of the destination. Promotion and marketing efforts are also being evaluated. The researchers recommended guidelines and suggestions for sustainable ecotourism development. 45 % studies were conducted using primary data while in 40 % studies both the primary and secondary data were used. 60 % studies were carried out in eco-destinations while national parks and wildlife sanctuaries were used as case studies in 17.5% and 12.5% papers respectively. It was found that ecotourism research in India has a vast scope which would assist in development of new theories and policies of ecotourism.

Keywords: *Ecotourism in India, Ecotourism potential, Impacts, Community participation.*