

Financial vantages of Academic Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Himachal Pradesh is a gift of providence for India who is endowed with those natural resources which are not available in another states of her. The verdant woody plants covered with snow and perennial flow of rivers through them which are making philharmonic and babbling noise appear as they are chanting hymens to pay their gratitude to providence to ascend them on the earth. This celestial vista attracts the attention of numerous people of world to enjoy the ravishing gift of God in Himachal Pradesh. The described panoramic mantrap will brand the economy of the blessed states for academic and educational tourism. It does not require a single penny of afresh capital expenditure rather it can only be done with efficient and sensitized adjustment of the existing academic institutions. All the faculty of the universities and the colleges are going out of state to undertake various Faculty Development Programme, summer and winter academic programme to garner the score which is required as an academic performance indicator (API) and performance based appraisal system followed by the university Grant commission to make faculty to raise to higher position in their academic carrier. It entails huge amount to complete all these courses by going out side the state. It is solely a financial drain out of the states' resources .The author is of the views that such financial drain can be capped and plethora of amount of funds may definitely be brought to the states' privy by orchestrating our existing resources of academia and educational institutions. Moreover, foreign students can be attracted to our educational institutions by changing the medium of instruction of some of the institutions and one of the university existing in Himachal Pradesh. It helps bring forth an *Academic-Tourism* and excretion as an alternative tourism product through which knowledge and inter-cultural interaction shall be shared and promoted respectively.

INTRODUCTION

People of any countries migrates from their native place to other countries because of political instability, poor economic condition, social unrest, war conditions and dissipated environmental conditions, floods, famine and draught in their countries. These factors are termed as 'push factors'. Contrariwise, political constancy, employment opportunities, availability of natural capital, pristine environment , better climate and better learning institutions attracts people from aboard. The factors which bait people are termed as 'pull factors'. The people of Himachal Pradesh are migrating to other states and countries only because of the lack of prestigious and reputed academic institutions in their native states which makes them to drain huge amount of the money out to achieve classic education from the reputed National as well as International institutions .These factors are pushing people out of the states. However, factors like pristine environment and genial climate lure people to come and enjoy ambrosial and panoramic landscape of Himachal Pradesh. This is efficient enough to facilitate one of the product of tourism which is termed a sight tourism. Although , it may help small hoteliers to make money, yet not able to fill the stomach of the privy of Himachal Pradesh.

It has potential to bring more shares to the exchequer over the period of time. However, there is a need of formulating a lucrative policies and strategies of international level to make it a celestial cow and horn of plenty (kamdhenu) of Himachal Pradesh.

In this sense, access , quality, and institutional capacity are to be accented to bait more expatriates students in higher educational institutions of the state.(higher education council 2017).

The pristine environment and gratifying climate is a treasure trove of the state to make it free from the unnecessary financial encumbrance and brand it most prosperous state in India. Academic tourism can be made an important sector of export of education .it is not an alternative to traditional tourism rather an addition to tourism industry of the state. Thus,it must be treated as a special product of tourism (Rodger 1998, Heydarov2009).

It has been one of the fastest growing alternative tourism product of the travel and tourism industry in the last five decades, it has been ignored thoroughly unheeded by the tourism professionals and policy makers. According to Heydarov 2019, the economic values and social effects of the pertinent subject were also not understood by the politicians and institutional functionaries in the state. In compendious, it is important to note that the students visit another country for a maximum of three years to acquire cognitive content at international standards is characterized as academic tourism. The students can also adopt goals such as learning a new language, learning different cultures, making new friends and doing internships in academic tourism in addition to their elemental goal of acquire education of international standards. Though academic tourism is a sub-branch of educational tourism, it is also a kind of youth movement, and can partly be described as youth tourism and cultural tourism (Rodriguez. 2012). International agreement in the field of education among different countries of the world is of paramount importance to promote academic tourism. Globalization and increasing digital opportunities have made the internationalization of educational institutions mandatory and increased the role of higher education institutions in global human education. The educational mobility has evolved important economic and social implications in the economy of the world. Bilateral and multilateral collaborations between education institutions, which are aware of the importance of this subject, encourage the academic mobility. It implies that Bilateral and multilateral collaborations provide impetus to the promotion of academic tourism.

There are slew of products of tourism. Tourism destinations and transportation facilities are not enough to create flow of tourists however, in fact, each product of the tourism is complementary to each other. Similarly, different products like educational institutions, accommodation facilities, food and beverage, transportation are required to facilitate academic tourism. On the basis of tourism literature, academic tourism is evaluated in five groups like Academic tourists, Geographical elements, Education institutions, industrial elements and external environment. The sound academic level of Educational institutions is to be maintained in order to attract international students. Global branding of educational institutions, use of technology and have multi-cultural structure help attracting global students. The incorporation of international recognized educational programme, renowned teaching staff, and the educational institutions forming international strategic alliances affects the destinations choice of international students (Heydarov 2019). The promotion of educational institutions through electronic media, conducting international workshops and seminars and organizing summer and winter courses helps them to have more foreign students. The most important elements that educational institutions should consider in order to get more share from student mobility include elements such as institutions providing higher education services, the variety of programs in educational institutions, international projects involving educational institutions, cooperation, the cultural diversity of educational institutions, language opportunities in educational institutions, higher education costs, the recognition of the diploma received from educational institutions by other countries, the recognition of educational institutions, branding effort, working opportunities, qualified academic staff, the image of educational institutions, location, financial aid opportunities such as scholarships, and social environment.

Objective

1. To promote academic tourism
2. Start summer and winter courses to mobilize resources
3. Start faculty development programs to attract teachers across the nation and abroad.

Importance of Industrial factors of academic tourism

Industrial facilities such as accommodation, food and beverage that meet the needs of academic tourists plays a pivotal role to gain more students across the world. Academic consultancy offices are also seen as an important factor that increases international students mobility.

Role of external environment

The external environment have strong bearing academic tourism. The external environmental factors that affects academic tourism are as follows: According to Chen (2007) economic factors helps in shaping the nature of both academic tourism and businesses in the sector. The living costs in the academic tourism destination, education costs, employment opportunities and economic cooperation between the sending country and the academic tourism destination are main ingredients to increase the mobility of the students to pursue their higher study. Per Capita income of the country also have valuable contribution in the mobility of expatriate students. The general economic situation in the country where the education is received, the value of money and infrastructure facilities and suitability of these conditions significantly shape the international students mobility towards any particular academic institutions.

Technological Factors

These factors significantly influences the choice of academic tourists. For example, applications in academic tourism marketing and the availability of technological opportunities in the educational institution are addressed in this regard. The reputation of the educational institution in terms of technology, the level of technology use in the educational institution and the availability of science and technology-based programs in the educational institution

are considered as technological attractions that affect academic tourism demand. On the other hand, innovations in information and communication technologies also affect the competition in academic tourism.

Social/Cultural Factors

The search for intercultural experience, the opportunities to establish international connections, the internationalization tendencies of academic tourism destinations and the global understanding in the destination are among the influential variables in international students' choice of destinations. However, it is suggested that international students are influenced by their peers, parents and the academic staff in their choice of destinations.

Physical/Environmental Factors

The climate and weather conditions of the destinations where educational institutions are located affect international students' choice of destinations. Although academic tourism stakeholders cannot control these factors, they can adapt to this situation and increase their choice .

Political Factors

These factors are the political or legal regulations that shape the mobility of international students in academic tourism. Government policies encourage, support and guide international student mobility. Political instability poses a serious challenge to international student mobility. Issues such as commercial cooperation between the sending and receiving countries, the security level of the receiving country, immigration policy, foreign policy, monetary and fiscal policy shape the destination choices of international students . Security perceptions of international students regarding the destination, relations between the country sending students and the country accepting international students, and the level of racial discrimination in the country accepting international students are among the political factors affecting academic tourism.

Himachal Pradesh is a state which is blessed with verdant jungle on hills laden with perennial snow which helps maintaining the pristine environment and blissful climate to live salubrious life. As per the State Economic Survey, Himachal Pradesh has been getting over-debited since it has achieved the status of statehood. Main concern of policy makers is how long the state can persistently raise loan to meet charged as well as voted expenditure. It is apparently clear that without raising its own income resources it will become more difficult to protect its sovereignty. The financial crunches of the state necessitate to find alternative ways to mobilize its own resources to get rid of the trend of raising loan in every financial year. The natural blessing is that nostrum which can be capitalized through the promotion of *Academic-Tourism*. Himachal Pradesh has have very prestigious academic schools like the Lawrence school Sanawar, and Dalhousie Public School at Dalhousie which are earning huge amount of money through *Academic-Tourism* as they are located in those pockets of the State where very absorbing climate and pristine environment are found. However, the elite class of the society can afford the fee of these exclusive institutions. As we know that the elite class of India constitute two percent of total population of India and within state their numbers are very insignificant. Thus, it is necessary to improve the educational standard of the existing institutions without bringing much changes rather giving directions and training, if needed, to the already working teachers and by proper utilization of existing infrastructure and logistics in the institutions. It shall definitely help an increase in the enrollment of those students who have gone to private schools to have good learning and education which they feel is not available in the government schools. the provision of school buses, proper dress with sober colour as recommended in the private elite institutions. The Government of Himachal Pradesh will earn handsome amount of revenue from its own institutions by taking little cognitive measures. Such measures may provide opportunities to haves and have-nots of the state to get education which is being provided by the renowned institutions of the Nations and the World by charging exorbitant fees which is beyond the paying capacity of the 98% of the total population of the society. The present establishment of the education institutions is bifurcated between Satellite and peripheral educational institutions. Satellite institutions have been functioning on Marhsalian profit maximization's doctrine while the Peripheral institutions have been operating since centuries on the basis of free bees and sops doctrine.

As the social sector in general and Education in particular are consider as the responsibility of the state, people expect some subsidiary services from the government, but not at the cost of the quality of the education. That is the reason why people of even lower per capita income sending their children out of the state by spending huge amount of money to take quality education. The drain out of such a huge funds of state can be capped if we revamp our educational system and in turn, earn more from the people of other states by wooing their children the educational institutions of the state. We have more scope to promote academic tourism through faculty development programme. It is skill development programme specially designed for academic educators. It has been specially formulated for the upgradation of skills and knowledge of aspirants regarding their interest of specialization. This programme can be one week to four months long and conducted by very few institutions. It focuses on areas like case and teaching skill development, research methodology, research skill development, perspectives on management and area wise specialization courses. As per UGC Regulations 2010, college and university teachers will have to get academic performance indicators (API) score through performance based appraisal system for recruitment and carrier advancement in their service. It is necessary for every assistant

professor and associate professor to complete two faculty development programme, two refresher courses in his service and one orientation course. Teachers also take summer as well as winter courses. Teachers spend large amount of money to complete these courses. Himachal pradrsh has lot of scope to start these courses in already existing institutions through which state can mobilize handsome amount of money. It will also facilitate the promotion of academic tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Thus, government must take measures to promote academic tourism and mobilize resources across the states and abroad.

CONCLUSION

As the economy of the Himachal Pradesh is reeling under financial strait as of over debt for expediting the work of development, it is very important to mobilize resources to sustain the growth of the economy. Academic tourism is one of major nostrum to raise funds for the its privy. It has been observed that academicians move out of the state to undergo various imperative courses that are required to score minimum score for academic performance indicator (API) and performance based appraisal system followed by the university Grant commission. It necessitates a drain out of the plethora amount of funds which can be held back and in consideration of that the state can attract more funds if it promotes academic tourism

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