Tourism today is a leisure activity of the masses. People today travel to international destinations to break the regular monotony of life. They are mainly attracted by either the scenic beauty of its nature or by fascinating leisure, sports and adventure activities offered by the destination. But every destination has some internal strengths and weaknesses that either enhance its capacity to attract foreign visitors or diminish it. Similarly from the external environment can originate various opportunities or threats as well. Therefore an attempt is made in this research paper to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Indian tourism industry so that the same can be utilized to increase its foreign footfalls.

Keywords: SWOT analyses, Indian tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

SWOT Analysis is an important technique of environmental analysis. Some authors use the profile of environmental threat and opportunity (ETOP), while some authors use the strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat (SWOT) as a technique of diagnosing the environment. Both the names are same in meaning. By ETOP and SWOT, we can observe the impact of each environmental sector like economic, political and social on the organization. As a summarized depiction of the environmental factors and their impact on future conditions, the profile is a convenient means by which attention of top management may be drawn to the most critical factors and their potential impact on the strategy of the firm as a whole and key aspects of its operations.

SWOT is an acronym for the internal strength and weaknesses of a business and environmental opportunities and threats facing that business. SWOT analysis is a systematic identification of these factors and the strategy that reflects the best match between them. The logic behind this technique is that an effective strategy maximizes business strength and opportunities on the one hand and minimizes its weaknesses on the other hand. The details of the words opportunities, threats, strength and weaknesses are as follows:

OPPORTUNITIES: An opportunity is a major favorable situation in the firm’s environment. Opportunity of a firm could represent improved buyer or supplier relationships, identification of a previously overlooked market segment, technological changes, changes in regulatory framework and changes in competitive circumstances, etc.

THREATS: Unfavorable situation in the firm’s environment is a major threat to the organization. Major elements who could represent threats to the organization may be entrance of a new competitor slow market growth, increased bargaining power of key buyers or suppliers, technological changes and changing regulations, etc. Understanding the key opportunities and threats facing a firm helps managers in identifying realistic options from which they can make an appropriate strategy.

STRENGTH: Strength is a comparative advantage or edge our competitors. The skill, available resources, goodwill, market leadership and buyer/seller relationships are the examples of strength of an organization.

WEAKNESS: A weakness is a limitation or deficiency in resources, skills and capabilities that impede effective information. Facilities, financial resources, management capabilities, marketing skills and brand image could be the causes of weakness.

2. Review of literature

Academic literature on the tourism industry in India has spanned across several disciplines from the regional as well as the national perspective. As the largest country in terms of size and population in the South Asian region, India has a large influence on the regional tourism industry. India featured prominently in the work on policy choices for South Asian tourism development by Richter and Richter (1985), who looked at government tourism initiatives and experiences of seven South Asian countries. In a similar vein, Brown (1988) had examined South Asia’s policy responses to accommodating tourists from Europe, but limited his study to Bhutan, India and the Maldives. At a national level, the tourism sector in India has been examined externally through the perception of foreign visitors as well as from within India.

“Reorienting HRD strategies for tourists’ satisfaction”- a study by Nageshwar Rao and R.P. Das (2002) sought to highlight how the Indian Tourism Industry can reorient its HRD strategies in order to satisfy and delight its customers to survive in the global competition. With a better qualified younger workforce occupying the positions in the future and...
with tremendous opportunities opening for them elsewhere, the key task before the policy makers in organizations is to keep the tourist contact employees satisfied.

Joaquin Alegra Marin and JaumeGaranTaberner’s study “satisfaction and dissatisfaction with destination attributes, influence on overall satisfaction and the intention to return” point to the need to reconsider the usual structure of tourist satisfaction surveys. The results of this study illustrate that tourists evaluate the attributes of a destination differently depending on whether the survey elicits an opinion relating to a dimension of dissatisfaction.

“International Tourist satisfaction and destination Loyalty : Bangkok, Thailand”(2010)- a study conducted by SiripornMcDowall tried to compare the demographic characteristics between first time and repeat international tourists in Bangkok and found that overall, international tourists were satisfied with their visit to Bangkok. First time tourists were more satisfied with the visit repeaters as their mean score was higher but there is no statistical difference between these two groups.

“Travelers’ Perception of Malaysia as their next holiday destination”- a study by Anon Abdul basah Kamil (2010) sought to have information and data on knowledge and perceptions of potential tourists about Malaysia to formulate appropriate and effective marketing and promotional strategies. This study found that knowledge is the most significant factor in determining tourists decision to visit Malaysia except for African, West Asian and South/ Central American tourists.

“Tourist satisfaction with Mauritius as a holiday destination”(2008- a research work by Perunjodi Ladsawut used the expectancy – disconfirmation model to study the tourist satisfaction across 18 destination attributes as well as overall satisfaction with the destination. Tourists satisfaction with individual destination attributes revealed that 13 attributes were positively disconfirmed whereas 5 attributes were negatively disconfirmed.

“Tourist satisfaction in Singapore- a perspective from Indonesian tourists”- a study by Theresia A. Pawitra and Kay C. Tan (2001); analyzed the Indonesian tourists’ satisfaction scores about Singapore and showed that from the ‘Indonesian tourists’ point of view , Singapore Tourism Board was successful in promoting and maintaining the performance of the local tourism industry.

“Factors influencing choice of tourist destinations: A study of North India” (2009) is a research paper by Neeraj Kaushik, Jyoti Kaushik, Priyanka Sharma and Savita Rani. This paper attempted to determine the factors responsible for determining the attractiveness of a tourist destination in North India and found that there are seven factors which are considered important by the tourists while selecting their destinations. These factors are- communication, objectivity, basic facilities, attraction, support services, distinctive local features and psychological and physical environment.

David Fister’s paper “The customer’s perception of Tourism Accreditation “ sought to know the level of awareness among consumer of the tourism accreditation system in Australia and found that a lot of work needs to be done before we can be confident that consumers are aware of the existence of the tourism accreditation system. It has also demonstrated that even when tourists are aware of accreditation, there is confusion about what it actually means.

“Foreign Visitor’s evaluation on tourism environment”(2010)- a study by Takeshi Kurilhara, and Naohisa Okamoto sought to understand the relative importance of the items that define the tourism environment and how foreign visitors evaluate Japan’s tourism environment. It discussed the tourism environment evaluation from the viewpoint of the qualitative approach given by the foreign visitor’s evaluation & the quantitative approach which is calculated by the principal component analysis based on the objective data.

3. Objectives of the paper
1. To study the internal strengths and weaknesses of Indian tourism industry
2. To explore the external opportunities and threats of Indian tourism industry.
3. To suggest measures to Ministry of tourism, Government of India to boost foreign tourist arrivals based on SWOT Analysis.

4. Research Methodology
Both primary and secondary sources of data are used in this research work. Primary data as collected through the questionnaire of my PhD research work was obtained from foreign tourists visiting India. Both quantitative and qualitative responses of foreign tourists form the basis of this research paper. Besides this, secondary data is collected from the official website of Ministry of tourism, Government of India, Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) issued by World Economic Forum and different journals and books.

5. Factors influencing international destination competitiveness
The research findings from different studies regarding the determinants/indicators of tourism destination competitiveness share some common features. This study adopts the findings of these researches to develop the measurement scale of destination competitiveness. The factors are as follows:
1. Security & safety: It includes law and order of country, safety of luggage, safety of family, safety of females, tourist grievances redressal, discipline in the country and political stability.
2. Maintenance and Cleanliness: It includes general cleanliness & sanitation, availability of clean drinking water, air, water, noise pollution, availability of healthy and hygienic food and healthy ambience.
3. Information and Communication: This factor involves communication with local people ease of visa formalities, quality of mobile phone networking and availability of information about destinations through websites.
4. Infrastructure: This feature includes the airport ambience and facilities, ground transport including road transport and rail transport connectivity to neighboring countries and connectivity to local tourist places.
5. Prices: Competitiveness can also be checked on this factor which includes price of general commodities, airfare charges, price of local transport, accommodation charges, food/other commodity prices at tourist spots fee charged to see tourist spots and availability of economic tour package for neighboring countries.
6. Facilities: This factor includes banking & financial system in the country, accommodation quality, medical facilities in country and easy availability of desired food.
7. Attractions: It includes the shopping facilities in the country, climate and weather condition, attraction of festivals, presence of historical monuments, holding of international art exhibitions, games & adventurous activities like golf, gym, sports, casino etc uniqueness of local blend of multi-cultural heritage nightlife, potential to be international destination and overall infrastructural facilities of the country.
8. Behavior of country residents: This includes behavior of government officials, behavior of taxi/Auto rickshaw drivers, friendliness/behavior of local people, general hospitality level of the nation, openness in society and level of education and training of service providers at tourist places.
9. Factors affecting the purpose of visit: It includes availability of natural resources, quality of tourism infrastructure and accessibility to tourist spots.
10. Other factors: It includes the extent of begging & cheating in the country, presence of terrorism and the general corruption level in the nation.

6. Competitiveness of India as an International tourist destination

The following discussion illustrates the state of competitiveness of Indian tourism industry:
1. Security & safety-India is highly lacking on this attribute of competitiveness. The major reasons being the internal community riots and also the terrorist attacks faced from time to time. The country is highly unsafe for females and there is poor discipline as well as political instability in the country. In the TTCI index of 2011 India was ranked 78th out of 139 economies showing poor security environment of the country.
2. Maintenance and cleanliness-The general cleanliness and sanitation level of the country is also very poor. Out of the top 10 polluted cities of the world two cities of India–Ludhiana is on the 5th position and Kanpur is the 10th position.
3. Information & communication- Though the official languages of the republic of India are Standard Hindi and English yet the government of India has given 22 languages of the 8th schedule the status of official languages. Because of such diversity in the regional languages the foreign tourist has to face the problem of communication with the locals. Also the official website of Incredible India campaign of Ministry of tourism, Government of India is less informative which could have otherwise solved this language and communication problem. There is improvement in the mobile phone networking of India and currently India has a total of 15 mobile network operators with Idea, Vodafone and Reliance Communications bagging the top three positions.
4. Infrastructure-As per the TTCI rankings of 2011 India’s Air transport infrastructure and the ground transport infrastructure bag 39th and 43rd position respectively out of 139 countries which is pretty well. Efforts made by the government of India are also commendable which are visible in the form of opening of Terminal 3 at the IGI airport, Delhi which can alone handle 34 million passengers providing ultra-modern facilities. This airport was ranked 6th in the world in the year 2011 whereas it was not among the top 100 in the year 2007 showing the seriousness and dedication of the Indian government for developing its infrastructure. The mobile teledensity of India is 74.15% and that of the world is 86%. Various schemes are being implemented with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for providing access to telecom services to people in the rural and remote areas as an effort of the Ministry of Communication, Government of India to provide better telecom infrastructure.
5. Prices-India is highly competitive when prices of general commodities, airfare and accommodation charges and prices of food items at tourist spots are discussed. In the list of top 10 least expensive nations of the world India bags 4th position. But the policy of the Indian government to earn foreign revenue through charging more entry fees from foreign tourists at tourist spots is highly criticized.
6. Facilities-India has a sound banking system with its five banks among the top 300 and two among the top 100 banks of the world in the year 2011.(State Bank of India 64th, ICICI 81st, Punjab National Bank 239th, HDFC 242nd and Bank Of India 263rd). The medical facilities are among the best in India with Fortis hospital, Bangalore rated 1st in the list of world’s best hospitals for medical tourists.
7. Attractions-India has vast diversity in weather and climatic conditions. India’s geography and geology are climatically pivotal. Though the Tropic of Cancer (the boundary between the tropics and subtropics) passes through the middle of India, the bulk of the country can be regarded as climatically tropical. Analyzed according to the Köppen system, the
climate of India resolves into six major climatic subtypes and is largely subject to four seasons: winter (January and February), summer (March to May), a monsoon (rainy) season (June to September), and a post-monsoon period (October to December). But the environmental hazards cannot be ignored as India accounts for 5.83% of the world’s carbon dioxide emissions adversely effecting its competitiveness. It has a large pool of historical monuments and cultural heritage with more than 3680 historical monuments as listed by archaeological survey of India. It has uniqueness of local blend but still India is lacking on the grounds of manmade attractions such as amusement parks, adventure sports and nightlife which need strengthening.

8. Behavior of country residents-India is particularly lacking on this ground as there is lack of education among the taxi/auto rickshaw drivers and the service providers of tourism in India. Foreign tourists are ill-treated at tourist spots. The number of rape cases have increased 999% in India since 2010 and India is the 9th most dangerous country for travelers in the world. The locals are just not willing to help a foreigner in normal circumstances.

9. Factors affecting the purpose of the visit-India is blessed with vast natural resources and is ranked 8th out of 139 countries by TTCI report 2011 for its natural resources. But this blessing has yet to be optimally utilized as we are lacking on the grounds of tourism infrastructure (89th out of 139 as per TTCI report 2011).

10. Other factors-There is widespread begging and cheating in the country at various tourist spots which makes the whole environment at these places unpleasing and embarrassing. The corruption level is also very high and India scores 3.1 out of 10 in the corruption perception index of 2011 and is ranked 95th in the list of least corrupted nations of the world making it one of the highly corrupt nations of the world. The extent of terrorism is also rapidly on a rise adversely affecting the competitiveness of India as an international tourist destination.

The competitiveness of Indian tourism industry as discussed above is based on secondary data which happen to coincide with the findings of the primary data obtained from the responses of the foreign tourists. The primary data also reveals good position of India for natural resources, multi cultural heritage, medical facilities as well as price competitiveness but India is lacking on the fronts of safety and security, maintenance and cleanliness, infrastructure, information and communication, man made attractions and behavior of country residents. So hereby is a SWOT Analysis of Indian tourism industry based on the interpretations of primary as well as secondary data:

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<th>Strengths</th>
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<td>• Prices</td>
<td>• Safety and Security</td>
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<td>• Information and Communication</td>
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<td>• Attractions</td>
<td>• Infrastructure</td>
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<td>- Historical monuments</td>
<td>- Banking and Financial System</td>
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<td>- International art exhibitions</td>
<td>- Accommodation Quality</td>
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<td>- Multi-cultural heritage</td>
<td>- Availability of desired food</td>
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<td>• Purpose of visit</td>
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<td>- Natural resources</td>
<td>- Shopper’s Paradise</td>
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<td>• Opportunities</td>
<td>- Climate and Weather</td>
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<td>• Shift of the global foreign tourists arrivals from developed economies to emerging economies</td>
<td>- Games and Activities</td>
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<td>• Threats</td>
<td>- Nightlife</td>
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<td>• Lack of Man made attractions gives an edge to the competitors.</td>
<td>- Potential to be international destination</td>
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<td>• Continuous decline in the global and Asia-Pacific Ranking</td>
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<td>• Frequent Communal Riots</td>
<td>• Behavior of Country residents</td>
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<td>• Frequent depreciation of Rupee</td>
<td>• Purpose of visit</td>
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<td>• Continuous threat of terrorists attacks</td>
<td>- Tourism Infrastructure</td>
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<td>- Accessibility to tourist spots</td>
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<td>- Begging and Cheating</td>
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7. Suggestions to Ministry of Tourism (MoT) to boost Indian Tourism

1. To provide for effective marketing and advertisement of India as a global tourist destination through promotional campaigns that project India as a whole and not merely a combination of states.

2. Proper transportation facilities: Families in different strata need facilities like bus, cars, and trains to approach their favorite destinations. Major distances are covered by trains or planes. Sufficient transport facilities exist and additional facilities can be made for the same based on requirements. India's transportation system is also in need of a serious overhaul. Although cars and trucks traverse India's roads, laws for operating vehicles are widely ignored. Often the result is pure chaos, as cars, trucks, bicycles and rickshaws drive into opposing traffic rules and ignore traffic lights to get where they need to go. Fatal car and truck accidents are not uncommon. For a tourist visiting India, the experience of traveling along India's lawless roadways can induce cardiac arrest. While India also has an extensive railway system, due to overcrowding and poor maintenance, this mode of transportation is not much better. Trains are frequently so crowded that people sit on the roofs of moving trains or hang out the windows. While a rare breed of adventurous tourist may find traveling on India's trains exciting, the majority of tourists might find using India's railways highly inconvenient. India needs to enforce its traffic laws and reduce railway overcrowding so that visiting tourists will have an easier time traveling from place to place.

3. Proper accommodation facility: While an international tourist is in India he needs to be provided with good quality accommodation at reasonable prices in nearby localities of tourist spots.

4. The educational nature of heritage sites should not be forgotten. Theatres showing educational videos about the heritage site and its history should be available and cost should be included in tour costs.

5. Food and restaurants: Food and restaurants are required at tourist sites. The restaurants should be able to serve a variety of global cuisines to suit all tastes and also have stress for local food. Restaurants should be able to supply mineral water to the health conscious tourist of the day.

6. Adequate and hygienic toilet, bathroom and urinal facilities are required at heritage sites. These facilities also need maintenance and cleanliness.

7. Primary HealthCare: Every tourist spot should be equipped with a primary healthcare centres to provide first aid and amenities to minimize stress and fatigue relief.

8. Handicraft and local crafts sales facilities: A tour is probably a time when the tourist is brought close to local handicrafts and local craftsmen. Adequate space for having shops to sell Indian handicrafts, garments and traditional items must be provided.

9. Amusement Parks and secondary entertainment facilities: Now days the tourists want to enjoy more and that too by spending least of their time. This opportunity can be availed by the ministry of tourism by building good amusement parks and shopping complexes near the famous tourist spots. It will not only promote tourism but also lead to employment generation for a large number of people.

10. Bank and ATM facilities: Most tourist locations require Bank and ATM facilities. Nationalized banks can be directed to provide ATM facilities nearby heritage/tourist sites.

11. Persons performing unclean acts can be fined for such purposes. Indian tourism department should frame surveillance and penal code that should authorize the specific persons at respective tourist spots to impose and collect penalties and fines from those who are damaging the tourist spots or creating unclean environment.

12. Incentive to explore the heritage: The government of India is recommended to design such tourism packages which cover a large number of tourist spots at discounted prices. It will provide an incentive to the tourists to visit more tourist places in a single visit to India. It will help in flourishing the tourism industry.

13. Another issue with an adverse effect on India's tourism is its widespread environmental pollution. Air quality throughout India is notoriously bad, since there are no curbs on emissions and law enforcement to prevent gross polluters. Most days, the air in big cities such as Mumbai has a red tinge to it, causing watery eyes and coughing. Respiratory infections are common, especially among sensitive individuals or those with allergies. Additionally, air pollution is beginning to show its effects on prominent tourist landmarks, such as Agra's Taj Mahal. In recent years, toxic air has damaged the ancient marble of the monument, jeopardizing its beauty and requiring significant repair. Measures should therefore be initiated for strict enforcement of provisions of Environmental Protection Act and the latest amendments made therein.

14. As India's population grows, forests are cleared to make room for more housing and development. The destruction of these forests leads to a loss of habitat for many of India's famed fauna, such as Bengal tigers, Asian elephants and Indian ring neck parrots. If India does not make greater efforts to reduce this loss of habitat, tourists searching for safari like encounters with the animals made famous in Rudyard Kipling's "Jungle Book" will be out of luck. India needs to preserve ecotourism by protecting its forests and the animals that inhabit them.

15. India's government should be cognizant of the different types of tourists that may want to visit India--ecotourists, history buffs or those seeking meditative retreats. India should take advantage of the West's intrigue with Indian culture, including yoga, ayurvedic medicine, Hinduism and meditation, and market itself accordingly. Private and government
sector should collaborate to improve and modernize India’s infrastructure. Not only will this increase tourism, but it will also increase foreign investment.

16. Coastal development: Development of coastlines and management of water resources will give a new impetus to tourism, tremendous boost to the development of flora and fauna and multiply our domestic and export income through sea food, fisheries and a variety of flora. This can be done with the expert guidance of consultants, hoteliers, industrialists and businessmen.

17. Single window facility should be provided for booking rooms in city hotels and other tourism related services.

18. Improve & change the image of Kashmir valley: Germany was the first country to change the caution notice to its citizens against travelling to Kashmir. They also went on to state that “foreigners were not a target for militants in Indian-held Kashmir”. The government should urge other countries to change their travel advisories and market Kashmir as an adventure tourism destination.

19. More efforts have to be laid in by the Government of India to provide adequate safety of foreign tourists especially for the female visitors.

20. Similar entry fees at tourist spots: It is a common practice in India to charge much higher entry fees at major tourist spots from foreign tourists in comparison to Indians. Although it is major revenue generating source for the government of India still the price discrimination if not abolished should be minimized.

21. Development of North east states: Efforts should be made for promotion of heritage of north eastern states of India which have a great potential to attract foreign tourists because of rich natural beauty.

22. VoA scheme: In an attempt to push inbound arrivals in India the government should extend VoA (Visa on Arrival) scheme to more and more nations. India currently issues VoA to 14 countries viz: Japan, Indonesia, The Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Singapore, Myanmar, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg, France, Germany and Russia.

8. CONCLUSION

India which is endowed with a treasure of beauty spots—natural as well as man-made could not boast of a healthy inflow of foreign tourists. Tourism industry holds a great potential to flourish in India provided its cultural and historical legacy is properly taken care of. Therefore the ministry of tourism can analyze the strengths and weaknesses of Indian tourism industry and also explore the favorable opportunities coming its way and minimize the effects of the threats posed so that Indian tourism industry can be benefitted from it. As the UNWTO highlights have also revealed in their study that there will be a shift in global trend of foreign tourist arrival from advanced economies to emerging economies and India being a part of the latter should therefore be ready enough to grab the fruits of this opportunity coming its way.

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