



Tourism Promotion through Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) Initiative: A Commerce Perspective²

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Abstract

Tourism is a vital sector contributing significantly to economic growth, employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, and regional development. In India, the Government has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen national integration and promote tourism. One such initiative is Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB), launched in 2015 with the objective of enhancing cultural exchange and mutual understanding among different states and union territories. This research paper examines the role of the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative in promoting tourism in India from a commerce perspective. Using both primary and secondary sources, the study analyzes how cultural integration, inter-state partnerships, and promotional activities under EBSB contribute to tourism development, economic opportunities, and inclusive growth. The paper also highlights challenges in implementation and suggests measures to enhance the effectiveness of EBSB in boosting domestic and cultural tourism. The findings indicate that EBSB has significant potential to promote sustainable tourism and strengthen India's tourism economy if supported by strategic planning and stakeholder participation.

Keywords: Tourism Promotion, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, Cultural Tourism, Economic Development, Commerce Perspective

Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global economy and plays a crucial role in socio-economic development. In India, tourism contributes substantially to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment generation, infrastructure development, and foreign exchange earnings. India's cultural diversity, historical heritage, natural beauty, and traditional practices make it one of the most attractive tourist destinations in the world.

Recognizing the importance of cultural unity and diversity, the Government of India launched the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) initiative in October 2015. The primary objective of this initiative is to strengthen emotional bonds among the people of different states and union territories by promoting cultural exchange, linguistic harmony, and mutual understanding. Over time, EBSB has also emerged as an effective platform for promoting tourism, especially domestic and cultural tourism.

From a commerce perspective, tourism promotion through EBSB not only enhances cultural integration but also generates economic opportunities for local communities, small businesses,



artisans, and service providers. This research paper aims to analyze how the EBSB initiative contributes to tourism promotion and economic development in India.

Economic Importance

Tourism refers to the activities of people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for leisure, business, or other purposes. Tourism is broadly classified into domestic tourism, international tourism, cultural tourism, eco-tourism, medical tourism, and adventure tourism.

Economic Importance of Tourism

Tourism plays a significant role in the economy in the following ways:

Contribution to national income and GDP

Employment generation in hotels, transport, travel agencies, handicrafts, and hospitality

Development of infrastructure such as roads, airports, and communication

Promotion of regional development

Earning of foreign exchange

Encouragement of small and medium enterprises

In India, tourism is labor-intensive and has strong backward and forward linkages with other sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, transport, and trade. Hence, tourism promotion is crucial for inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) Initiative: An Overview

The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative was launched to celebrate the unity in diversity of India. Under this program, states and union territories are paired with each other to promote cultural exchange and understanding.

Objectives of EBSB

To promote national integration and cultural harmony

To encourage mutual understanding between people of different states

To showcase the cultural uniqueness of each state

To promote linguistic learning and cultural exchange

To strengthen tourism and people-to-people contact

Activities under EBSB



Cultural exchange programs

Promotion of traditional festivals, food, dance, and art

Student and academic exchange programs

Tourism promotion activities

Language learning initiatives

Handicraft and local product exhibitions

These activities indirectly and directly support tourism development by increasing awareness and curiosity about different regions of India.

Review of Literature

Several studies have highlighted the role of cultural initiatives in tourism promotion. Richards (2018) emphasized that cultural tourism strengthens destination branding and enhances tourist experiences. Sharma and Gupta (2019) noted that government-led cultural integration programs can significantly boost domestic tourism by creating awareness and emotional connection among citizens.

Studies on Indian tourism development suggest that domestic tourism has immense potential due to India's vast population and cultural diversity (Ministry of Tourism, 2022). Research by Singh (2020) highlighted that initiatives like EBSB can act as catalysts for regional tourism development by promoting lesser-known destinations.

However, some researchers have pointed out challenges such as lack of coordination, limited infrastructure, and inadequate marketing strategies, which may restrict the full potential of such initiatives.

Research Methodology

The present study is based on descriptive and analytical research design.

Sources of Data

Primary Sources

Government reports and policy documents related to EBSB

Data from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

Official publications and brochures

Secondary Sources

Research journals and books



Articles from tourism and economic development studies

Reports from international organizations

Websites and publications related to tourism and cultural studies

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative methods to understand the impact of EBSB on tourism promotion and economic development.

Role of EBSB in Tourism Promotion

1. Promotion of Cultural Tourism

EBSB emphasizes cultural exchange, which directly supports cultural tourism. Tourists are encouraged to explore the traditions, festivals, cuisine, art forms, and heritage of paired states. Cultural festivals organized under EBSB create awareness and interest among people to visit new destinations.

2. Strengthening Domestic Tourism

Domestic tourism forms the backbone of India's tourism industry. By fostering emotional connections among states, EBSB motivates people to travel across regions and experience diverse cultures. This increases domestic tourist flow, benefiting local economies.

3. Economic Opportunities for Local Communities

Tourism promotion through EBSB creates income opportunities for local artisans, craftsmen, performers, tour operators, and small traders. Handicraft exhibitions and cultural fairs provide platforms for showcasing local products, thus promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment.

4. Development of Lesser-Known Destinations

One of the significant contributions of EBSB is the promotion of lesser-known and unexplored tourist destinations. By highlighting regional uniqueness, EBSB helps reduce pressure on overcrowded destinations and promotes balanced regional development.

5. Strengthening Inter-State Trade and Commerce

Tourism promotion under EBSB indirectly boosts inter-state trade. Increased tourist movement leads to higher demand for local products, food items, handicrafts, and services, thereby strengthening regional commerce.

Economic Impact of Tourism Promotion through EBSB

Employment Generation



Tourism-related activities such as hotels, transport, travel agencies, cultural performances, and handicrafts generate employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers.

Contribution to GDP

Tourism promotion leads to increased tourist spending, which contributes to GDP growth. Domestic tourism, in particular, has a multiplier effect on the economy.

Infrastructure Development

Increased tourist inflow encourages government and private investment in infrastructure such as roads, accommodation, sanitation, and communication facilities.

Inclusive Growth

EBSB supports inclusive growth by involving local communities, rural areas, and traditional sectors in tourism development.

Challenges in Tourism Promotion through EBSB

Despite its potential, tourism promotion through EBSB faces several challenges:

Lack of adequate infrastructure in remote areas

Limited awareness and marketing of EBSB activities

Coordination issues between states and agencies

Insufficient involvement of private sector

Language and communication barriers

Sustainability and environmental concerns

Addressing these challenges is essential for maximizing the benefits of the EBSB initiative.

Opportunities and Future Prospects

EBSB offers numerous opportunities for strengthening India's tourism sector:

Integration of EBSB with digital tourism platforms

Promotion of eco-tourism and sustainable tourism

Collaboration with private tourism stakeholders

Use of social media and digital marketing

Promotion of cultural tourism circuits

Strengthening tourism education and skill development



With proper planning and policy support, EBSB can become a powerful tool for tourism-led economic growth.

Suggestions

Strengthen infrastructure in emerging tourist destinations

Increase budget allocation for EBSB tourism promotion

Encourage public-private partnerships

Promote sustainable and responsible tourism practices

Improve coordination between tourism departments and cultural bodies

Enhance awareness through digital campaigns

Conclusion

Tourism promotion through the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative plays a significant role in strengthening cultural unity and economic development in India. By encouraging cultural exchange and inter-state understanding, EBSB enhances domestic tourism and creates new economic opportunities. From a commerce perspective, the initiative supports employment generation, regional development, and inclusive growth. Although challenges exist, effective policy implementation, infrastructure development, and stakeholder participation can transform EBSB into a major driver of India's tourism economy. Thus, tourism promotion through EBSB holds immense potential for sustainable economic growth and national integration.

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