

## ROLE OF WOMEN, SECURITY AND SAFETY: LEGAL ASPECTS IN TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

Tourist industry is providing job opportunities for women and at the same time it affects women's lives in destination communities. Tourism is considered a vehicle of development. It has potential to contribution to economic development of backward areas and communities. It creates paths towards the elimination of poverty among women in developing countries. Tourism is presently the third largest export industry in India - the first two being gem and jewellery and readymade garments and employs the largest human power in the country especially women. The importance of tourism as a strategy to empower women economically should therefore be questioned in term of their security and safety. This paper is an attempt to present the role of women in nurturing the tourism and at the same time try to bring in flash the security and safety issues of women.

**KEYWORDS:** Women, Security, Legal, Tourism, Safety, Development.

### INTRODUCTION

*"Safety and security are vital to providing quality in tourism. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide safe and secure environment for visitors"*

(UNWTO, 1996)

Worldwide, tourism industry is well known of being one of the fastest growing economic sectors as per the report of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The international annual growth rate and income growth rate of the of the world economy was reported 4.6% and 11.2% respectively in 2006 as international arrivals grew from 25 million to 842 million from 1950 to 2006. The UNWTO forecasts that international arrivals are expected to reach nearly 1.6 billion by the year 2020. Tourism emerge as investment market for developing economy and this leads to increased

investment in infrastructure, development of domestic markets, liberalization of air transport, marketing and advertising, growing intraregional cooperation and a growing number of public-private partnerships . The contribution of tourism to poverty alleviation was first noted in the 1970 (Harrison 2008, p.851). Tourism is the third largest export industry in India after gem and jewellery and readymade garments and employs the largest human power in the country. In India the foreign exchange earnings from tourism have recorded a massive compound annual growth rate both in terms of (11.59%) dollar and (12.74%) money value. The average contribution of tourism industry to the country's GDP was 5.3 percent. India is expected to be the second fastest growing (8.8%) nation in the world, because it is blessed with tremendous variety of tourist resources.

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The Govt. of India has also been implementing many schemes through. The women occupying positions in tourism sector that were previously restricted to men and also occupying leadership positions. However, this development has been limited, largely due to the dual role of women, who spend more hours than men dealing with parenting and household tasks, despite the fact they both have jobs outside home (Costa, Carvalho & Breda, 2010). Studies show that, in most regions of the world, women make up the majority of the tourism workforce, with a tendency to concentrate on lower level and underpaid jobs, and also carrying out a large amount of unpaid work in tourism family businesses (UNWTO & UN Women, 2011). Although tourism is a global competitive industry it but may prone to disasters like economic crises, outbreaks of warfare, epidemics and other natural disasters and manmade disasters like terror attacks. International tourism has efficiencies to recover from these adverse situations. As a result tourism is highly sensitive to perceptions of danger and lack of safety and security. But lack of safety and security and incidences of crime represent a more serious threat to travel and tourism than any other negative factor.

### **WOMEN'S POSITION IN TOURISM**

Tourism is considered as one of the world's largest economic activities today. The Draft Tourism Policy 1997 sees the emergence of tourism as an important instrument for sustainable human development including poverty alleviation, employment generation, environment regeneration and advancement of women and other disadvantaged groups. The general picture shows that tourism industry seems to be a particularly important sector for women (46% of the workforce are women) as their percentage of employment in most countries are higher than in the workforce in general (34.40% are Women, ILO, Data).The proportion of women's to men's working hours available, for 39 countries, is 89 percent which means that women work for 89 hours, when men work for 100 hours. The ratio of women's

to men's wages is 79%. Means women are working for fewer hours than men and receive even less pay. Though women have achieved higher levels of education than ever before but their share in management position remains unacceptably low. Women are being employed as cleaners, travel agencies sales persons, waitresses, chambermaids, flight attendants etc... In the tourism sector, key managerial positions being dominated by men and lower levels occupation with few career development opportunities being dominated by women. It can be observed that more than 90% of people working in catering & lodging, as waitresses, bartenders, maids, baby sitters, cleaners, housekeeping helpers, launderers, dry - cleaners and the like are women. In the tourism industry, the percentage of women who work in the industry is high, but their function is dominated by unskilled, low-paid jobs.

Tourism provides significant opportunities for women not only in formal sector but also in the informal sector. Informal sector provides opportunity for those women who are responsible for children and elderly relatives, women with less education, and those who would otherwise not be able to get jobs in formal employment. They may involve in flexible works at home such as producing handicrafts and working for tourist industry along with their household responsibilities while improving their standard of living. But not all informal work provides positive opportunities for women. Women in informal employment are vulnerable to being exploited, treated unfairly, or underpaid.

### **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Tourists are vulnerable because they are temporary visitors to communities with which they are not familiar. According to Echtner and Ritchie (1991) creating managing an appropriate destination image is critical to an effective positioning and marketing strategy. Quality in tourism depends on the safety and security. 26/11, 2008 Mumbai terror attack on Taj Palace & Tower, killed 166 people and wounded at least 293. The changing attitudes of

travelers in the wake of these attacks were reflected in the manner in which a number of independent travelers dealt with the fear of insecurity. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), international tourist arrivals slumped by 1.3 per cent in 2001—the only significant decrease since World War II. In the Caribbean, CTO estimated that arrivals from the US fell an estimated 20 per cent between September and December 2001.

National crime statistics show 92 women are raped each day in India, mostly in rural areas, though the figure is widely believed to be an underestimate. Street harassment and violence, sometimes called “eve-teasing”, is even more common, experienced by 79% of Indian women according to a recent survey. Tourists can be subjected to the same harassment and worse, most recently in July 2016 when an Israeli national was sexually assaulted by a gang of men in the Himalayan resort town of Manali. A Japanese woman was kidnapped and sexually assaulted in 2014 in Bihar and a Russian assaulted by an auto-rickshaw driver in Delhi in 2015, among other cases. Exploitation through tourism can take many different forms: poor wages, dangerous working conditions, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, prostitution, slavery, and human trafficking. Women and children living in poverty in developing countries are particularly vulnerable to these threats. Tourism sex work might appear to provide an escape from the hardships of everyday life, but can result in far greater long-term hardships such as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, social dislocation, destitution, or drug addiction (Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010)

### **INDECENT PRESENTATION, TRAFFICKING AND SEX TOURISM AN ABUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN**

The reports of the Special Reporter on Violence against Women (UNCHR) have highlighted the linkages between countries in economic transition and the increase in trafficking and

forced prostitution of women. Violation of human rights due to sex tourism and trafficking of women are the other sides of the booming tourism industry. To service the tourist, migration and trafficking of women, within and cross border countries is commonplace. Women are trafficked not only from Nepal and Bangladesh to India to service the sex trade but also from eastern European women to European countries, Russian women to Thailand and the Philippines and Goa, to service the sex trade. Tourism industries have not taken serious action against the exploitation of women in trafficking and sex tourism. Globalised crime and technology like the internet have given the sex industry new means of exploiting, supplying and marketing women and children as commodities to buyers. In tourism marketing, after cultural heritage and natural beauty, women are being the most widely-used objects. Tourism promotional advertisements and brochures are often full of sexist images of women. They are projected as pleasure providers. Their images often patronizing, eroticized and misleading. To look beautiful, women are expected to dress in an attractive manner. There is a significant amount of sexual objectification of women working in the tourism industry.

### **GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT VS TOURISM**

Gender equality, in economic terms means equal access to resources such as credit and education, as well as equal engagement in different economic activities (Masika & Joeekes 1996, p.2).

Tourism has potential for creating jobs and encouraging income-generating activities but the benefits of tourism are distributed between men and women unequally, particularly in the developing world. Globally, the tourism industry seems to be a particularly important sector for women (46 % of the workforce are women) as their percentages of employment in most countries are higher than in the workforce in general (34 - 40 % are women, ILO data). The numbers of women and their percentage of the

workforce in tourism vary greatly between countries - from 2 % up to over 80%.The tourism is creating paths towards the elimination of poverty of women and provide various entry point for women's employment, self-employment in small, micro and medium income generating activities.

The tourism provides both opportunities and challenges for gender equality and women's empowerment. Women participation is high but their functions are dominated by unskilled, low-paid jobs. Gender stereotyping lies in the fact that those women mainly tend to perform jobs such as cooking, cleaning and hospitality and managerial positions are being captured by men. Tourism market like many other sectors showed vertical and horizontal gender segregation. Vertically, lower levels and occupations with few career development opportunities are being dominated by women and key managerial positions being dominated by men. Horizontally, women and men are placed in different occupations - women are being employed as waitresses, cleaners, travel agencies sales persons, flight attendants, etc., whereas men are being employed as gardeners, construction workers, drivers, pilots, etc. Education and training are crucial to the alleviation of gender inequalities. Education brings increased choice, business acumen, and improved economic opportunity.

To improve the status of women in tourism, it is important to stress women's participation in tertiary education, to provide support and training for women tourism entrepreneurs, and to ensure training and education are free of gender bias (Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010).

## **CONCLUSION**

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the global economy. In India, in recent years there has been a major growth in the tourism sector. Tourism satisfies human natural instinct of experience, education and entertainment.

Tourism industry is also known for its potential for creating jobs and encouraging income-generating activities especially for women. Women have entered into the tourism industry at different levels. The Govt. of India has been taking many measures to provide a safe and comfortable touring to national and international tourists. The Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010 draws attention that if the aspects of gender are considered in the policies, plans and implementation this sector would promote gender equality (UNWTO and UNIFEM, 2010). This shows that tourism sector all over the world still needs special attention in regards to integrating gender issues in the policies. Tourism is a means for economic development so its profit should not be restricted to some specific communities but to all members of the community. It should lead to gender equality and empowerment. Gender sensitization and raising awareness of gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles, particularly regarding the way they affect women's occupations, hierarchical positions, working hours and wages should become the base of policies of Intergovernmental bodies, governments, tourism industry, trade unions and NGOs.

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