

AN ETHNOCENTRIC STUDY: EMERGING THRUST AREAS OF TOURISM AT SHEKHAWATI REGION OF RAJASTHAN

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study highlights the different thrust areas of tourism in unlocking the potential of tourism in Shekhawati region. An attempt has been made to make a distinct regional identity in the context of rural growth through tourism, creation of closer relationship between local people and tourists. In Shekhawati region there are many places which can be developed and promoted as tourist destinations. Interconnections were found between tourism and growth of regional identity, increased socio-cultural benefits and better living style. This ethnocentric study focuses on the role of local residents' in creating a distinct image of the regions in new thrust areas of tourism such as Pilgrimage Tourism, Temple Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Eco- tourism, Heritage Tourism, Rural Tourism, Farm Tourism and Food Tourism. It also explores marketing and promotional strategies to extend tourists' interest in the region. Moreover, the study offers a SWOT Analysis of all the selected places for research study and snapshot of attractions of the Shekhawati. The key issues to emphasize on are marketing, promotion and branding strategies, collaboration with stakeholders, awareness, training, education and research. Keeping in mind the paper also highlights the important findings in context of cleanliness and hygiene on the places which are important from the aspect of tourism.

KEYWORDS: Ethnocentric, Hospitality, Food Tourism, SWOT