EXPLORING THE UNCHARTED: A FORWARD-LOOKING ASSESSMENT OF INDIA'S ADVENTURE TOURISM NATIONAL STRATEGY

Dr. Yogesh Khandre,
Associate Professor, MGM Institute of Management & Research, MGM University, Aurangabad
ykhandre@mgmu.ac.in

ABSTRACT:
India is home to some of the best natural wonders on earth, including pristine forests, the snow-capped Himalayas, grasslands, golden and silver deserts, rivers, lakes, wetlands, mangroves, beaches, volcanoes, and coral reefs that are home to an incredible diversity of wildlife. In addition, we have the mega-fauna, which includes more than 1200 bird species and iconic animals like tigers, lions, elephants, rhinoceroses, leopards, wild buffaloes, and Indian bison (gaur). India ranks relatively low in the world of adventure tourism, despite its natural resources and potential. India has a lot of potential to develop into a major hub for adventure tourism and sports worldwide. India has a great deal of potential to draw adventure travelers from around the world. The geographical features of the nation, from North to South and East to West, give the growth of adventure tourism options a competitive edge. For a long time, marketing academics have underlined the significance of strategies as a crucial component of any service or product marketing. Many people have handled branding challenges strategically, developing marketing strategies to raise the bar for promotion. Similar to this, the Indian government has developed strategies to compete in the sector's competitive tourism industry. Moreover, this paper will shed light on the collaborative efforts of various governing bodies across different states, as they unite towards the shared national mission of making India a top-tier adventure tourism destination. In doing so, it will illustrate how a strategic approach at both the national and regional levels is poised to unlock India's immense potential in the realm of adventure tourism. This study is an attempt to brief discussion on popular adventure tour activities taking place different regions of the country. Finally the study will be concluded with identification of futuristic adventure tourism activities in the country.

Keyword: National strategy, Adventure Tourism, hard adventures, soft adventures, incredible India, Driving Factors for promoting tourism, Focus areas on tourism, Government collaborations and Future of adventure tourism etc.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Adventure tourism involves a journey incorporating a combination of at least two out of the following three components: physical exertion, immersion in natural surroundings, and cultural engagement. Despite its abundant natural resources and potential, India currently occupies a relatively low position in the global adventure tourism arena.

Definition of Adventure Tourism:

As defined by the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) and widely accepted in the industry, is: "Adventure tourism is a type of niche tourism involving exploration or travel to remote or exotic areas, engaging in physically challenging outdoor activities. It typically includes elements of physical activity, cultural exchange, and interaction with nature."

Adventure tourism includes activities such as caving, climbing, cycling, hiking, hunting, rafting, and others. This is a good overview of the types of activities typically associated with adventure tourism. It's important to note that adventure tourism often involves experiences that challenge participants physically, mentally, or emotionally and provide opportunities for cultural immersion and interaction with local communities.

However, India possesses immense opportunities to emerge as a prominent global hub for adventure activities and sports, capable of luring adventure enthusiasts from all corners of the world.It's great to hear that India is actively promoting adventure tourism as a niche tourism product and has developed a National Strategy for Adventure Tourism.

Here's a breakdown of the key points from the national strategy for adventure tourism with short discussion:

Geographical Advantage: India's diverse geography, from the northern Himalayan Mountains to the southern coastal regions and from the eastern forests to the western deserts, provides a competitive advantage for adventure tourism. These natural landscapes offer a wide range of adventure activities for tourists.

Adventure Tourism as Niche Tourism Product: The Ministry of Tourism has recognized adventure tourism as a niche tourism product. This means that it is being specifically promoted and marketed to attract tourists who have a keen interest in adventure activities.

Year-round Destination: India aims to position itself as a year-round destination for adventure tourism. This implies that adventure activities can be enjoyed throughout the year, taking advantage of different seasons and regions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In their research titled "Sustaining Cultural Tourism Online: Video Documentary as a Digital Media Content," Goh and Nagalingam explore the connection between digital media and cultural tourism, specifically within the Malaysian context. Their work sheds light on the tourism industry's utilization of digital initiatives to transcend cultural boundaries. The study also offers a detailed account of the creation of a video documentary and an online product package aimed at enriching cultural tourism experiences and promoting its long-term sustainability in Penang (Goh & Nagalingam, 2009).

Unlike other sectors that neatly fit into distinct categories, tourism is exceptionally challenging to classify due to its extensive integration, interdependence, and interaction with numerous industries such as hospitality, transportation, culture, and various other business sectors. In a recent survey conducted by Niti Aayog, over 500,000 heritage sites and monuments were identified in India, with approximately 30 out of 38 cultural heritage sites being recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Furthermore, about 3,691 monuments have been entrusted to the care of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and hold the status of national importance (Niti Aayog, 2019).

The travel and tourism industry stands as the world's largest economic sector, constituting 10.3% of the global GDP. Projections suggest that by 2029, it could reach a staggering $500 billion in revenue. Over the previous decade, this industry has displayed remarkable resilience, consistently expanding its significance as a vital contributor to foreign exchange, with no signs of deceleration (Kant, 2020).

In the work titled "Cultural Tourism as a Business Model in India," Raja Sarkar delves into the concept of cultural tourism as a viable business model and scrutinizes the associated challenges. The study highlights the enduring perception of India as a global cultural tourism destination, underscoring its immense potential to drive tourism growth (Sarkar, 2018).

The research paper titled "Success of Digitalization in Tourism Industry in India," authored by Shigaonker in 2018, delves into the realm of digitalization within the travel and tourism sector. It investigates how mobile technology, online travel portals, and social media platforms are influencing the industry and discusses the challenges that arise as a result of this digital transformation (Shigaonker, 2018).

In his 2018 work on tourism, "Improving Heritage Management in India," Rathi discusses the establishment of a working group under the chairmanship of the CEO of NITI Aayog, initiated by the Prime Minister's Office (Niti Aayog, 2019). This working group aims to comprehensively summarize the efforts undertaken and planned to protect and preserve India's natural heritage while exploring opportunities for enhancing tourism and ensuring the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage.

In their paper titled "The Concept of Classification of Tourist Motivation Factors," L.A. Koziol and R.W. Pyrek provide an overarching perspective on the various motivational factors that influence tourism. They discuss how these factors play a crucial role in the development of locations into popular tourism destinations (Koziol & Pyrek, 2014).

As highlighted in the article "Ecotourism for Community Development: A Stakeholder's Perspective in Great Himalayan National Park," Bansal and Kumar (2011) focus on the potential for sustainable adventure tourism development in India, emphasizing stakeholder perspectives and community involvement. The review highlights the importance of balancing economic benefits with environmental conservation and cultural preservation.

Although focused on New Zealand, the review by Bentley and Page (2008) provides insights into the importance of risk management in adventure tourism, which is directly applicable to India's context. It examines how providers manage risks and ensure safety, crucial for developing India's adventure tourism strategy.

Buckley's (2010) comprehensive review on the cultural and environmental impacts of adventure tourism explores best practices for minimizing negative impacts and maximizing positive outcomes, essential considerations for India's adventure tourism strategy.

Gretzel and Jamal (2009) examine the role of technology in enhancing adventure tourism experiences. They discuss how digital tools and platforms can be leveraged for marketing, safety, and enhancing tourist experiences, which is relevant for a forward-looking strategy in India.

Hall (2011) analyzes economic and policy frameworks for sustainable tourism governance. It provides insights into policy learning and the evolution of tourism policies, offering a framework for developing and implementing effective adventure tourism policies in India.

This review of literature has discussed multiple facets such as connecting the tourism online, focusing on revenue generation models, good heritage management and targeting to motivate the tourist to visit the unseen destinations. There are likely many other options such as culture and hospitality which might get a chance to develop through various tourism promotions schemes.

National Strategy for Adventure Tourism:

The Ministry of Tourism has formulated a National Strategy for Adventure Tourism. This strategy likely outlines the goals, objectives, and action plans to promote and develop adventure tourism in India.Under the leadership of the Secretary (Tourism), a National Board for Adventure Tourism has been established. This board consists of representatives from various central ministries/organizations, state governments/UT administrations, and industry stakeholders. The board's primary objective is to operationalize and implement the national strategy for adventure tourism.

Overall, it appears that India is taking a proactive approach to leverage its geographical diversity and natural resources to attract adventure tourists from around the world. This can contribute significantly to the country's tourism industry and boost its image as a premier adventure tourism destination.

These activities are categorized and regulated to ensure safety, promote responsible tourism, and protect the natural environment. One has to always check with local authorities and tour operators for the latest regulations and safety guidelines when engaging in adventure tourism in India, as rules and classifications may change over time.

3. TYPES OF ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES:

Extreme or hard adventure activities:

These are thrilling and challenging experiences that require participants to have a higher level of knowledge, skills, training, and experience due to their inherent risks. These activities are not suitable for beginners and demand a certain level of physical and mental fitness. Here are some examples of hard adventure activities:

High Altitude Mountaineering: Climbing extremely high mountains, such as Everest or K2, requires expert mountaineering skills, physical endurance, and acclimatization to high altitudes. It is one of the most challenging and dangerous adventure activities.

River Rafting: Whitewater rafting on fast-flowing rivers with turbulent rapids demands

teamwork, paddling skills, and the ability to navigate through rough waters. It can be dangerous if not done with proper guidance.

Scuba Diving: Exploring underwater ecosystems at significant depths requires scuba diving certification, knowledge of dive equipment, and an understanding of underwater hazards. Divers must also be aware of decompression sickness and other potential risks.

Hang Gliding: Soaring through the air using a lightweight glider demands skill in controlling the glider and understanding wind patterns. Participants must also have proper equipment and training to ensure safety.

Skydiving: Jumping out of an aircraft and free-falling before deploying a parachute is a high-adrenaline activity that necessitates strict safety protocols and training. Skydivers must be knowledgeable about parachute deployment and emergency procedures.

Rock Climbing: Scaling natural rock formations or indoor climbing walls requires proficiency in rope techniques, equipment usage, and climbing skills. Safety measures like harnesses and helmets are essential.

Cave Diving: Exploring underwater caves is a highly technical and risky form of diving, as it involves navigating tight spaces and limited visibility. Specialized training and equipment are essential for cave divers.

Base Jumping: Base jumping involves leaping from fixed objects like cliffs, bridges, or buildings with a parachute. It's an extremely dangerous sport that requires extensive training and knowledge of the specific jump location.

Ice Climbing: Ascending frozen waterfalls and ice-covered cliffs demands ice climbing gear, knowledge of ice conditions, and proper technique to prevent accidents.

Backcountry skiing and snowboarding: Skiing or snowboarding in remote, ungroomed areas with avalanche risks requires avalanche safety training and knowledge of backcountry terrain.

Participants in hard adventure activities should always prioritize safety by seeking expert guidance, using appropriate gear, and adhering to safety protocols. Many of these activities also require participants to sign liability waivers and undergo comprehensive training programs to minimize risks.

4. *SOFT ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES:*

These are indeed a popular choice for tourists who want to enjoy outdoor experiences without the need for special skills or extensive experience. Here are some examples of soft adventure activities:

Hiking: Hiking involves walking or trekking through natural landscapes, often on established trails or paths. It's a great way to explore the beauty of nature, from easy strolls in parks to more challenging hikes in rugged terrain.

Camping: Camping allows tourists to spend time and connect with nature outdoors. Whether its car camping in a designated campsite or backpacking to a remote location, camping offers a chance to relax and unwind in natural surroundings.

Biking: Biking can be both leisurely and an adventurous activity, depending on the terrain and intensity. It can involve cycling through scenic routes, mountain biking on trails, or exploring urban areas on a bike tour.

Canoeing/Kayaking: Paddling on calm rivers, lakes, or coastal areas is another soft adventure activity. It provides a peaceful and often scenic experience on the water.

Fishing: Fishing is a relaxing activity that allows tourists to connect with nature while waiting for a catch. It can be done in various settings, such as freshwater lakes, rivers, or saltwater shores.

Wildlife Safaris: Going on a safari to observe wildlife in their natural habitat is a soft adventure activity that offers a chance to see exotic animals and explore unique ecosystems.

Hot Air Ballooning: Hot air ballooning provides a serene and scenic way to experience breathtaking landscapes from above. It's an adventure that offers a sense of tranquility.

Zip Lining: While it has an element of adventure, zip lining is often considered a soft adventure activity because it doesn't require specific skills. It involves gliding along a cable from one point to another, often through forests or over scenic landscapes.

Bird Watching: Bird watching is a peaceful and educational activity for nature enthusiasts. It involves observing and identifying birds in their natural habitats.

Photography Expeditions: For those interested in capturing the beauty of nature and wildlife, photography expeditions offer a soft adventure experience. Participants can explore scenic locations while honing their photography skills.

These soft adventure activities provide a range of options for tourists to enjoy the outdoors, connect with nature, and have fun without the need for extensive training or specialized equipment. They are ideal for individuals or families looking for a more relaxed and less risky form of adventure tourism.

5. FOCUS AREAS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY ON ADVENTURE TOURISM:

The strategy appears to have several key focuses, including:

Creating Adventure Destinations: Developing locations within the country that are conducive to adventure tourism, which could involve infrastructure development and conservation efforts. Encouraging Adventure Tourism Safety: Ensuring that adventure activities are conducted with safety in mind to protect both tourists and the natural environment.

Talent Development: Training and educating individuals in adventure tourism-related skills.

Capacity Building: Expanding the country's capacity to support adventure tourism, this could involve training guides, improving transportation options, and more.

Marketing: Promoting the country as an adventure tourism destination through effective marketing strategies.

Global Adventure Tourism Market: The statistics you provided highlight the substantial growth potential in the adventure tourism industry. The expected increase in market value from 2022 to 2028 reflects the growing interest in adventure experiences among travelers.

Unique Experiences: Adventure tourism is known for offering unique and challenging vacation experiences. These experiences often take travelers out of their comfort zones and allow them to connect with nature and local cultures in a meaningful way.

Values and Sustainability: Adventure tourism often emphasizes a connection with basic values, which can include a respect for nature, cultural appreciation, and a sense of personal accomplishment. Sustainability is a key consideration in adventure tourism to ensure that natural environments are protected and local communities benefit from tourism activities.

It's important for the country to strike a balance between promoting adventure tourism for economic growth and ensuring that it is done sustainably and responsibly to protect the

environment and benefit local communities. Proper planning, regulation, and education are essential components of achieving this balance.

6. FACTORS THAT DRIVE GROWTH FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INCLUDES:

The adventurous Indian youth indeed play a significant role in driving the growth of various industries and trends. Here are some key factors that highlight their influence:

Changing Mindset: The Indian youth have undergone a significant shift in mindset over the years. They are increasingly open to trying new things, seeking adventure, and pushing boundaries. This change in attitude has led them to explore unconventional paths and embrace novel experiences.

Economic Growth: India has witnessed steady economic growth over the past few decades. This has led to increased disposable income among the youth, allowing them to pursue their adventurous aspirations. They are now more financially capable of participating in activities like adventure travel, extreme sports, and outdoor adventures.

Access to Information: The digital age has made information readily accessible to the Indian youth. They are well-informed about various adventure opportunities, both within the country and abroad. This easy access to information empowers them to plan and undertake adventures confidently.

Social Media Influence: Social media platforms have played a significant role in fueling the adventurous spirit among Indian youth. They are exposed to stunning visuals and stories of adventure seekers from around the world, which inspire them to embark on their own journeys and share their experiences online.

Peer Pressure and Social Trends: Peer influence and the desire to fit in with social trends also drive the adventurous pursuits of Indian youth. As more of their friends and acquaintances engage in adventurous activities, they are more likely to follow suit to be a part of the experience-sharing culture.

Tourism and Hospitality Industry: The tourism and hospitality industry in India has evolved to cater to adventure enthusiasts. There are now specialized adventure tour operators, adventure parks, and adventure sports facilities that make it easier for the youth to access and enjoy thrilling experiences.

Cultural Shift: There is a growing cultural shift in India towards valuing experiences over possessions. Many young Indians prioritize creating memorable experiences, and adventure activities align well with this mindset.

Influence of Role Models: Indian youth are inspired by role models and influencers who have achieved fame through adventurous pursuits. These role models serve as aspirational figures, encouraging the youth to follow their passions and take risks.

Wellness and Fitness Trends: The focus on health and wellness has led to an increased interest in outdoor activities, fitness challenges, and sports. Adventure activities often align with the desire to stay fit and healthy, attracting a health-conscious demographic.

Government Initiatives: The Indian government has also recognized the potential of adventure tourism and has been promoting it through various initiatives and campaigns. This has further encouraged the youth to explore adventure opportunities within the country.

In summary, the adventurous Indian youth are driven by a combination of changing mindsets, economic empowerment, information access, and societal influences. Their willingness to break stereotypes and explore new horizons contributes significantly to the growth of adventure-related trends and industries in India.

7. EXPLORING INCREDIBLE INDIA WITH INTEGRATING ADVENTURE TOURISM:

"Incredible India" has successfully integrated adventure tourism into its broader tourism promotion efforts. India's diverse landscape, which includes everything from towering Himalayan peaks to lush forests, vast deserts, and a long coastline, makes it an ideal destination for adventure enthusiasts. Here's how "Incredible India" promotes adventure tourism:

Diverse Adventure Activities: "Incredible India" showcases a wide range of adventure activities available across the country. This includes trekking in the Himalayas, river rafting in the Ganges, paragliding in Himachal Pradesh, rock climbing in Karnataka, wildlife safaris in national parks, and more.

Promotion of Adventure Destinations: The campaign highlights specific adventure destinations in India. For example, it promotes Rishikesh and Haridwar in Uttarakhand as adventure hubs for

river rafting and yoga retreats, and Manali as a gateway to trekking and mountaineering in the Himalayas.

Adventure Festivals: "Incredible India" promotes adventure festivals and events, such as the Ladakh Marathon, Goa International Bird Festival, and the Ladakh International Film Festival. These events not only attract adventure enthusiasts but also showcase the cultural diversity of India's adventure destinations.

Cultural Immersion: The campaign emphasizes the cultural experiences that often accompany adventure tourism in India. Travelers can immerse themselves in local traditions, cuisine, and festivals while engaging in adventurous activities.

Wildlife Adventures: India is known for its rich wildlife and biodiversity. "Incredible India" promotes wildlife adventures, including safaris in national parks and tiger reserves, birdwatching in sanctuaries, and marine adventures along the coasts.

Historical and Cultural Adventure: India's history and culture provide a unique backdrop for adventure tourism. "Incredible India" highlights opportunities to explore ancient forts, temples, and historical sites while engaging in adventure activities.

Adventure Tour Operators: The campaign works with adventure tour operators and agencies, promoting their services to help travelers plan adventure trips and experiences.

Safety and Sustainability: "Incredible India" emphasizes safety and sustainable practices in adventure tourism. It encourages tourists to choose accredited adventure tour operators who prioritize safety and responsible tourism.

Online Resources: The campaign's official website provides detailed information on adventure destinations, activities, tour packages, and safety guidelines for adventure tourists.

Overall, "Incredible India" successfully leverages India's natural beauty, cultural diversity, and historical heritage to position the country as a top adventure tourism destination. It combines adventure with culture, providing travelers with unique and immersive experiences that make India an incredible choice for adventure enthusiasts.

8. THE COLLABORATION OF VARIOUS GOVERNING BODIES IN INDIA TO PROMOTE ADVENTURE TOURISM:

The collaborative efforts of various governing bodies across different states in India towards the shared national mission of making the country a better adventure tourism hub are crucial for achieving success in this endeavor. Adventure tourism has the potential to boost the economy, promote sustainable development, and create job opportunities while showcasing the natural and cultural diversity of India. Here's how these collaborative efforts can be structured:

National Policy Framework: The central government can play a pivotal role by formulating a comprehensive national policy framework for adventure tourism. This framework should provide guidelines, standards, and incentives for states to develop their adventure tourism infrastructure.

Inter-State Coordination: States can collaborate on marketing campaigns and infrastructure development. This could involve sharing best practices, coordinating events, and creating joint promotional materials to attract adventure tourists.

Infrastructure Development: States should invest in creating and maintaining adventure tourism infrastructure such as trekking trails, camping sites, rock climbing facilities, and water sports centers. Funding can be sourced from both state budgets and central government grants.

Skill Development: Collaboration can extend to training and skill development programs for adventure tourism professionals. States can work together to create standardized training modules and certification programs to ensure safety and quality standards are met.

Promotion and Marketing: A unified marketing strategy can be adopted to promote India as an adventure tourism destination. This includes leveraging social media, travel expos, and participating in international adventure sports events.

Safety Regulations: States should work together to establish uniform safety regulations and protocols for adventure tourism activities. This will enhance the reputation of India as a safe destination for adventure seekers.

Research and Data Sharing: Collaboration can extend to data sharing and research on adventure tourism trends, visitor demographics, and environmental impact assessments. This information can help in making informed decisions and planning for sustainable growth.

Environmental Sustainability: It's essential to collaborate on sustainable practices to protect natural environments and wildlife. States can cooperate on implementing responsible tourism initiatives and conservation efforts.

Public-Private Partnerships: Encourage private sector participation through partnerships with adventure tourism companies. States can provide incentives for private investment in adventure tourism infrastructure and services.

Tourism Training Institutes: Collaborate on establishing specialized adventure tourism training institutes or courses to create a skilled workforce that can meet the demands of this growing industry.

Regular Meetings and Forums: Organize regular meetings and forums where representatives from different states, as well as industry stakeholders, can discuss progress, challenges, and opportunities in the adventure tourism sector.

Incentives and Subsidies: States can offer incentives and subsidies to adventure tourism businesses that adhere to safety and sustainability standards. These incentives can encourage responsible business practices.

By fostering cooperation among various governing bodies, India can harness its incredible natural beauty and cultural diversity to become a world-class adventure tourism destination. This not only benefits the economy but also promotes responsible tourism and environmental conservation.

9. THE FUTURE OF ADVENTURE TOURISM

The future of adventure tourism in India is indeed promising, with technological advancements playing a pivotal role in shaping the industry. Here are some keyways in which technology is likely to impact adventure tourism in India:

Improved Safety Measures: Technology will enable adventure tour operators to enhance safety measures. For instance, the use of advanced GPS tracking, satellite communication devices, and wearable technology can help monitor the location and health status of adventure enthusiasts in real-time. This ensures prompt assistance in case of emergencies.

Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR): These technologies will provide prospective adventure tourists with immersive previews of their experiences. They can explore a destination or activity in a virtual environment before making bookings, which can boost confidence and interest in adventure tourism.

Drones: Drones can be used for scouting and surveying adventure routes and destinations, allowing tour operators to identify potential risks or challenges. They can also capture breathtaking aerial footage, enhancing marketing materials and providing adventurers with memorable content.

Online Booking Platforms: The ease of booking adventure tours and experiences through online platforms and mobile apps will continue to grow. These platforms can provide detailed information.

10. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

To advance India's adventure tourism, establish stringent safety standards, enhance infrastructure, and ensure inclusivity. The following suggestions and recommendations will create a sustainable and dynamic adventure tourism sector, leveraging India's diverse landscapes and cultural heritage while ensuring tourist safety and satisfaction.

1. Develop Comprehensive Safety Standards: Implement strict safety regulations and certification for guides and operators, and conduct regular safety audits.

2. Enhance Infrastructure and Accessibility: Improve infrastructure in remote locations and ensure facilities are inclusive for all.

3. Promote Sustainable Practices: Encourage eco-friendly tourism and enforce sustainable guidelines with local community collaboration.

4. Foster Local Community Involvement: Involve local communities in tourism planning and provide training for their participation.

5. Leverage Technology and Digital Marketing: Utilize digital platforms, develop apps, and use VR/AR for marketing.

6. Diversify Adventure Tourism Offerings: Develop unique products and promote lesser-known destinations.

7. Strengthen Policy and Regulatory Framework: Formulate clear policies, establish a national council, and facilitate collaboration among stakeholders.

8. Conduct Research and Data Collection: Invest in research to understand trends and inform strategic planning.

9. Enhance Training and Certification Programs: Develop specialized training aligned with international standards and promote certification.

10. Promote Awareness and Education: Launch awareness campaigns, integrate outdoor education in curricula, and encourage media coverage.

11. SUMMARY

In a noteworthy development, India's position in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum has shown a remarkable ascent. In the year 2019, India secured the 34th position, a significant jump from its 65th rank in 2013. This remarkable progress underscores the country's growing appeal as a global travel destination. Furthermore, the nation's Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) demonstrated a steady rise, marking a growth rate of 3.2 percent in the previous year. This upward trend in FTAs reflects the increasing interest of international travelers in experiencing the diverse cultural and natural riches that India has to offer. As India continues to make strides in the global tourism arena, these developments signify a bright future for the country's travel and tourism sector. "Incredible India" has successfully integrated adventure tourism into its broader tourism promotion efforts. India's diverse landscape, which includes everything from towering Himalayan peaks to lush forests, vast deserts, and a long coastline, makes it an ideal destination for adventure enthusiasts. There are an immense opportunities available for the adventure tour operators for promoting their services to help travelers plan adventure trips and experiences. Another concern through the campaign like "Incredible India" emphasizes on safety and sustainable practices in adventure tourism. It encourages tourists to choose accredited adventure tour operators who prioritize safety and responsible tourism. Few online resources can provide official website links which can provide detailed information on adventure destinations, activities, tour packages, and safety guidelines for adventure tourists. Overall, national strategic plan through the adventure tourism policy can successfully leverage India's natural beauty, cultural diversity, and historical heritage to position the country as a top adventure tourism destination. It can blend adventure with culture, providing travelers with unique and immersive experiences that make India an incredible choice for adventure enthusiasts.

REFERENCES:

1. Aayog, N. I. T. I. (2018). *Sustainable tourism in the Indian Himalayan region*. Report of Working Group II, NITI Aayog, Government of India.

2. Bansal, S. P., & Kumar, J. (2011). Ecotourism for community development: A stakeholder's perspective in Great Himalayan National Park. *International Journal of Social Ecology and Sustainable Development, 2*(2), 31-40.

3. Bentley, T. A., & Page, S. J. (2008). Safety and risk in adventure tourism in New Zealand: How providers manage the risks. *Tourism Management, 29*(1), 41-50.

4. Buckley, R. (2010). *Adventure tourism management*. Elsevier.

5. Goh, G. C., & Nagalingam, S. (2009). Sustaining cultural tourism online: Video documentary as a digital media content. In *Proceedings of 2nd National Symposium on Tourism Research* (p. 83).

6. Gretzel, U., & Jamal, T. (2009). Conceptualizing the creative tourist class: Technology, mobility, and tourism experiences. *Tourism Analysis, 14*(4), 471-481.

7. Hall, C. M. (2011). Policy learning and policy failure in sustainable tourism governance: From first- and second-order to third-order change? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19*(4-5), 649-671.

8. Hiray, A., Valentine Lopes, R., & Umbarkar, D. (n.d.). To study the awareness of cultural tourism.

9. Koziol, L. A., & Pyrek, R. W. (2015). The concept of classification of tourist motivation factors. In *Cultural tourism in a digital era: First international conference IACuDiT, Athens, 2014* (pp. 57-66). Springer International Publishing.

10. Kant, R. (2020). *The travel and tourism industry: Economic significance and future projections*.

11. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. (n.d.). Home | Ministry of Tourism | Government of India. Retrieved from https://tourism.gov.in./

12. Nagalingam, S., & Hiang, G. C. (2009, July). Sustaining cultural tourism online: Video documentary as a digital media content. In *Proceedings of 2nd National Symposium on Tourism Research* (p. 83).

13. Niti Aayog. (2019). *Improving heritage management in India*. Government of India.

14. Sarkar, R. (2018). Cultural tourism as a business model in India. In *International Conference on Indian Trade & Commerce: Past, Present & Future*.

15. Shigaonker, A. (2018). Success of digitalization in the tourism industry in India. *Tourism Review*.