

Swarna Andhra Tourism Mission 2029: An Overview

Dr. V. Jagadeeswari, Dr. M. Subramanyam

Centre for Women's Studies, Sri Venkateswara University

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ABSTRACT

By 2030, India is expected to have the largest working-age population globally, yet providing economically viable jobs for general stream students remains a major challenge. Improving employability necessitates a new approach and curricular support, as outlined in NEP-2020. The tourism sector is vital for the growth of many developing countries, offering millions of jobs and fostering creativity and entrepreneurship. Digital technologies provide new opportunities by enabling small tourism businesses in these countries to access the global travel market directly for the first time. On World Tourism Day, the World Bank Group and its partners are examining how digital innovations can promote sustainable tourism for development. The government expects the Digital India Program to empower citizens digitally, enhance governance, deliver on-demand services, and establish digital infrastructure as a utility for all. To support this, a standardized data exchange system with clear data-sharing guidelines must be implemented, ensuring reliable transfer of digital data across networks of public and private service providers for users.

Keywords: Employment Opportunities, Tourist Industry, Entrepreneurship, World Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 positively influences the tourism sector by prioritizing skills-based education that enhances graduates' employability and industry readiness. By promoting practical learning through internships, hands-on training, and stronger collaborations with industry stakeholders, the policy addresses the specific needs of fields such as hospitality, travel management, and tourism services. Additionally, NEP 2020 encourages a holistic understanding of the cultural, economic, and environmental dimensions of tourism, thereby fostering national pride and strengthening India's global competitiveness in the tourism sector.

The "Swarnandhra" tourism policy (formally Andhra Pradesh Tourism Policy 2024-29) intends to promote Andhra Pradesh as a prominent global tourism destination by attracting private investment, developing infrastructure, and promoting sustainable tourism. The policy focuses on strengthening the tourism ecosystem through fiscal incentives like tax benefits, capital subsidies, and support for private and public-private partnership projects, while also emphasizing improved connectivity, high-quality visitor experiences, and responsible tourism practices.

As digitalization transforms the tourism industry, it is essential to consider how educational institutions can align their curricula with emerging trends. Integrating digital skills and tourism management into academic programs will not only prepare students for new job opportunities but also foster innovation and adaptability in the workforce. This approach can help bridge the gap between traditional education and the evolving demands of the tourism sector, ultimately enhancing employability and supporting sustainable economic growth. To capitalize on these opportunities, there is an urgent need for collaboration among government agencies, academic institutions, and industry leaders. These partnerships can facilitate the design of specialized training modules and certification programs tailored to the dynamic requirements of the tourism sector. Moreover, fostering entrepreneurship among students through incubators and mentorship initiatives will empower them to create innovative solutions and contribute meaningfully to the growth of digital tourism.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to analyse the contribution of "Swarnandhra" tourism policy and NEP 2020 in promoting **sustainable and responsible tourism**.

Research Methodology

This paper discusses about "Swarnandhra" tourism policy (formally Andhra Pradesh Tourism Policy 2024-29) and employability and industry readiness through National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The data collected from secondary sources.

Key Impacts of NEP 2020 on the Tourism Sector

Skill-based and practical education

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places strong emphasis on shifting the educational approach from theory-heavy teaching to a more practical, hands-on model of learning. This has significant implications for the tourism and hospitality sectors, where experiential learning is essential. Students are encouraged to develop industry-oriented skills through exposure to real-world situations, simulations, field visits, and "learning by doing." Such an approach helps students understand customer handling, destination management, event coordination, and travel operations in a practical context, thereby enhancing their competence and confidence as professionals.

Industry-academia collaboration

NEP 2020 actively promotes partnerships between educational institutions and the tourism industry. Through structured internships, apprenticeships, and collaborative projects, students can gain direct industry experience before completing their studies. This collaboration helps bridge the long-standing gap between classroom learning and workplace expectations. It ensures that the curriculum aligns with current industry trends and technologies and enables students to build professional networks, enhance their practical knowledge, and secure better employment opportunities.

Holistic curriculum development

Another significant contribution of NEP 2020 is the push toward more comprehensive, modern, and flexible curricula. For tourism studies, this means integrating subjects such as sustainable tourism practices, environmental impact assessment, digital tourism marketing, e-commerce in travel services, and responsible tourism planning. By introducing multidisciplinary learning, students acquire a broader understanding of tourism's economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions. This holistic education equips future tourism professionals to make informed and responsible decisions that support long-term sectoral growth.

Enhanced internationalization

The policy encourages the internationalization of Indian higher education by attracting international students and promoting academic partnerships with global institutions. This has a positive ripple effect on the tourism sector. The influx of international students increases demand for accommodation, transportation, food services, and cultural tourism, contributing to the growth of education tourism. At the same time, Indian students have greater opportunities for exchange programs and international exposure, thereby improving the overall quality of tourism education in the country.

Entrepreneurship promotion

NEP 2020 highlights the importance of fostering entrepreneurial attitudes among students. For the tourism sector, this means encouraging young individuals to innovate and establish start-ups in areas such as travel technology, eco-tourism, event management, adventure tourism, and heritage preservation. By integrating entrepreneurial training, business incubation support, and financial literacy into the curriculum, the policy

empowers students to convert their ideas into viable ventures and contribute to the sector's diversification and growth.

Increased employability

One of the overarching goals of NEP 2020 is to enhance graduates' employability by equipping them with job-ready skills. In tourism, this translates into training students in communication, customer service, digital tools, foreign languages, cultural understanding, and problem-solving. By emphasizing adaptability and industry-specific competencies, the policy ensures that tourism graduates are well prepared for evolving industry demands. This improves career prospects and helps maintain a skilled workforce capable of supporting India's growing tourism ecosystem.

Promotion of multidisciplinary learning

NEP 2020 encourages students to learn across multiple disciplines rather than restrict themselves to a single stream. This is especially beneficial for tourism, an inherently diverse field encompassing geography, culture, business management, marketing, hospitality, and environmental studies. By allowing students to choose subjects across streams—such as combining tourism with digital marketing, foreign languages, or environmental science—the policy helps create well-rounded professionals who understand the sector from different perspectives. This multidisciplinary approach also enables students to engage in critical thinking and problem-solving, essential for managing complex tourism systems.

Strengthening of vocational education

The NEP emphasizes the integration of vocational education into mainstream academic pathways. For the tourism and hospitality sectors, this entails introducing vocational courses in travel operations, food and beverage services, front office management, tour guiding, and hotel operations at the school and college levels. Students gain early exposure to practical tourism skills, enabling them to enter the workforce faster or pursue advanced studies with a stronger foundation. Such vocational training also supports rural and community-based tourism by allowing local youth to participate meaningfully in tourism activities.

Boost to digital literacy and technology adoption

With NEP 2020 placing a strong focus on digital literacy and technology-enabled learning, tourism education is expected to incorporate tools such as virtual tours, digital booking systems, GIS mapping, and data analytics. Students can learn how technology influences tourism trends, consumer behavior, and marketing strategies. Exposure to ICT tools prepares them to work efficiently in a tech-driven tourism environment where digital platforms play a significant role in travel planning, promotion, and service delivery. This improved technological competence ultimately strengthens the competitiveness of India's tourism workforce.

Encouragement of creative and experiential learning environments

NEP 2020 encourages innovative pedagogical methods that go beyond textbooks. For tourism education, this includes experiential learning through role-plays, case studies, live projects with tourism boards, visits to heritage sites, and collaborations with hotels or travel companies. Such active engagement deepens students' understanding of real-world tourism challenges—such as managing peak tourist seasons, ensuring customer satisfaction, and promoting sustainable practices—and helps them develop essential soft skills, including leadership, teamwork, and communication.

Support for regional languages and cultural studies

One of the unique features of NEP 2020 is its emphasis on promoting Indian languages and cultural heritage. This directly benefits the tourism sector, as knowledge of regional languages and local culture enhances a student's ability to engage with tourists, understand cultural sensitivities, and promote heritage tourism. Graduates with multilingual skills and deeper cultural awareness are better equipped to work as tour guides,

interpreters, cultural promoters, and destination managers, contributing to more authentic and responsible tourism experiences.

Strengthening rural and community-based tourism

By emphasizing inclusive education and grassroots-level skill development, the NEP encourages the participation of rural youth. When combined with tourism-related vocational training, this fosters the development of community-based tourism models. Students from rural areas can draw on their knowledge of local culture, traditional crafts, and natural landscapes to develop tourism opportunities in their regions. This not only generates local employment but also promotes sustainable tourism practices that preserve local traditions and ecosystems.

Long-term enhancement of the tourism workforce

Overall, the combined reforms of NEP 2020 contribute to the development of a more dynamic, adaptable, and globally competitive tourism workforce. By aligning education with industry needs, promoting skill development, embracing technology, and enhancing cultural competence, the policy helps create professionals who can respond to global tourism trends, support new tourism products, and drive innovation in the sector. This long-term transformation not only improves employability but also strengthens India's position as a major global tourism destination.

SWARNA ANDHRA TOURISM VISION 2047

“To emerge as a leading global tourism hub, offering a rich spectrum of spiritual, coastal, ecological, adventure, and wellness experiences, while empowering local communities and promoting sustainable development.”

The Swarna Andhra Tourism Policy aspires to elevate Andhra Pradesh into a center of tourism excellence by delivering world-class experiences that showcase the state's distinct identity, cultural heritage, and natural splendor. This vision is built upon the following core elements:

Vision Elements

Position Andhra Pradesh as India's premier tourism destination for both domestic and international travelers.

Increase the tourism sector's contribution to more than 20% of the state's Gross Value Added (GVA).

Strengthen tourism as a significant source of employment, generating opportunities for over 20% of the state's workforce.

Promote sustainable and responsible tourism practices to protect and preserve the state's natural ecosystems and cultural heritage.

Develop world-class tourism infrastructure—including top-tier terminals, seamless connectivity, and comprehensive way-side amenities—to enhance the overall tourist experience.

Swarna Andhra Tourism Mission 2029

“To develop and promote tourism in Andhra Pradesh as a catalyst for economic growth, employment generation, and cultural exchange, while upholding the principles of sustainability and inclusivity.”

The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Policy is committed to achieving the following mission objectives to position the state as a premier tourism destination:

Mission Objectives

1. Boost Economic Contribution: Increase the tourism sector's share in the state's Gross Value Added (GVA)

from 4.6% to 8%.

- 1. Enhance Employment Opportunities:** Increase tourism-related employment from 12% to over 15%, creating diverse livelihood opportunities across allied sectors.
- 2. Strengthen International Appeal:** Position Andhra Pradesh among the top 10 Indian states in Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs), improving its global tourism standing.
- 3. Increase Tourist Spending:** Raise the average spending by domestic tourists from INR 1,700 to INR 25,000, thereby magnifying tourism's economic impact.
- 4. Extend Duration of Stay:** Increase the average tourist stay from 1–2 days to 5 days, offering more enriching and immersive experiences.
- 5. Expand Accommodation Capacity:** Grow the state's classified room inventory from 3,500 to over 10,000 rooms, ensuring ample high-quality hospitality options.
- 6. Attract Private Investment:** Mobilize private investments worth INR 25,000 crore to strengthen infrastructure, services, and innovative tourism models, fostering a competitive and thriving tourism sector.

Strategies

To realize its mission and position as a premier tourism destination, Andhra Pradesh's policy is anchored around six strategic pillars:

- 1. Tourism Product Diversification and Destination Development**
- 2. Demand Activation and Development of World-Class Tourism Infrastructure**
- 3. Targeted Branding and Creation of Bespoke Tourism Experiences**
- 4. Professional Skilling and Capacity Building of the Tourism Workforce**
- 5. Promotion of Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Practices**
- 6. Strengthened Governance and Efficient Administration to Elevate Andhra Pradesh as a Leading Tourism Destination**

Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs)

The policy aims to develop and strengthen **Anchor Hubs** by enhancing last-mile connectivity, promoting Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs), expanding accommodation options, building local skills, and advancing sustainable tourism. Key initiatives include:

a) Last-Mile Connectivity

The state will prioritize seamless access to major tourist sites by improving last-mile connectivity. Efforts will include constructing and maintaining approach roads, introducing efficient transport options such as shuttle services and bike rentals, and upgrading road, rail, and air networks. These initiatives will help create an integrated transport system that meets the diverse needs of travelers.

b) Wayside Amenities

To ensure a comfortable visitor experience, essential facilities will be developed across Anchor Hubs. These amenities include parking areas, clean restrooms, drinking water points, and clear signage, enhancing convenience and accessibility for tourists.

c) Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs)

PPPs will play a pivotal role in financing and implementing major infrastructure projects. These include highway development, modernization of transport systems, and the construction of hospitality facilities. Partnerships will also support investments in key tourism infrastructure—such as parking, restrooms, potable water, and signage—thereby improving the overall quality of visitor services.

d) Employment Generation and Skill Development

The policy places strong emphasis on creating employment by involving local communities in tourism initiatives. Skill development programs will train individuals in hospitality, tour operations, conservation, traditional crafts, and related fields. This will empower local populations and raise the standard of tourism services.

e) Sustainability

Sustainability is a core pillar of the policy. Initiatives will focus on the environmentally responsible management of Anchor Destinations through effective waste disposal, water conservation, and the adoption of energy-efficient technologies, such as solar lighting, to ensure long-term ecological protection.

Professional Human Capital Development

The Government of Andhra Pradesh places strong emphasis on building a highly skilled workforce for the tourism and hospitality sectors, ensuring the delivery of high-quality, market-relevant skills that meet the expectations of both domestic and international travelers. The state is already home to several renowned institutions—such as ICI Tirupati, IITTM Nellore, FCI Visakhapatnam, SIHM Tirupati, and the Adventure Academy Kadapa—which will serve as key partners in implementing these training initiatives.

Key Initiatives

1. Omni-Channel Skill Development Programs

Collaborate with industry experts to offer accessible, hybrid learning platforms that equip the workforce with current and industry-relevant skills.

2. Human Resource Development in Niche Tourism Sectors

Introduce specialized training programs in adventure tourism, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions), and storytelling to meet the rising demand in these fast-growing segments.

3. Degree Certifications for Emerging Areas

Launch degree programs in emerging domains, such as sustainable tourism and digital marketing, to prepare students with industry-aligned competencies for the contemporary tourism environment.

4. Training on Specialized Knowledge

Provide focused training on subjects such as Buddhist history and other cultural areas to enrich cultural and heritage tourism offerings.

5. Satellite Training Centres in Rural and Tribal Areas

Establish training hubs in remote, rural, and tribal regions to empower local educated youth with skills in hospitality, sustainable tourism, and traditional crafts, fostering inclusive growth.

6. Cross-Border Apprenticeship Models

Implement international apprenticeship programs to expose trainees to global best practices and enhance local expertise, strengthening Andhra Pradesh's global competitiveness in tourism.

7. Capacity Building for Local Communities

Offer programs to develop local skills in tourism management, hospitality, and guiding, ensuring that communities actively participate in and benefit from tourism-driven development.

CONCLUSION

Additionally, the state aims to foster strong partnerships with private-sector stakeholders, international organizations, and academic institutions to update curricula and teaching methodologies continually. This collaborative approach will ensure that training programs remain adaptable to evolving industry trends and technological advancements, thereby producing graduates who are well-equipped to thrive in a dynamic global tourism landscape. To further strengthen professional workforce development, the Government of Andhra Pradesh recognizes the need for establishing an **Institute of Hotel Management (IHM)** and additional **Food Craft Institutes (FCIs)**. These institutions will be instrumental in creating employment opportunities and advancing the state's vision of becoming a leading destination for affordable, experiential, and sustainable tourism. The government will work closely with the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) of the Government of India to establish these institutions. The Honorable Prime Minister recommended that the tourism sector adopt digitalization across all aspects. As a result, the Ministry of Tourism and MeitY are collaborating to investigate the feasibility of creating a Unified Tourism Interface, which would facilitate seamless information sharing among the many players in the tourism ecosystem. Such a unified tourism interface would enable an open, interoperable network for search, discovery, information sharing, and digital transactions, and might usher in the next wave of travel services.

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