

# Studies in Tourism Geography of India: Definition, Approaches and Prospects

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#### Abstract

Tourism geography is a novel area of research and broadly examines the interaction among such themes 'spatial organization', 'land-man relations' and 'areal differentiation' (Taaffe 1974; Gibson 2008) in the study of the distribution and spatial pattern of tourist places. Tourist activities generate wealth and employment, attract foreign exchange, promote travel and hospitability industry, advance cross-cultural communication and understanding, build infrastructure, and lead to local as well as global development. Pearce (1979) examined the range and scope of tourism geography and opined the centrality of spatial interaction in the geographies of tourism. The geography of tourism examines a variety of areas like 'the effects of scale', 'spatial distribution of tourist phenomenon', 'tourism impacts', 'planning for tourism', and 'spatial modeling for tourist development' (Williams 1998). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2016) reports that tourism will continue to grow in most Western developed economies. Recently, Indian geographers have been interested in the spatial dimension of tourism in

India (Mir 2016). Given this overview, the objective of this chapter is to address two research questions: (1) how is tourism conceptualized by geographers? (2) what insights do Indian studies provide about tourism geography?

### Keywords

India · Spatial dimensions of tourism · Tourism geography

#### 27.1 Introduction

Tourism geography is a novel area of research and broadly examines the interaction among such themes as 'spatial organization', 'land-man relations' and 'areal differentiation' (Taaffe 1974; Gibson 2008) in the study of the distribution and spatial pattern of tourist flows. Tourism is one of the largest global industry, which generates a sizeable wealth, and employment, attracts foreign exchange, promotes travel and hospitability industry, advances cross-cultural communication and understanding, builds infrastructure, improves social well-being, and enhances local as well as global development.

Of this 55%, tourist arrivals were destined for advanced economies and the remaining 44% in emerging economies. Most of the tourist arrivals were directed for core regions comprising North America and European countries. Regions such

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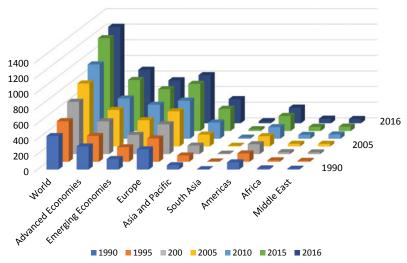
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as South Asia, Africa and Middle Eastern show the least arrivals. In addition, Fig. 27.1 depicts Asia and Pacific region witnessed 9% increase in arrivals, followed by Africa by 8%, Americas by 3%, Europe by 3% and double-digit growth in some countries, and a negative increase in Middle eastern region by (-4)%. These statistics demonstrate broader patterns of uneven tourism arrivals across international destinations. Yet another concern less discussed is the environmentally unsustainable nature of tourism. While most economic sectors are reducing its ecological footprint and developing strategies of plummeting greenhouse gas emissions, the tourism sector has not attended this global concern. Peters and Landre (2012) have called for a 'new tourism geography' to better understand this phenomenon and develop mitigation policies.

The global economy is witnessing an era of 'mass tourism', and thus, with economic prosperity, it generates tourist attraction and the enhanced scale of this activity promotes regional development. This, in turn, makes tourism a key factor in developing effective regional policy (Giaoutzi and Nijkamp 2006). Pearce (1979) examined the range and scope of tourist geography and opined the centrality of spatial interaction in the geographies of tourism. The geography of tourism examines a variety of areas like 'the effects of scale', 'spatial distribution of

tourist phenomenon', 'tourism impacts', 'planning for tourism', and 'spatial modeling for tourist development' (Williams 1998). The first theme scale is important since the interaction of human beings with tourist destinations is not consistent through time and space at different geographical scales. The cause and effect relationship vary across geographical scales. Thus, scale will be an important consideration since, human interactions, choice of destinations and tourism flows will be influenced with geographical aggregation of tourism flows. The second theme is of central concern to geographer's namely spatial distribution of tourist phenomenon. This includes sub-themes such as spatial pattern of supply and demand, geography of resorts, determinants of inbound and outbound tourists, regional patterns of tourist destinations, patterns of movement and flows of tourists and tourism-led regional development among others. The third theme tourism impact is another area of interest since these can originate as economic, social, political, cultural and anthropological impacts, which vary across space and time. The fourth them tourism planning involves regional development of a tourist location. Once a tourist place is identified, it requires diverse types of infrastructure such as hotels, amenities, public infrastructure, and workforce. Finally, geographical information systems (GIS) and spatial

Fig. 27.1 Global trends in international tourists arrivals (Millions): 1990–2016 depicts the international tourism arrivals reached a mark of 1,235 million globally (UNWTO 2017). *Source* UNWTO tourism highlights, 2017 Edition



statistics modeling can provide insights to the analytical interpretation of the evolution and change patterns of tourism through time and scale, spatial diffusion of tourism within and between countries, development of hierarchies of resorts and tourist places and effects of distance on patterns of tourist movements.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2016) reports that tourism will continue to grow in most Western developed economies. It has contributed to overall economic growth and accounts for 4.1% of GDP, 5.9% of employment, and 21.3% of service exports in the OECD region during 2015. In comparison, the impact of tourism and travel sectors on the Indian economy was 3.3% of GDP, 5.8% of total employment, 5.4% of total exports and 5.7% of total investment during 2016 (Turner 2017). In addition, a cyclic behavior of the destruction of the demand for old tourist place (X) with the substitution of new tourist place (Y). Initially, the tourists are in a phase of 'exploration', and a 'destination' is identified (X), and this destination is exploited until there is 'maturity', generating 'exponential growth' of visitors to the location. Ultimately, the old site is saturated with visitors and a new site (Y) replaces the old leading to a slowdown of trips to the old site with an eventual collapse in demand. The cycle of demand saturation of old site with demand for new site continues as the old over-exploited destination loses its attraction in relation to the new destination (UNEP 2000; Haggett 2001).

Recently, Indian geographers have been interested in the spatial dimension of tourism in India (Mir 2016; Babu 2008). Mir (2016) opines tourist geography research in India is lopsided and model-building research is less popular. Further, Babu (2008) observed foreign tourist travelers data show an increased variability annually, and the domestic tourist travelers have been increasing exponentially. He also, observes a seasonal pattern of peak, trough and plateau among both foreign and domestic travelers. In addition, tourist accommodation and arrival statistics demonstrate higher concentration in selected states in India. The key domestic tourist

generating states are West Bengal, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra. There is an uneven distribution of tourism sites, amenities and natresources Indian across A sub-national study reported (Government of India 2015) the encouragement of 'decentralization of power to local government', 'allocation of financial resources', and 'development of a well-articulated plan for tourism development' major states in India. Significant inter-state variations exist with respect to tourism characteristics such as purpose of trip, intensity of trip by state of origin, rural and urban variations. The largest tourist visitors during 2008–09 were in Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh and least in Northeastern states, and Goa.

Given this overview, the objective of this chapter is to address two broad questions (1) What are the geographic perspectives on tourism? (2) What insights do Indian studies provide on tourism geography of India? The remainder of the chapter are organized into the following four sections: the second section defines tourism and reviews geographic studies, third section review tourism geography studies in India, and fourth section concludes.

### 27.2 Tourism: Concept and Definition

When people travel for less than a year for leisure, business, shopping, religious, medical or family reasons away from their residence, than it is considered as an act of tourism (UN World Tourist Organization 1994). They may be visiting a destination for sightseeing, meeting friends or relatives, or simply taking a vacation. Tourists may further spend their leisure time at a destination playing sports, enjoying exotic cuisine, reading on a beach or simply enjoying the environment or wilderness. Similar activities can be performed without travelling to a distant location, and within shorter duration of time, but that will not be classified as recreation activities. Travel and

tourism have an intertwining relationship since tourism involves travel from home to short or distant locations within the nation or international locations. However, travel may involve non-tourist destinations such as work related, visiting a relative or making a trip for shopping experience. A second distinction is that tourism-led travel takes place infrequently while non-tourism travel occurs more frequently. Duration and distance generally separate a general travel relative to tourism-related travel.

Analogously, travel for pleasure without spending a longer duration can be defined as leisure, and organized activities for pleasure at home can be called recreation. Thus, recreation can be defined as the sum of all activities, experiences and processes involved in the use of leisure time. However, more recreation and tourism can be differentiated in degree rather than in kind since both types of activities are pursued for pleasure. In addition, both sets of activities imply a multi-stage process of a recreation experience namely: planning, travel to the experience, participation in the activity itself, travel back home and recall of the experience (Clawson and Knetsch 1966). Recreation tends to happen locally after work or school, during the week and weekends and often in relatively shorter distance from home. However, tourists make trips relatively less frequently usually during holidays, summer vacation periods and involve travel to more often a distant location for a relatively longer duration.

Thus, comprehensively speaking tourism can be understood as a holistic process comprising several components whose interaction generates the totality of tourist experience. These components are 'processes', 'activities' and 'outcomes', that arise from the relationships and the interaction among four actors namely 'tourists', 'tourism suppliers', 'host governments' and the 'local environment' that acts as agents in attracting tourists to a destination. The tourist generally seeks psychic and physical experiences from a tourist destination, which affects the choice of selecting the destination. The businesses in the tourist destination see tourism as an opportunity to enhance their profit by supplying goods and

services that the tourist market demands. The local government sees tourism as an opportunity to earn foreign exchange wealth, seek higher employment from services that tourists demand, and taxes collected from tourist expenditure either directly or indirectly. Therefore, tourism is an amalgamation of activities, services and industries that delivers a travel experience. This entails such services like transportation, hotel, dining, shopping, entertainment and other hospitality services available to tourist visitors. In the subsequent section, tourism is discussed from a geographic perspective.

# 27.2.1 Tourism Geography and Planning Studies

Tourism geography grew as a sub-field within geography during the Great Depression period. The classic publication of an article in the *Annals* of the Association of American Geographers by McCurry titled The Use of Land for Recreation (1930) led the take-off of this nascent area. Recreation geography has been defined as the study of all activities and phenomena that relates to the experiences and processes involved in the use of leisure time. Tourism is associated with the use of leisure time at a distant location for a considerable duration of time. It is inherently a geographic phenomenon since it allows people from distinct parts of the world to experience unseen places. Tourist places are spatially distributed geographically with varying degrees of accessibility. Tourism occurs at different geographical scales and can be local or global. The tourism industry is complex comprising of hotel chains and airline industry and tour operators that are spread across international boundaries through a network of multinational corporations. There is much debate on the effects of globalization on tourism. Several argue that globalization has made places look very similar since the multinational corporations and media have diffused popular culture, food and clothing products through alternate information outlets. Yet others argue that it is even more important to keep places distinct and allow them to maintain their identity at the local and regional scales. Further, tourism trends can be deciphered for planning purposes at the regional scale. Tourists generating regions are source areas from where the tourists are coming, and tourist-receiving regions are destinations where the tourists are visiting. Using such information, one can identify the characteristics of tourist's spots that contribute to the supply of tourist places. In addition, the tourist places need to be accessible, attractive, relatively well located and should have sound transport infrastructure. Tourist geographers have addressed seven themes in the past few decades 'Tourism-led-development', resorts and their development', 'Tourism travel', 'Tourists impacts', 'Recreation and tourism planning' and 'Geographic Information Systems (GIS) application in tourism'. The sub-disciple has grown sufficiently to compile a journal of scholarly publications since 1999, titled *Tourism* Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism, Space, Place and Environment published by Routledge and Anatolia by Taylor and Francis.

The first theme addressed is tourism-led regional development. It can be hypothesized that tourism leads to regional development since it generates employment, businesses prosperity, and higher tax revenue collection for the local economy. In the wake of these arguments, tourism can be said to promote regional development or vice-versa. The national and local governments have examined tourism as a tool for planning, economic diversity and improvement and then to analyze the success and failure of these efforts, but unfortunately the benefits of tourism development have been less rewarding than anticipated by government agencies. It is observed that lack of tourism has been a limiting factor in the development of Tamil Nadu (India) despite an abundance of natural and cultural resources. Study of tourism as a means of improving regional economies is in great demand, and case studies demonstrating the rationalization of growth, scale of development, social and political effects would add to the existing analysis.

The second theme addresses tourist resorts and their development. A collective model has

been proposed by Butler (1980), Smith (1991) and Dietworth and Ashworth (1995). A fundamental contribution of their analysis is the notion of a stage process of growth and change from some initial to a culminating stage of development or deterioration. Christaller (1963) initially described the set up such a model within the context of a peripheral theory of tourism location. The idea of a location theory of tourism attractions did not develop but it led to the development of resort-based development. The development is centered on a key resource such that development takes place with a focus on that resource. Resorts can be found in many places such as seaside (Britain), mountain regions (La Grande Plagne, France) and in the deserts (Palm Springs, California, Las Vegas, Nevada). The resort-based development model has been divided into six stages: 'exploration', 'involvement', 'development', 'consolidation', 'stagnation and decline'. The model has been tested for discovering whether an ideal strategy exists for avoiding a center-periphery conflict. In addition, beyond the process of resort-based development process, there have been studies investigating resorts as morphological or tourist phenomena. The notion of a 'resort business district' has been proposed which suggests the idea of a specialized district characterized by a linear land use pattern and specific spatial relationships among and between retail centers. This type of development process has been implemented in places that have sea resources as in Britain, Malaysia, Thailand and Australia to develop seaside resort development. The development of Cancun as a resort in Mexico has been analyzed in terms of site and situation strategies. The analysis of the physical and cultural character of potential destinations in Mexico in relation with the cost and convenience of transportation to competing destinations led to the decision to position the resort in Cancun. This area of research is fertile and wide open as more studies are needed to validate the resort-based development model in conjunction with geographical and location attributes of potential resort locations.

The *third theme* addressed by geographers is *tourism travel*, which is the single most

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researched topic by tourism geographers. Tourism involves travel between places of origins (residence) and the destination (tourist places). Williams and Zelinsky (1970) first inquired the question of international tourist flows. They examined international tourist flows among 14 top destinations using graphic flow assignment models that revealed eight sets of explanations. A study of international tourism in Canada addressed the relationship between factors attributed to tourism that affected Canada's foreign trade deficit. A similar study of tourism in Europe concluded that distance plays a significantly lesser role relative to day-to-day travel behavior. The study utilized Chritaller's core-periphery model and the notion of attraction. The center is defined as the origin (home country or region) and periphery (destination country or region). The analysis suggested the larger the country's (destination) attraction the further was its relative location from the center (origin). A further implication of the analysis was that attractiveness is relative to the spatial choices of tourist between competing choices among destinations. Several studies have investigated domestic tourism at micro and macro scales in Victoria, British Columbia. The studies concluded that tourism travel is a search process with a directional bias. Tourists discovered that the outcomes of the search patterns were dependent on the mental images of the destination and personal motivations. Tourists travel within their home country between states as well. A few studies investigated gross tourist travel patterns among states and noted high degree of variations between state-to-state vacations travel besides most patterns conformed to the distance decay principle. A few important variables stood out to be significant shifters of the demand curves such as the number of state parks, auto ownership and a willingness to travel long distance. It was also opined that the southern and mountain states were tourist recipient's states and the Great Lakes and eastern states were the tourist generating states. Further, it was noticed that travel to visit family and friends was the most dominant reason and a significant association existed among leisure travel and trip purpose.

International tourism is an area that demands greater attention for research and investigation especially the determinants of tourism in the wake of globalization.

The fourth theme addressed by tourist geographers is tourism impacts. The most important work in this area has been the book written by Mathieson and Wall titled Tourism economic, Physical and Social Impacts (1982). Tourism impacts vary in response from negative to positive to balanced, but the negative responses dominated. Amongst the responses, the book noted economic influences tend to be positive, and physical and social influences tended to be generally negative. The negative environmental impacts of large-scale recreation subdivision can be addressed by regional planning of water, soil, drainage and scenic erosion in relation with the needs of the region in conjunction to the environmental constraints of an area.

The fifth theme addressed by tourism geographers is recreation and tourism planning. Two kinds of research have been undertaken in this direction and these are critiquing of existing plans and engaging actively in the planning process. Geographers working in federal agencies have utilized the concept of carrying capacity in river and recreation studies. This notion has been utilized to develop Wilderness Permit system, visitor information services, and establishing criteria for campsites. Another neglected aspect of tourism planning is the area of strategic planning. Strategic planning has been a valuable tool of addressing planning problems, but the field remains fragmented with topical interests that are at the most fragmented and scattered. Strategic planning remains a key area for tourism planning since as tourism development needs infrastructure, with a high capital cost structure, long time periods of construction and many interdependencies, this technique helps in mediating with different stakeholders to address this long-term objective. This task will require the formulation of a strategy to shape opportunities for competitive advantage and provide a plan for stakeholders to follow. Important decisions will have to be made involving stakeholders with multiple objectives.

The *final theme* addressed is the application of GIS to tourism problem-solving. GIS is the most widely utilized technology to harness, explore, query and model geographical database. It is the combination of hardware, software and practices used to run spatial analysis and mapping programme. It is a collection of practices, software and hardware, with the ability to collect, store, manipulate, analyze, prepare maps digitally, automate map with additional information, print and share output. It is important to know that GIS requires data structures in formats by computer software to reconstruct the spatial data model in digital form. Data models can be constructed utilizing raster and vector data. The raster data models are a system of tessellating rectangular cells in which individual cells are used as building blocks to create images of point, line, area, networks, and surface entities. Similarly, vector data models are spatial data models using two-dimensional Cartesian (x, y) coordinates to store the shape of spatial entities. GIS can be used in tourism planning such as tourism site selection, tourism retail trading decisions, attraction allocation, and visitor demographic data. First, for the advanced users, GIS has the capability to conduct scenario and forecasting analysis of demand and supply analysis. This technology at a very basic level can be used to identify specific development sites based on a set of criteria using economic, social, environmental and business development related data. Further, GIS can be utilized for tourism modeling for a prospective tourism region involving a complicated set of criteria. It has been used very successfully for planning, execution and engagement in strategic management of the enterprise. Second, tourism development is a geographic phenomenon and GIS can identify principal tourist activity spaces within a destination and flow among destinations. Businesses and local government can implement strategic plans for building superior infrastructure such as public transportation system linking various tourist activity spaces. Third, GIS can be used in relation to providing environmental justice with the implication that tourism perhaps cannot benefit all sections of society equally such as

groups whose home are lost due to site selection. The technology also aids in preparing an inventory of resources to identify land use conflicts and complementarities and activities, available infrastructure and natural resources. Fourth, GIS can be utilized to study and analyze tourism impacts on various industrial sectors using time series or cross-section spatial data sets. The What if? (Klosterman 1996) tool can be used for scenario generation with the assumption what will happen if a critical variable in the model changes and how will it affect the destination? For the advanced user GIS can run spatial regression, location allocation and spatial optimization models to query geographic data for revealing the best tourist location and sites for future development. It can be an aid in supporting important business decision-making solutions.

### 27.3 Tourism Geography: Indian Studies

Tourism is conceptualized as 'the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their realm for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes' (World Tourism Organization 1994). The Government of India's (2014) defines tourism as 'a movement of one or more household members traveling to a place outside their usual environment for purposes other than those of migration, or getting employed, or setting up of residence, in that place and which is outside their regular routine of life for not more than six months'. In addition, 'sustainable tourism is defined as tourism that takes into full account of its current and future, economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of the visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities' (UNEP and WTO 2005). Geography of tourism can contribute to four areas of knowledge and understanding: 'role of geographical scale', 'demand and supply sides of tourism', 'spatial components of tourism system' and 'spatial interaction between the various components of tourist system' (Nelson 2017). The causation relationship among variables explaining tourism

development may not be consistent across different scales and times. Thus, uncovering spatial relationships across geographical scales are important. Second, the identification of demand and supply factors is equally important for the understanding, estimation and decision-making. Third, spatial components of tourist system refer to the tourism generating areas, tourism receiving areas, and the intervening opportunities of connectivity between the supplying and receiving areas. Fourth, spatial interaction refers to the interaction, measurement, estimation and prediction between regions in terms of tourist flows. Further, Hannam and Diekmann (2015) opine that with rapid national growth in India likely will be a large source of and destination of tourist flows. They utilize a critical theory approach to analyze several themes like: 'tourism governance', 'cultural tourism', 'heritage tourism', 'nature-based tourism' from the supply-side, and the 'international tourism', 'domestic tourism', 'outbound' and 'Indian diaspora' from the demand-side. Given this brief overview the following six themes are reviewed in the Indian context in the following sections: 'globalization and tourist development, 'regional tourism and development', 'economic geography and tourism', 'eco-tourism and sustainability', 'tourism and environment impact' and 'infrastructure development and tourism'.

# 27.3.1 Globalization and Tourism Development

Globalization and tourism are interdependent as the process of globalization affects the local; and vice-versa local affects the globalization. Thus, there is a reciprocal relationship between tourism and development. For example, beaches in Goa and the Taj Mahal in Agra attract not only domestic visitors but also international tourists. At the same time, liberalization of the Indian economy has encouraged international visitors. Nowak et al. (2010) opined the increasing international fragmentation of tourism production through such processes as 'outsourcing', 'vertical specialization' and 'delocalization'.

Outsourcing involves services in tourism sector that are information-sector based, technologically enabled business process outsourcing services. These may include such services as call center support, and other services including data entry handling and coding, medical and legal transcriptions and testing. For example, the package tour is an aggregate product that contains various segments of production. These production processes in turn require different technologies, alternate factor proportions, skill sets, marketing inputs and geographic locations, provided in different combinations to tourist consumers with various pricing schemes.

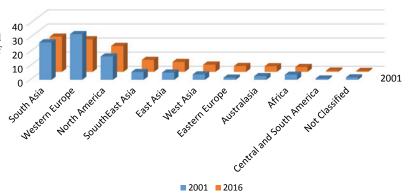
Further, the Government of India (2017a, b) reports that the share of India as a proportion of international tourist arrivals almost doubled from 683.3 million during 2000 to 1235 million during 2016 and in terms of percentage increased from 0.39 to 1.18%. Figure 27.2 shows the larger percent of international visitors to India are primarily from the core developed countries i.e. Western Europe and North America as well as South Asia and Southeast Asia.

In addition, globalization has positive and negative impacts on the local and global economy. Several positive impacts such as easy availability of credit due to international banking, alternatives modal choices, competitive and luxurious hotel accommodation, and international cuisine. On the negative side, there can be tsunami, terrorist attacks, disease breakthrough that may deter tourists from traveling to tourist destinations. In sum, globalization has a positive impact on tourism since the positive outweighs the negative impacts.

# 27.3.2 Regional Tourism and Development

Tourism geography is a rapidly growing field in India without adequate attention being paid by Indian geographers. Babu et al. (2008) in their book *Tourism Development Revisited* provides a critical overview that deals with the details of the conceptual and paradigmatic evolution of tourism as a socio-economic phenomenon. Tourism

**Fig. 27.2** Foreign tourist arrivals in India from global regions (in percent): 2001 and 2016. *Source* Government of India, Ministry of Tourism (2014 and 2017a, b)



plays a significant role in economic, political, and social development processes. This sector is dynamic and thus, demonstrates changing patterns of space-time development across countries. Babu's (2008) study identified several characteristics of Indian tourism: first, foreign tourists have been increasing over the years with high annual volatility, as well as domestic tourism volume has been extremely high; second, both foreign and domestic tourism display seasonality, i.e. peak, trough and shoulder; and tourist arrivals have been concentrated in certain destination and states. Further, the National Council of Applied Economic Research (GOI 2015) noted several spatial characteristics of domestic tourism such as: (1) 4.4 trips were made by an Indian household in rural areas, (2) 12 of 35 states and Union Territories showed a higher incidence of domestic tourism relative to the nation, (3) the highest incidence of trips were observed in Jammu and Kashmir with 904 trips per 100 households followed by Himachal Pradesh with 791 trips during 2008–09, (4) the states and Union Territories with the least intensity of domestic tourism were observed in Northeastern states and Goa, (5) the average number of trips made by urban households in an year is less than rural households and the states/UTs are Tripura, Assam, Jharkhand, Goa, Kerala and Chandigarh, Delhi, Daman Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Lakshadweep (6) the intensity of tourism is least in Assam, (7) the importance of factors that lead to trips are social, religious, medical, business and leisure, and (8) Delhi is the only state where the leisure trips are the highest (Government of India 2014). Further, a recent study on domestic tourism in India (Government of India 2017a, b) observed the following three trends with respect to household profile, characteristics of trip and expenditure on trip: (1) nearly 36.6 and 35.7% of rural and urban households reported overnight trips with central purposes of holidaying, leisure and recreation, health, medical and shopping during past 365 days of survey period (July 2014–June 2015); (2) Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh were the largest destination of visitors for all reasons; and (3) the costliest trip was for medical category followed by shopping and last holidaying, leisure and recreation.

Shukla (2014) analyzed the geographical dimension of tourism in Gujarat using primary and secondary data analysis. He opined the motivational factors attracting tourists are post-monsoon season, which is cool winter weather; fairs and festivals, site seeing, as well as religious sites attract visitors; other factors motivating tourists are cheap and easy transport supply and historical monuments in the region. The Northeastern region in India has immense tourism potential and yet the number of visitors dwindle. The region is endowed with hills, plateaus, and plains along with river systems that contribute to scenic tourism. It has rich stock of both scenic and cultural resources, as it is located at the confluence of diverse ethnic stock of population. The region has tremendous potential for tourism-led regional development strategy (Bhattacharya 2008). In addition, Nagaland has a

rich potential of rural tourism since it is known to be a world biodiversity hotspot (Ezung 2011). Goa is the recipient of a large locale volume of tourists and yet there are ill effects of tourism in Goa. The local people's organizations are making a strenuous effort to prevent further degradation of Goa's natural resources. However, on the other side the tourism industry with local muscle power and a nexus with politicians are trying to attract high-end tourist relative to cheap charter tourists. The real estate and luxurious hotels do not attract tourists since they travel for the scenic beauty and not the concrete jungle 1997). India has followed the demand-centered strategy of developing Goa as a premier beach town and resort-styled development. The economic rationale of this strategy has been to maximize foreign exchange, employment and percolation of economic benefits to lagging areas. Such a development policy might not be the most efficient for three reasons: first, local population are harmed since they lose control of their land resources for the benefit of tourist consumption; second, they do not get a share of the profit; and third, tourism often escalates crime, prostitution and drugs at the expanse of the loss of local culture (Routledge 2000).

Scale refers to the level at which a geographical phenomenon is represented. The level could be a Census block, township, city, district, metropolitan area, state, nation or the global region. If a certain trend is observed in the real world, and when data is aggregated over spatial scale for the same observation, the trends could be revered. In statistics, this could be referred to as Simpson Paradox. In geographical inquiry, one often notices this phenomenon and is called the Modifiable Areal Unit Problem (MAUP). Tourism geographic studies have been conducted at smaller spatial scales and more studies need to be conducted to unravel the impact of scale on tourist geographic phenomenon. Sahani (2017) conducted a survey to analyze tourist expectation and satisfaction using primary survey for Santiniketan of different tourist spots (West Bengal). Santiniketan is a cultural heritage and educational center in West Bengal visited by domestic and foreign visitors. A statistical inference analysis revealed no significant variation in tourist spots in relation to tourist expectation and satisfaction. Yet, he opines lack of management, marketing, and infrastructural facilities for tourist spots needs further attention. A qualitative survey determined that although tourism generates local development, it has led to the control of the business interests of the local area in Araku Valley Township by interests outside the local economy. The benefits to the local economy in terms of employment and income generation should outweigh the costs in terms of protecting the resource base and carrying capacity of the environment (Gangopadhyay and Chattopadhyay 2012). Mandal and Chakrabarty (2013) study a small place Gopiballavpur (settlement in Midnapore West district, West Bengal) whose economic strength is agriculture. The place is a leading hub for Vaishnavism and thus rural tourism, or sustainable tourism can bring more prosperity to the area (Mandal and Chakrabarty 2013). Such studies suggest the importance of micro-level studies, which can macro-level generalization and produce more insights to the relationship between tourism and regional development. Thus, micro-level studies reveal aspects of tourism analysis not informed by studies at different scales.

### 27.3.3 Economic Geography and Tourism

Tourism is an important sector of the Indian economy since; it contributes to employment, local development, foreign exchange, and generates wealth. The number of international tourist's arrival during 2003 was 2.7 million, which increased to 8.8 million during 2016, which is a three-fold increase (GOI 2003 and 2017a, b). Majority of the foreign tourist visitors were from the top five sources Bangladesh, United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Malaysia (GOI 2017a, b). The number of domestic inbound tourists in India was 1614 million and their top five destinations were Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka during 2015–16 (GOI 2017a, b).

Given these trends, this section examines the following sub-themes: 'domestic tourism', 'international tourism flows', and 'tourism and national economic development' in India at a sub-national level.

Domestic tourism in India has been thriving and increasing during the period 2004–2016. Domestic tourism is also characterized by uneven distribution of tourist visitors across states. There has been a continuous growth in domestic tourism during 1991–2016 to all states and Union Territories at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13.03% (GOI 2017a, b).

In the wake of globalization, the flows of not only foreign travel arrivals but also domestic visitors have increased manifold.

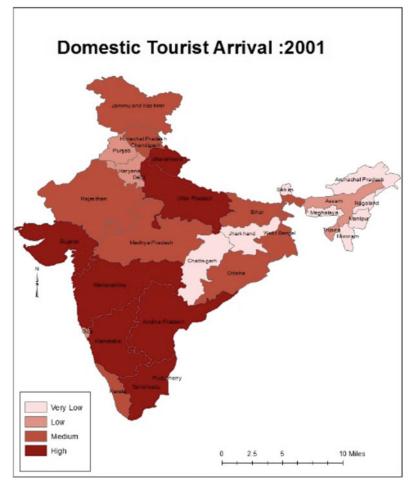
Figures 27.3 and 27.4 depicts a spatial pattern of tourist visitors in India: first, a high percent of domestic tourist visitors visited three states namely Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu during 2001 which expanded to include other states like Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan by 2016; second, the next category of visitors labelled medium travelled to states such as Karnataka during 2001 and included states such as Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar; in the third, low category states visitors did not choose the Northern states, Central and Western states and parts of Northeastern states, which declined in the basket of states representing the region, yet the North, Northeast and East states did not attract so many visitors; and fourth category represents the very least(very low) states such as Punjab, Haryana, and parts of Northeastern region during 2001 which continued to include Northeastern states during 2016.

Figures 27.5 and 27.6 displays the *international tourist flows* in India during 2001 and 2016. Four patterns can be observed: first, *high* group includes states such as Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and Goa during 2001 and 2016; second group *medium* consists of Kerala, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar; and third, the *low* group includes Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Gujarat during 2001 and 2016 and the very low group of states include Northeastern states, Puducherry, Gujarat, Odisha, J&K,

Chandigarh and Punjab among many other states during both 2001 and 2016. Bergman (1996) asserts that the tourist potential of any region depends upon three A's: first, the regions accessibility to the core countries; second, regions' quality and number of accommodations; and third, the regions cultural and physical attractions. Several local governments have tried to promote regional tourism because of the potential economic gains it manifests. Singapore has attempted to capture inbound tourists from India in Southeast Asia through its efforts of exploiting India's 'Look East Policy'. This Indian policy is an effort of strengthening its economic ties with members of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The economic liberalization policy has also surged Indian business travelers exploring investment opportunities in the region. Further, Singapore has expanded efforts to invest in Indian projects to solicit more Indian travelers (Yahya 2003). Similarly, Gopalan (2013) mapped the cross-border flows of tourists between India and European Union. He examined the determinants and barriers to selected countries and noted three factors of interest: 'visa regulations', 'Bollywood tourism' and 'resident permits' for employment and education purposes. Further, Dhariwal (2005) has estimated the determinants of international tourism in India during 1966-2000. She observed that socio-political factors such as 'communalism', 'Indo-Pak tensions' and 'terrorism' have threatened the potential gains from what could have been a vibrant sector generating perennial income.

The tourism sector is a vital component of the *national economic development* through its employment, income and development impacts. It contributes and interacts with many other economic sectors of the system and thus, creates economic interdependence among vital sectors. The Government of India commissioned a study (GOI 2014) to develop tourism satellite accounts for 2009–10 to measure the importance of tourism in national development. They estimated tourism direct share in India's gross domestic product of about 3.7% and in employment 4.4%. In addition, if the indirect effects are aggregated these shares increase to 6.8 and 10.2%. Further,

**Fig. 27.3** Domestic tourism in India: 2001. *Source* Government of India, Ministry of Tourism (2017a, b, 2003)

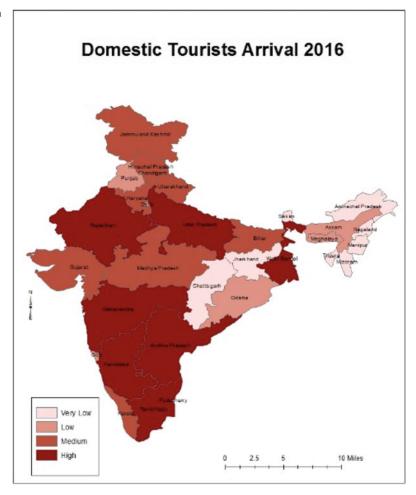


Bhatt and Munjal (2013) quantified the economic impact of tourism through the computation of backward and forward linkages. The linkage analysis reveals that the expansion of hotel, air transport, surface transport, restaurant industry benefits the tourist sector immensely. Further, Munjal (2013) argues the case for inclusion of tourism in the input-output framework for analyzing the inter-linkage and multiplier effects of tourism on other economic sectors. Thus, policymakers need to take cognizance of these relationships while developing economic policies to foster tourism development. Hence, economic geographers can contribute in many significant ways to shed light, to the relationship between tourism and local and regional development processes in India.

### 27.3.4 Ecotourism and Sustainability

Ecotourism is a form of tourism where travelers visit natural areas to enjoy and appreciate nature, promote conservation and involve local people for beneficial social and economic development. De-differentiation characterizes ecotourismbased travel activities. In such a pursuit of tourism, tourists often engage in activities such as 'birdwatching', 'backpacking', 'surfing', and or 'bungee jumping' (Shaw and Williams 2004). The age cohort of tourists are often within 35-54 in such tourism pursuits. Travelers from this age group are often motivated by two key factors: first, to enjoy scenery and nature and second, to access unfamiliar places and landscapes. Most eco-tourists are well educated and are from the

**Fig. 27.4** Domestic tourism in India: 2016. *Source* Government of India, Ministry of Tourism (2017a, b, 2003)

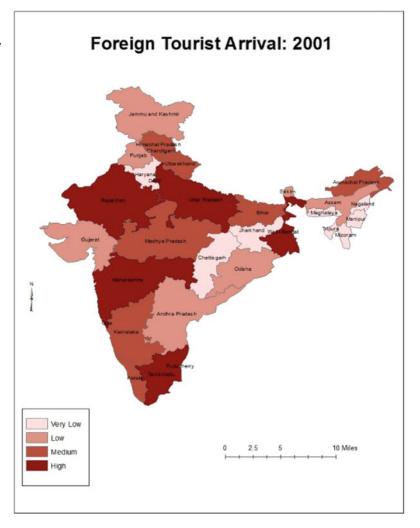


above-average income group. They are the 'new middle class' who are quite environmentally aware.

Ecotourism has many characteristics such as 'minimal impact visitor behavior', 'sensitivity and appreciation towards local people and biodiversity', 'support for local conservation endeavor'. 'local participation decision-making' and 'educating both travelers and local communities'. Bjork (2000) opined eco-tourism's resurgence has been due to the 'greening of markets', 'increasing awareness of the environment', 'better informed managers', and the importance of the interdependent relationship among good ecology and well-performing economy. In addition, for ecotourism to be sustainable four groups of actors

need to participate, and they are: local people, the authorities, tourists and tourism-related business and organizations. Another related and yet overlapping concept is sustainable tourism. The practice of economic tourism within the ecological carrying capacity of land is termed sustainable tourism. Butler (1999)articulated sustainable tourism as a practice that is conducted in a manner, at such a scale, that it remains viable for an indefinite period. In addition, such a tourism practice should not alter the landscape to a degree that it prohibits the development of other activities. Tourism, like any other industry has positive and negative benefits. It has economic benefits of generating income and employment. However, the negative benefits of rising environment cost, increase in

**Fig. 27.5** Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India: 2001. *Source* Government of India, Ministry of Tourism (2017a, b, 2003)

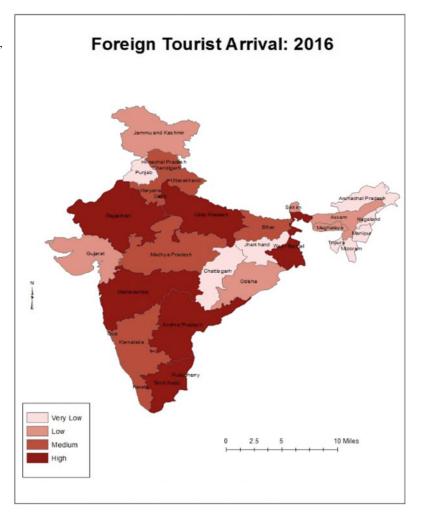


the greenhouse gas emissions, and physical degradation of the natural and historical sites has led to the physical closures of tourist places to visitors. In addition, increasing tourism flows has led to an increase in rental prices, congestion and declining air quality of the tourist places (The Economist 2017).

The Economist developed a 'Sustainable Development Index (STI) to evaluate nations on their resolve to develop and promote sustainable practices in tourism. France and Germany lead the index overall, and across most domains of evaluation. Of the ten countries in the sample, these two nations have exemplified a sustained action at the national level, set targets and follow up

monitoring the outcome of government intervention (The Economist 2017). A 100-point score sets the maximum for computing the Sustainable Development Index (SDI). India scored 36.9 relative to France (73.9), Germany (71.7), Japan (46.0), Brazil (34.9), China (30.8) and Indonesia (27.1). It scored the highest amongst the developing nations and has sustainable development policies that sets out some milestones and contains metrics for selected groups of stakeholders. India scored 29.0 points in the 'policy and regulatory environment' realm relative to France (96.0), Germany (77.5), Japan (35.0) and China (17.5). Although, India has developed sustainable development policies, there are limited incentives

**Fig. 27.6** Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India: 2016. *Source* Government of India, Ministry of Tourism (2017a, b, 2003)



to enforce them at the lower tiers of tour operators (The Economist 2017).

Thus, ecotourism is a concept that has gained popularity in India in the last several decades. Mir (2016) identifies several types of popular ecotourism practices in India. These are 'mountain tourism', 'adventure tourism', 'wildlife tourism' and 'agritourism'. Ecotourism implies management of tourism and conservation of nature in ways to meet the need of tourism business, and at the same time satisfy the demand of local population for employment, food, fodder, timber, shelter and status of women. The Kerala economy is an exemplar sustainable-based tourism development. Utilizing the three pillars of sustainable development

(economic growth, sustainability and community participation), it can be argued that the state might not measure up at the aggregate scale, although a few success stories prevail sporadically (Thimm 2017). Sreekumar and Parayil (2002) argue Kerala stands out as a model of tourist-based development. Although, it is observed that tourism earnings have been falsely recorded in official publications. This incorrect statistic is later utilized by the tourism industry for justifying subsidies, tax cuts, and concessions. While there is miniscule contribution of tourism to local development, the perceived benefits are notionally utilized for advancing projects that have degradation effects on environment.

India is a rich location for wildlife, bird and tiger reserves. There are several attractions such as the Jim Corbett National Park (Himalayan foothills), Ranthambore National Park, Sariska and Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuaries (Rajasthan), Kanha National Park (Madhya Pradesh), and Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary (Rajasthan) amongst many other destinations. These places can be successfully utilized for wildlife tourism if their carrying capacity is kept intact. The carrying capacity will depend on several factors such as attitudes of local people, tourist satisfaction, cost and benefit analysis of tourism impact, and conservation management. Clearly, there are problems with wildlife serves and sanctuaries in India. Das (2011) echoed concerns regarding the basis of ecotourism guidelines for preserving tiger reserves and laments at the fragmented nature of policies and the resultant trade-offs. She suggests for a revision of the guidelines with a critical analysis of the underlying conceptual basis of eco-tourism. Banerjee (2010) opines there has been a sizeable loss of tiger population due to lack of funding, mismanagement, population and development pressure in the light of the ecotourism debate. Also, the current policies have not benefitted conservation efforts and the local communities. A suggested middle path is the integration of ecotourism with sustainable livelihoods that will be supported by local communities. Karanth and Karanth (2012) echoed a middle ground approach as well where a shared profit motive between the private landowners and tourism entrepreneurs would pave the way for the tourism industry to grow in a sustained manner instead of government intervention. An 'adaptive management approach' has been advocated for sanctuaries and reserve management in India (Holling 1978; Robbins and Chhangani 2015). This approach assumes that the system under consideration is poorly understood and uncertain which is true of Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Rajasthan. This approach entails provoking experimental conditions such that a variety of policies are implemented to evaluate the outcomes. At the end, the objective is to understand and manage a complex system. Thus, such an approach will manifest: first, 'the freedom to adapt and invest in new conservation rules'; second, 'the opportunity to directly intervene in environmental systems'; third, 'the necessity of democratic and scientific monitoring'; and fourth, the 'opportunity to change rules to invoke new outcomes' (Robbins and Chhangani 2015).

The Indian government enunciated the first tourism policy (Government of India 2002). The basic tenets of the policy were to develop tourism sector as an engine of growth. The policy addressed additional goals of harnessing the direct, indirect, and induced effects of tourism for employment generation, position India as a global brand with its untapped tourism potential, utilize the role of private sector in cooperation with public sector, create a tourist circuit based on regional cooperation with states and other nodal agencies, and ensure that the tourists rejuvenates and energizes after a tourism experience in a way that they feel India from within.

### 27.3.5 Tourism and Environment Impacts

Tourism is a double-edged sword that generates benefits for socio-economic development in the local area, but at the same time leads to environmental degradation as well. It is the ecological, flora and fauna resources that attracts tourists, yet the very activities of tourism lead to an increased pressure on land and decline in its carrying capacity and thereby, environmental damage. The stress imposed by the increasing tourism has led to devastating impact upon the fragile natural ecosystem (water, land, forest and soil), declining land-man ratio, soil erosion, increased pollution, natural habitat increased pressure for endangered species loss, enhanced pressure for forest fire, and disposal of waste in the nearby river and oceans leading to a harmful effect on the natural ecosystem and its depletion.

Late Karan (1989) opined Sikkim opened for tourism for trekking. The tourism industry has increased pollution and destroyed the alpine vegetation. A development plan should include the absorptive capacity to maintain the fragile ecological balance of the high mountain area. For instance, Kullu district in Himachal Pradesh is a tourist destination because of its mountain scenery and cultural heritage. It has attracted tourist visitors for centuries and especially during the early parts of 1990s since the upgrading of National Highway 21, improvement in communication, effective marketing and growth of the Indian economy (Gardner et al. 2002). Cole and Sinclair (2002) applied an ecological footprint (EF) analysis to estimate the area of productive land and water ecosystems required to produce resources for consumption. The method absorbs the wastes the production economy generates. This technique was utilized to quantify the sustainability of Manali, a tourist center in the wake of an exponential increase in tourist visitors. Analysis revealed EF increased from 2012 hectares to 9665 hectares (450%) which tantamount to an EF twenty-five times larger than the size of Manali town. This outcome leads to several concerns for local government since almost 80% of the EF is attributed to tourist visitors. First, increased tourist visitors have implications for waste generation and its management. The increased waste (plastics, food, garbage, camping equipment, etc.) ends up in the Beas river which has implications for the long-term sustainability of river ecosystem. Second, increased tourism has led to the loss of valuable forest land, productive soil and natural vegetation for construction of hotels and homes. Third, there is increasing shortage of drinking water especially during peak tourist seasons. And fourth, there is an increased level of atmospheric and noise pollution due to the regional dependence on outside sources of fossil fuel to operate motor vehicles (Kuniyal et al. 2003). Thus, is it necessary to convert arable and pasture land for growing more food, increase dependence on fossil fuel, convert land for housing for the sustenance of tourists.

In sum, local government needs to weigh the cost-benefit of the environmental loss for earning higher tourist income. Dey et al. (2018) conducted a geospatial analysis of the impact of tourism industry in Dehradun city (Uttarakhand

state). They used satellite images for 1972, 2000 and 2016 for understanding the land use and land cover dynamics. It was observed that construction is being extended to steep and very steep-sloped areas making it vulnerable to land-slides and other natural disasters. A similar fate for Mussoorie town in Garhwal Himalaya was observed where since 1989 tourist visitors have increased leading to haphazard development of tourist facilities (Madan and Rawat 2000).

# 27.3.6 Infrastructure and Tourism Development

There is a strong interrelationship between tourism and infrastructure, since the supply of a well-developed road, rail, air transport network along with the provision of hotel and tourism hospitality services leads to a healthy growth of the tourist industry in the region. Hyma and Wall (1979) opined Tamil Nadu is rich in natural and cultural resources but lacks infrastructure and a well-articulated development strategy. They argued for a resource and urban-based development strategy that would have advantages for tourism development in a developing area. Such a provision of a well-articulated infrastructure supply implies that tourist visitors will not have problems in reaching their destinations, staying there and appreciating the attractions. Typically, the public sector and private sector cooperate in the supply of social infrastructure and the provision of accommodation. Infrastructure is the backbone of tourism development in India. The benefits or losses that a region makes is dependent on the travel account which is defined as the net difference between the income receipt from and expenditure on tourism when its people travel abroad. Thus, a provision of balanced supply of infrastructure will enhance the travel account. An associated concept is the notion of income multipliers and spatial linkages between infrastructure, tourism expansion and travel account. A popular tourist destination will receive more visitors as compared to a peripheral and a less popular destination. Every Rupee that a visitor spends at a destination will lead to three kinds of effects: direct, indirect and induced effects. The direct impact entails the initial introduction of currency into the local economy by the tourist visitors on hotel accommodation, food, travel and shopping. The indirect effect implies the next round of spending because of tourist spending. This in effect will lead the local businesses to spend on expenses, employee salaries, taxes and business expansion such as machinery, purchase of land, new hiring to better serve the tourist industry. Subsequently, an induced effect leads to yet another round of spending by the tourism business such as paying for licenses, fee, additional machinery and labor. Thus, this process of spending and re-spending is referred to 'rounds of spending' and is called the multiplier effect with each round of tourism spending generating an additional round of spending by business. Lastly, the development of tourism industry can lead to tourism-led-local development through the further development, expansion and diversification of tourism industry. The tourist industry can take advantage of the existing tourism business or purport the development of new businesses to facilitate the provision of tourism services. Such an articulated network infrastructure supply, tourism businesses leads to a spatial linkage effect and overall expansion of tourism development (Jackson 1993; Nelson 2017).

Although the arrival of international tourists has increased from 5.08 million to 8.80 million during the decade 2006-2016 (India Tourism Statistics 2007 and 2017b) a recent report (Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA) posits that infrastructure was hampered by a lack of inadequate road, airport infrastructure and constrained with inadequate hotel rooms. Tourism arrivals have increased due to the 'Incredible India' marketing effort making her a sought-after tourist destination with respect to domestic, inbound, and outbound tourist travelers. The report purported four salient features of the strong consumption-driven economy that heralded the era of growth in tourism. These are: (1) increased government focus on tourism promotion, (2) a powerful branding campaign, (3) rapidly growing and increasingly wealthy middle class and (4) liberalization of the airline industry have contributed to the emergence of tourism in India in the international and domestic spotlight (Livemint 2007). Several Indian states have endeavored towards improving tourism infrastructure. For instance, Rajasthan a popular tourist destination has strived towards introducing a new train called the 'Royal Rajasthan' on the lines of palace on wheels. In addition, 16 air strips are to be improved/started and commercial airlines are to be invited to start operations. Another project to be imitated is the development of a 'Mega Desert Tourist Circuit' comprising Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Pali, Mount Abu, through heritage conservation, landscaping and other initiatives (FICCI 2015–16).

#### 27.4 Conclusion

The World Tourism Organization (WTO 1994) defines tourism as 'the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes'. The tourism industry is the third largest after the oil and automobile industries. The tourism industry is very important for regional development since it generates wealth and employment, attracts foreign exchange, promotes travel and hospitability industry, advances cross-cultural communication and understanding, builds infrastructure, and leads to local as well as global development.

Tourism geography has been a systematic branch of geography since the post-WW II period. Tourist geographers have addressed six themes in the past decades such as: 'Tourism-led-development', 'Tourism resorts and their development', 'Tourism travel', 'Tourists impacts', 'Recreation and tourism planning' and 'Geographic Information Systems (GIS) application in tourism'.

Indian tourism statistics reveals an overall increase in domestic and international visitors to tourist sites. Tourism geography in India is a nascent area of research and this chapter surveys six areas of geographic research: 'globalization and tourist development, 'regional tourism and development', 'economic geography and

tourism', 'eco-tourism and sustainability', 'tourism and environment impact', and infrastructure development and tourism'. First, it is expected that with increased globalization the number of domestic and international tourist visitors would increase manifold, and this implies an increase in tourism planning for site selection, tourism development and local government investment. Second, regional tourism analysis suggests the proclivity of micro-level studies, which can lead to macro-level generalization and produce more insights to the relationship between tourism and regional development. Thus, micro-level studies reveal aspects of tourism analysis not informed by studies at alternate scales. Third, economic geography analysis reveals during latter part of post-liberalization period (2001-16) domestic tourist visitors have flocked to selected states in India such as: Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu. Karnataka, Maharashtra Rajasthan. Likewise, foreign tourists have increased exponentially to Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and Goa during the same period. Fourth, the notion of 'sustainable tourism', which is defined as the practice of tourism within the ecological and environmental carrying capacity bounds of the land has become very important. The Economist (2017) reports India has implemented sustainable tourism practices, but there are limited incentives for implementing at the lower tiers of tourist operators. Fifth, the tourism industry attracts visitors due to environmental diversity, flora and fauna and yet, it is the tourist industry which is responsible for the increased ecological and carbon footprint in such areas like: Kullu-Manali, Sikkim state, Dehradun city and Garhwal Himalayan region. A cost-benefit analysis would suggest 'preservation' instead of 'tourism development'. Lastly, there is a symbiotic relationship between infrastructure provision and tourism development. An increased supply of infrastructure will lead to higher spatial linkages and more tourist-led regional development.

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