



## WOMEN PARTICIPATE OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN MAHARASHTRA STATE

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**ABSTRACT**

Women empowerment is one major issue of today's. Various International organizations, and governments, are engaged for empowering women, economically, socially, and politically. United Nations World Travel Organization implemented an action plan for empowering women through tourism. As far as Maharashtra state is concerned, tourism is one of the main sectors in the state and contributing in income and employment to people. In this context, the present study examines the contributions of tourism in women's empowerment in Maharashtra. The study is based on secondary data. A statistical test shows there is a difference in participation of male and female workforce in tourism in the state. Out of the total workforce in tourism, only 31 percent of the workforce is female, which is less than that of the average female workforce of the state (34 percent). Further, there is wide scope for the women empowerment through tourism in Maharashtra. The steps should be taken by the government, banks, NGOs, Self-help Groups, and so on to encourage and facilitate women in tourism related activities.

**Introduction**

Empowerment of women is one of an important issue in the last decade of the twentieth Century. Women's economic empowerment is absolutely essential for raising their status in society. Visits to several hundred villages spread throughout the country and large-scale interactions with rural and urban women and questioning them about their needs always elicited the same answer: 'give us jobs- we can do the rest'. Tourism is found to be an important means of empowering women in this present global economy. Because of the relative 'newness' of mass tourism, many new employment opportunities exist for women, both within the formal and informal sector. However, less attention has been paid to the unequal ways in which the benefits of tourism are distributed between men and women, particularly in the developing world. Tourism presents both opportunities and challenges for gender equality and women's empowerment. The Global Report on Women in Tourism 2015 is a first attempt to develop a quantitative framework for monitoring the status of women working in tourism across the globe. Its focus is on tourism in developing regions (Global Report on Women in Tourism, 2010). As far as the Maharashtra tourism is concerned, the women are actively involved. They are getting equal opportunities for job, both direct and indirect employment through tourism in Maharashtra. Tourism is one of an important sector in Maharashtra state. It is providing livelihood to the local people in and around the tourists' destinations. It is a major means of income and employment for people today.

**Objectives**

1) To study the role of tourism industry in the empowerment of women.

2) To examine the participation of women in tourism industry in Maharashtra state.

**Materials and Methods****Data and sources**

The present study is conducted on the tourism industry and its contribution on women's empowerment in Maharashtra state. The study is based on secondary data. Secondary data have been collected from the Civil Aviation and Tourism Department, Government of Maharashtra. Only the data of total number of employees in Head Office of Tourism Department of Government of Maharashtra, have been taken to examine the participation of women in the tourism industry. The results thus obtained were used to draw inferences for the total state. The period of the present study is 2014-2015.

**Delimitations of the study**

The present paper is delimited to the study of empowerment of women through tourism industry in Maharashtra state. Only the direct employment within the tourism industry is analysed in the present study.

**Discussion on Tourism sector in Maharashtra state**

India, a tourism hotspot in the world, has a large bouquet of tourist attractions to boast of. Its widespread diversity has always attracted both foreigners as well as its own citizens alike, to explore its mirth and gaiety that it has to offer the world. The name Maharashtra first appeared in a 7th century inscription and in a Chinese traveler's account. Its name may have originated from rathi, which means, "chariot driver". At that age Maharashtra was full of builders and drivers of chariots who formed a maharathis, a "fighting force." The state known for its sheer size and diversity is located on the western part of the country. It has a varied landscape bounded by the Western Ghats that stretch out

into the mists as far as the eye can see. The innumerable forts, that adorn the State, stands proud and strong, depicting its historic past. Additionally scores of temples sculpted into and out of basalt rock, through the atmosphere. Its diverse and colorful cultures are all woven into one gigantic quilt that represents the true nature of the State. The colorful festivals of the State galvanise the sleepy thousands into fervent motion. And her miles of silver, white beaches, stretched taut and inviting over the entire coast. The exquisite Mashru and Himru crafts, Bidri Ware, Paithani Saris, Sawantwadi Crafts, Warli Paintings, Kolhapuri Chappals draw immense tourists from various corners of the country. Keeping this in mind the Ministry of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has awarded ACNielsen ORG-MARG, one of the largest market research and consultancy organizations in this part of the continent, to conduct this study. for a period of one year for collection of Tourism Statistics..

#### **Discussion on status of women in Maharashtra state**

According to the 2011 Census of India, out of the total population of Maharashtra, i.e. 54,131,277, women constitute of 49.15 percent. In Maharashtra, women shares about 30.41 percent of total workforce and more than 92 percent of total female population lives in rural areas. Out of the total workforce 30.41 percent is female employee against 69.59 percent of male employee. The role of women's empowerment for a just society was highlighted in the Beijing Conference (1995). Maharashtra has a tradition of collective decision making by communities. There is a reserve for women in the state. The reservation of seats for women in Panchayat is 50 percent and 33 percent in the Government service. Both the Central and State governments have introduced a number of programme, e.g. Mahila Samridhi Yojana, Balika Samridhi Yojana and Small Family Schemes, to promote both women's welfare and their empowerment. Gender concerns have been addressed in the state through an array of women-specific welfare and empowerment programmes. However in the absence of either a comprehensive study on gender related issues in Maharashtra or any other audit of the development programmes of the state government, it is difficult to make a correct assessment of the situation of women.

#### **Discussion Role of tourism sector in women's empowerment**

The year 2001 has been declared as the "International Women's Empowerment Year" by

the United Nations. Again the year 2001 has been declared as the " Women's Empowerment Year" in India. During the last sixties, the concept of empowerment became very important in the field of development studies. Empowerment has different meaning in the development field, in general, it implies the equal distribution of power between those who have more power and who have less power. Tourism Sector is a major generator of employment. As a highly labour intensive activity, tourism and tourism support activities create a high proportion of employment and career opportunities for low skilled and semi-skilled workers, particularly for poor, female and young workers. Women make up 70 percent of the labour force in tourism sector and half of all tourism workers are 25 years or under. The tourism sector can be an important source of employment for many of the unemployed youth and consequently reduces the poverty in the society (Government of India, 2011). During a conference in Berlin in March 2008 the United Nations World Travel Organization (UNWTO) has implemented an Action Plan for the Empowerment of Women through Tourism sector. The objectives of the plan are derived from the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, which aims are to benefit poor (also through tourism), protect the environment and empower women. Tourism is an important part of world's GDP (more than 10percent) and creates around 8 percent of world's employment. Of all people employed in the tourism sector 60-70 percent are women (Ampumuza *et al*, 2008).

Despite the bias against the service industry during socialism, jobs in tourism were always attractive and respected within society, because, given the circumstances, economic sectors like tourism were able to employ large percentages of women and paid relatively high wages. Thus, tourism seems to be a valuable tool for promoting women's economic and social well-being. Tourism workers benefited from professional training courses and long holidays in the off-season (Ampumuza *et al*, 2008). In addition, seasonal unemployment made tourism an attractive opportunity for women who could combine paid employment with family responsibilities, thus easing their triple burden. Introducing the notion of generative empowerment into the transformation and sustainability debate can better contextualize the role of tourism in sustainable development in post-communist CEE. This traditional division is even stronger visible in small scale

tourism and micro enterprises. Small scale tourism is important within the tourism sector in Latin- America, especially in rural areas. For example in Ecuador 54, 5 percent of the tourist entrepreneurs are micro enterprises (Andrade and Navarro, 2005). As we look on the percentage share of women employment through tourism in most of the tourism related economy of the world, the contribution of tourism industry in women empowerment can well judged. Table-1 shows the percentage share of women's employment in some major tourism economy of the world.

**Table 1.** Percentage share of women employment in Tourism Industry

S. No.	Country	Employment (%)
1	Australia	55.8
2	Canada	55
3	Dominican Republic	50
4	Mexico	47
5	Egypt	25

Sources: The Fifth UNWTO International Conference on Tourism Statistics, 2009

In Australia, the tourism sector has 55.8 percent of female employment, which is relatively higher as compared to other tourism economy, like Canada-55 percent, Dominican Republic- 50 percent, Mexico- 47 percent and Egypt – 25 percent, whereas, in India, the female participation in tourism sector is approximately around 30 percent. As per the region, the participation of women in Hotel and Restaurant is as in the Table-2.

**Table 2.** Percentage share of women employment in Hotel and Restaurant

S. No.	Region	Employment (%)
1	Latin America	58.5
2	Caribbean	55.4
3	Africa	47
4	Oceania	46.8
5	Asia	35.4

Sources: Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010, 2011

Table-2 shows the participation of women in hotel and restaurant. The participation of women in Hotel and restaurant business is an average of 49 percent. It is high in region of Latin America with 58.5 percent and lowest in Asia with 35.4 percent which is more than the average female participation in tourism sector in India.

### Discussion on Women's empowerment through tourism Industry in Maharashtra state

Empowerment of women through the tourism industry is an important field of concern today. As far as Maharashtra state is concerned, tourism is one of an important sectors in Maharashtra state and providing livelihood to the local people in and around the various tourists' destinations. It is a major means of income and employment for people. It offers employment to all categories and all the section of the society, i.e., skilled and unskilled, men and women etc. Therefore, it is one of the important sources of women's empowerment in the state.

**Table 3.** Percentage share of women employment in tourism in Maharashtra

Sr. No.	Gender	Employment (%)
1	Male	69.59
2	Female	30.41
	Total	100

Sources: Census 2011, Government of India.

As per the study conducted on women's empowerment through tourism industry in Maharashtra, 34 percent of female population are directly linked with the tourism industry in state (table 3). Out of the total direct employment through tourism, 34 percent of the employees are female against 66 percent of male employee which is higher than the average percentage share of total female workforce of 30 percent in the state (Census 2011). In Maharashtra, tourism industry is contributing much to the women's empowerment. They are getting equal opportunities in tourism and tourism related sectors. Women, both skilled and unskilled, are actively involved in the tourism sector and its decision making.

**Table 4.** Percentage share of women employment in tourism in Maharashtra

Sr. No.	Nature Of Job	Employment (%)	
		Male	Female
1	Regular Employee	69.67	30.32
2	Regular - Master Roll basis	67.5	32.5
3	Engineering Cell	57.69	42.30
4	Ad-hoc basis and Contract basis		
	Ad-hoc	57.14	42.85
	Contract	25	75
	Combined	45.45	54.54
	Total	66	34

Sources: Computed from the secondary data

Table-4 shows the employment as per the nature of job in the tourism department of Maharashtra. In regular basis, there is 30.32 percent of female employee against 69.67 percent of male employee. In engineering cell of the tourism department, total female employee is 42.30 percent and 57.69 percent male employee. In regular Master Roll basis, there is 32.5 percent female employee and 67.5 percent male employee. On Ad-hoc and contract basis, there is 54.54 percent of female employee against 45.45 percent of male employee. In Ad-hoc and contract basis, the percentage share of female employment is more followed by the total percentage of women employment in engineering cell as compare to other nature of job. In contract basis, particularly, the percentage of female employment is 75 percent against 25 percent of male employment. Apart from direct involvement of women population in tourism activities, good numbers of women are indirectly engaged in tourism industry. In indirect way, tourism related activities like in hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, Small and medium enterprises (SME's), various household businesses, tea stalls, travels, handlooms and handicraft etc., women are engaged and have occupied a noticeable position in the state. Even in seasonal homes (home-stays), the participation is noticed and seems to be an appropriate livelihood activity within tourism for women, especially in South-West district.

### Conclusion

Tourism industry is one of an important source for empowering women. In Maharashtra, tourism industry is contributing much in the women's empowerment. Women in Maharashtra, both skilled and unskilled, are actively involved in the tourism sector and its decision making. The economic empowerment of women through tourism can be well judged by the percentage share of women workforce in tourism in Maharashtra. The total percentage share of women employee in tourism sector is 34 percentages, which is higher than the total percentage of women workforce of 30 percent in the state. The total percentage women employee in tourism sector of Maharashtra is also more than that of India's total women participation, i.e., 30 percent. As per the nature of job, the percentage share of women population is more in Ad-hoc and contract basis and next in the engineering cell. It is 54.54 percent in Ad-hoc and contract basis, 42.30 percent in engineering cell, 32.5 percent in regular Master Roll basis and 30.32 percent in regular basis as officers and staffs. Apart from direct employment

through tourism, women are also indirectly engaged in tourism related activities. In indirect way, tourism related activities like in hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, Small and medium enterprises (SME's), various household businesses, tea stalls, travels, handlooms and handicraft etc., they are employed and have occupied a noticeable position in the state. Even in seasonal homes (home-stays), the participation is noticeable.

Maharashtra is gifted with natural beauty and resources, therefore, there is a further potential in the tourism industry. And also as per the forecast study conducted by Tata Economic Consultancy Services (TECS), Horizon study and various others researcher, Maharashtra tourism is expected to expand more in the future. With the increasing inflows of more tourists the employment opportunity will also increase. Hence, there are more possibilities for empowerment of women and that too at a very low investment in tourism industry. Tourism is a service oriented, labour intensive and multi-dimensional sector which is linked with many other sectors of the economy like transportation, hotels, restaurants, travels and tour businesses, seasonal home (home stay), etc. and provide a larger opportunity for employment. Therefore, there is wide scope for women's empowerment in both formal and informal sectors of tourism industry.

### Suggestion

The systematic approach is required to uplift the women section of society through tourism industry, so that the management, records and future research is possible in this particular field. It is in this context, the steps should be taken for the involvement and participation of women in this sector. We can encourage them by providing the some tourism related activities and business in particular for females like, hotels, way side amenities, model tea houses, trainings in travels, and providing Seasonal home business (Home-stays) for them/ or in the name of women of the home, and licensing of cafeterias for women. Apart from these, the tourism related workshops, seminars, conferences and exhibitions should be organized, in particular for women, within state and later for inter-state. Later inter-state exhibitions will not only help to encourage women in tourism sector but also increase the tourist inflows along with advertisement or promotion tourism of the state. Further, It is not only the duty of government and along with government, but also it is the duty of individual, institutions, organization (both profitable and

non-profitable), SHG's, SMEs, Micro Financial institutes, banks and all other stakeholders of tourism to facilitate and encourage women to take participation in tourism related activities. In this regard, the "Hands-on Approach" should be followed. Finally, it may be emphasized that, the women themselves have to come forward and make it as a major and alternative means of livelihood in the state.

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