Chapter 8: Suggestions and Recommendations

- Recommendations
- Suggestions
8.1 Suggestions and Recommendations

The present study was a concise study of Tourism Marketing in Bundelkhand Region. The main purpose of the research was to understand the present status of tourism marketing in the region and to develop strategies to increase the foreign and domestic tourist inflow in Bundelkhand.

The study covered 13 tourist destinations of the region, which were being promoted by the tourism departments of UP and MP state. The foreign and domestic tourists visiting this region, the tour and travel agents and the tourism officials were the subject matter for this study. The data collected was analysed through applying various statistical tools such as frequency distribution, mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, skewness and other statistical tests to draw inferences and thus interpret new outcomes and strategies to increase the foreign and domestic tourist inflow in Bundelkhand.

Keeping in view the elements of Tourism Marketing Mix and on the basis of data analysis and findings, the researcher has made an effort to present the suggestions for the 7 Ps separately;

8.1.1 Product

1. The research findings indicate that most of the people were travelling for recreation purpose, therefore more recreational projects should be brought up to satisfy the tourists:
   
   - It is strongly recommended that the region should have one park en-route to Datia and Sonagiri. It will definitely attract the tourists and motivate them to extend their stay.
   - Water sports like paragliding, parasailing and paddle boats may be started at Baruasagar, which would add to the existing pleasure and benefits.
   - Additional services like more musical concerts and theatres can be added at the tourist attractions.
   - Additional benefits like spa treatment would also increase the pleasure experience of the tourists.
• Since nightlife is an important attribute to the domestic tourists visiting the region, therefore late night restaurants or eating joints with live music can be encouraged to attract the tourists.

2. It was found that shopping pleasure was either missing or negligible in the region. Therefore, it is suggested that;
   • Better shopping environment can be created if the government and private organisations come up with projects like shopping malls and air conditioned stores.
   • Production and marketing of local handicraft goods should be encouraged.
   • Chanderi is famous for its brocades and muslins, especially for its hand woven sarees. More retail outlets of Chanderi handlooms at convenient places can be opened to cater to the shopping needs of the tourists. This will be an added attraction for the tourists and will increase employment opportunities and encourage young entrepreneurs in the region and also bring more earnings.

3. It was observed that most of the tourists visit one or two popular destinations of Bundelkhand and move to other region. To avoid this and to make the tourists stay for a longer time and to let them explore all the attractions of the region, the concept like “a ride to Bundelkhand on wheels” can be introduced which would enable a tourist to reach to all the tourist attractions in a limited time period.

4. Develop some better theme based restaurants offering Bundeli cuisines, Chinese, Thai, Italian food, etc. which can add to their pleasant experience, enhance their satisfaction level and help in creating stronger word-of-mouth.

5. The government should work for promoting more flights between major cities such as, Bombay, Delhi and major tourism destinations, such as Khajuraho. These must be linked to good rail or road transport to tourist destinations like,
Shivpuri, Kalinjar, Chanderi, Deogarh, etc., which are being aggressively promoted.

6. Light and sound programmes can be started at the tourist destinations like, Deogarh, Kalinjar, Chanderi, Kalpi, Mahoba, etc. to attract the tourists.

8.1.2 Price

1. Since most of the people visiting the region are from service class category therefore, it is recommended that the respective state government should have tie ups with other government organisations so that the officials can be encouraged to visit the region when on vacations. Special packages or discounts or attractive offers can be designed for the executives of the government institutions to attract them to visit the region for recreation, conferences and other such purposes. A separate package can be offered to the employees of private organisations too.

2. Most of the domestic tourists travel to Datia, Chitrakoot, Sonagiri and Orchha because of its religious importance. To attract more number of religious tourists, special offers, transport facilities and discounts should be offered during festivals like Navratri, Dushehra, Diwali and many more.

3. To attract the backpacker tourists, more government subsidised eating joints or boarding and lodging facilities can be provided to enable them to enjoy the tour at reasonable rates. This would also help in creating positive word-of-mouth and encourage more backpackers to visit the region.

8.1.3 Place

1. Tour and travel agents are important channel members in tourism industry. It is recommended that a close liaison with the tour and travel agents should be developed and maintained so that they include more destinations of Bundelkhand in their package. More monetary benefits or other offers may be provided to the tour and travel agents as follows:
• The Ministry of tourism can give rewards like “Best Agency” to the
tour and travel agencies that promote and bring business to the
untapped destinations of the region. List of such agencies can be
highlighted as the “Top Rated Agencies” on the websites or the travel
guides. This will also benefit and promote the travel agencies and help
them to get more business, as the tourists prefer to book tours through
approved travel agents.
• Special discounts can be given to these travel agents to book
government accommodation at the untapped destinations. By this, the
tourism department would also be benefitted because more destinations
of Bundelkhand will be in the itinerary of the tourists, which would be
a win – win situation for both.

2. It is recommended that the ministry of tourism should develop a plan wherein
the local tourist departments of Agra, Varanasi and Jaipur are encouraged to
promote Bundelkhand region for excursion trips. For this, special incentive can
be offered to the officials of the respective tourism departments for soliciting
bookings for untapped destinations of Bundelkhand.

8.1.4 Promotion

1. Since it was observed that most of the domestic tourists visiting the various
tourist destinations of Bundelkhand region were from nearby areas therefore, it
is strongly recommended that more effective awareness programmes should be
designed by the tourism departments and promoted in other states to create and
enhance the awareness of the tourist attractions of the region.

2. Collecting information from respective websites is the most effective source,
 hence, it is strongly recommended that the website should be made more
attractive and a separate web page on Bundelkhand with attractive pictures and
offers about all the tourist attractions of the region should be designed.
Moreover, the tourist attractions of the region should be highlighted on the
International Tourist Map.
4. The tourism departments of the UP and MP states organize mahotsavas at important destinations like Jhansi and Khajuraho but some destinations have been overlooked. It is suggested that the fairs and mahotsavas should be organised at other tourist attractions also which will promote tourism in Bundelkhand, especially at other destinations like Datia, Baruasagar, Sonagiri and Kalinjar.

Moreover, these mahotsavas are not organized in coordination with the tourism departments of the two states. This leads to difference in levels of popularity of the mahotsavas separately, whereas if the dates are coordinated with each other it would lead to synergistic effect in promotion. This would also help in promoting the region as one. Tourist attending at one destination would get motivated to attend the mahotsava of another destination if the dates are complementing each other.

5. Since it was found that the awareness for various tourist attractions of the region was low, it is recommended that special documentary films should be produced, highlighting the attractions of the region, and these films can be shown at:

- Shatabdi Express, as most of the foreign tourists travels to Jhansi by this train but miss out on visiting most of the destinations.
- Various flights flying to and fro.
- Deluxe Volvo buses.

6. More attractive advertisements should be placed in leading newspapers, travel magazines, journals, and on tour and travel programmes shown on television.

- Attractive brochures and pamphlets should be made available at important places like railway stations, airports, hotels and restaurants.
- A celebrity may be made the brand ambassador of the region. This would help in enhancing the awareness of the region and have an eye catching appeal. This would be an effective message source to draw the attention of the target audience and help in creating the desired positioning of the region.
7. Bundelkhand has a treasure of tales of valour and bravery and has an abundance of historical monuments. These features can be highlighted in the promotional programmes because most of the foreign and domestic tourists travel to seek historical benefit.

8. Brand Bundelkhand should be developed to promote tourism in Bundelkhand. For this, joint efforts should be made by the tourism departments of both UP and MP states. To give the region a separate identity, the ministry of tourism should get a USP (Unique Selling Proposition) or a tag line created for the region.

9. In the month of October many Christian pilgrims (domestic and foreign) come to Jhansi to celebrate St. Jude’s Feast. Since their stay usually extends upto a week therefore excursion trips to different attractions should be promoted during their stay in Jhansi. The tourism department can show documentaries on Bundelkhand in the Church premises and place the hoardings of its destinations near the St. Jude’s Church, at the railway station and at the main crossings in Jhansi to create awareness and interest in the pilgrims. Arrangements of mini buses from the church premises to different destinations can be made to facilitate the excursion trips. Tours of one night stay can be planned and different destinations can be grouped into various categories to cater the diverse interest of the tourists.

10. “Destination Wedding” – is a concept which offers the arrangement of weddings with all rituals, accommodation, food and an excursion trip for the guests, etc.

The hotels that are more in demand by Event Management Companies can be identified and the local tourism offices can have tie-ups with them and work on discounted rates for excursions to different destinations. Such hotels can be listed as the recommended hotels in the region. Again creating the win – win situation for both.
11. Educational institutions should be encouraged to bring the students on excursion trip to the region for educational purpose. Local promotion can be done by targeting the schools and encouraging them to take the students to museum and other historical places for educational purpose. Documentaries can be shown in schools.

12. Safety and security is one of the critical factors which can affect the inflow of the domestic and foreign tourists to the region. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that Bundelkhand should be promoted and positioned as a peaceful and tourist friendly region.

Tourists want to seek multiple benefits while travelling and tourism in Bundelkhand is multi-facet. Bundelkhand can be promoted and positioned as the region of multi-facet tourism – historical, religious, adventurous, wildlife, cultural and rural – all in one go!

8.1.5 Physical Evidence

1. The tourists were dissatisfied with the cleanliness at the tourist destinations, especially at the religious places. Therefore, it is suggested that private agencies should be given contract to maintain cleanliness at these destinations which would help in providing a hygienic environment and also increase the beauty of the place. Beautification of all the tourist spots is required.

2. Better upkeep and maintenance of the museums and the artistic objects is recommended. Air conditioning of the museums, more cleanliness in and around, renovation and beautification will make the places more attractive and presentable.

8.1.6 People

1. The service providers should be trained to show willingness to welcome the tourists. They should be made aware of the socio-economic benefits of tourism
so that cheating and harassment could be avoided and the tourists are accorded a warm welcome.

2. Provisions for pre-paid services of auto-rickshaw and taxi should be made to avoid cheating, harassment and confusion and to create a feeling of security in the tourists. The concept of tourism police can be introduced to specially handle the safety and security problems of the tourists.

3. The abundance of hawkers, peddlers and photographers cause nuisance and harassment to the visitors. This needs to be addressed.

4. Tourist satisfaction is very important for creating a positive word-of-mouth. Since our findings show that word-of-mouth is an effective source of information therefore efforts should be made to train all the people involved in selling services. Feedback to evaluate the service providers should be taken from the tourists in order to check and create highest level of customer satisfaction.

5. A training programme for the guides can be introduced in which the knowledge, skills and abilities of the guides can be checked and polished. This will enable the tour guides to serve the tourists in more courteous and professional way.

6. The hotel staff is a crucial service provider and ambassador of that destination hence the staff should be trained to be more courteous and render a personal touch the tourists. This would enhance the tourists’ satisfaction level and create a desire to re-visit the region and explore the destinations not visited.

**8.1.7 Process**

1. Ministry of tourism can make the arrangements of mini-tourist bus facility from the railway station to the tourist destinations and back to the station. The arrangement of guides should also be made in the bus.
2. Better infrastructure and improved facilities like communication and banking will add a feather in the cap. ATMs to facilitate the money transactions should be opened at convenient places. Application of latest communication facilities is essential in the hotels. More cyber-cafes and pre-paid telephone booths can be opened.

3. To create convenience the general instructions, rules and common queries can be displayed in some popular foreign languages (from where most of the tourists come to the region) at transit points, hotels, tourist spots, etc.

4. Ministry of Tourism should make efforts to open more tourism counters in the region so that the inquiries and complaints can be handled in a better way.

5. Tourism department can have a tie up with the hospitals near to every destination so that the doctors are available for medical treatment as and when required. Such approved hospitals and doctors should be listed and promoted on the website and at necessary places.

Hence,

“Brand Bundelkhand” should be developed with the joint efforts of UP and MP state government. The suggestion related to the Tourism Marketing Mix given by the researcher would yield good results only if all the three elements on the Services Marketing Triangle viz.,

- Company (Tourism Department),
- Service Providers (All the people involved i.e., hotel staff, tour and travel agents, guides, etc.) and
- Customers (Tourists),

are happy in their own way and have their individual interests served optimally.
The Service Providers should be trained, motivated and fairly rewarded, the tourism department should work hard for encouraging responses and get revenue and the tourists should be happy and satisfied. It should be a **win – win** situation for all.