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Topic of Research: **Branding of Pushkar as a Smart Destination**

Findings

The acceptance of smart destination is rather new but clearly emerging as a hot discussion in the tourism sector which resembles very much with the progressive attitude of applying information and technologies in smart cities. A destination can be a smart destination if it applies modern technologies, provide genuine information through various IoT (Internet of things) channels, being sustainable and helps in generating innovative methods to keep and preserve its competitiveness by enhancing the workings of stakeholders. To be known as a smart destination, the major need is required is to branding it and this is a continuous process. Pushkar is taken as study area for this research. This study will try to find out the parameters of smart destination and acknowledging it through branding, questions are being raised about gap between them related to branding strategies, brand value and brand image of Pushkar region of Rajasthan. It has been pointed out that there is comprehensive conflict in Pushkar as a tourist destination among various stakeholders regarding the brand of Pushkar which is still branding itself as a normal tourist destination despite having an eminent potential to be branded as a smart destination. With little research done on Pushkar as a tourist destination, it suffers from inefficient branding. Primary data as well as secondary data will be used to gather and analyze responses. For the Quantitative approach a questionnaire being prepared in respect of hypotheses. For the Qualitative approach secondary data as well as primary data will be accessed and will be collected through Observation, Questionnaires and Interviews. This will help to analyses the understanding of tourists, and service providers about branding and its relation with smart destination. This study will be focusing on analyzing the base of smart destination and how a destination can emerge as a smart destination through developing its branding strategies. Pushkar enjoys as being an old destination and yet it shows the ability to become a smart destination which is to find out through pilot study. The study will develop a model to integrate branding of a smart destination. This will certainly help Pushkar to recover from many unsustainable developments and will bring positive image to the destination. The expected outcome of this study will prove to be beneficial for the development and

advancement of destination, its various stakeholders and will improve the brand image at international level. It will also help government to develop the more parameters of smart destination.

The present study was framed due to the ever-increasing competition amongst tourism experience towards adopting the smart destination qualities and services. The main purpose of the study was to identify smart destination parameters which through branding would help in the growth of a destination for the future. The other objectives of the study were to study the current state of tourism in Pushkar, to understand the correlation between branding and different smart destination parameters from tourists as well as service providers' perspectives and to propose a smartness level measurement model and suggest strategies regarding the improvement needed for a destination to become smart. The present study also explained the scope and justification of the study. The scope of the present study includes the parameters needed to check the potential of smartness of a destination and need for effective branding which extends to the tourism industry. For the purpose of this study, the Destination Management Organizations (DMO) working to manage their destinations, for which Pushkar as a potential smart destination is chosen for this study. In this research, first studied the current state of Pushkar tourism and studies under the identified smart destination parameters and then correlate it with destination brand building and finally suggested the model for measuring smartness level of a destination.

Throughout their histories, tourism locations have marketed their images in a variety of various ways in order to attract tourists from a variety of different markets. In spite of the time and money that has been invested in their marketing efforts, visitors to certain locations are still not as acquainted with them as they may be, whilst others have grown more well-known all over the globe. The examples of Spain, Singapore, Australia, and South Korea are the most well-known due to the success of their smart branding efforts. The detailed literature review study on the basis of basic keywords which are included in the research study including Destination branding, Smart Tourism Destination, Crisis management, Technology, Sustainability, Experience, and Stakeholders. Majorly, the literature concentrated on finding the basic parameters of a smart tourism destination, importance of destination branding as well as brand equity and the correlation between destination branding and smart tourism destination parameters to promote a smart tourism ecosystem.