INDIAN REALITY TOURISM – A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper to find out the tangible potential and opportunities of reality-tourism in India and other parts of the world. Do we expose our nudity, weaknesses and poverty to tourists or can it be used as an unconventional revenue source for local development of such backward areas?

Design – The paper defines the concept of reality-tourism which is prevailing in India at a slow pace and provides a critical analyses about pros and cons of this type of tourism. It also analyses the view of all the stakeholders such as the tourists, the tour operators and the people from slum areas. The paper highlights the various means of reality-tourism, the modus operandi, the various factors affecting reality-tourism through a proposed model, ending up with satisfaction level measurement of the all the players involved.

Methodology – Based on an extensive literature review, the author proposes a model to check the various criticisms against the reality tourism also calculate the impact of reality tourism on the daily life of slum dwellers with a case study approach followed by descriptive analysis.

Findings – The paper finds a positive trend about reality-tourism. Three different case studies reflects three different scenario of reality-tourism in India about their direct and indirect positive impact on daily life routines of slum dwellers, their business, their health and their education. The paper can also serve as a basis for further research to check the authenticity of proposed model and can frame out some better tourism policies for such niche segment of consumers.

Keywords Reality tourism, alternative tourism, poverty, local economic development, pro-poor tourism, slum, Dharavi, India

"Vasudhaive Kutumbkam"- For a prudent person, the whole earth is one family.

INTRODUCTION

A London based mechanical engineer gets to grill a gathering of young rag-pickers about their method of trash collection and their life style in one of the streets of Dharavi in Mumbai. One professor from Harvard University along with his scholars is busy in local streets full of garbage talking to people living there about the 'dreams and hopes' of their children. A gang of young girls from European nations take a round on cycles in the dense streets talking to women and teenage girls about the use of the sanitary napkin. Few social science students from USA, fascinated by variety of Indian customs and traditions, decided to experience it while spending their holidays in one of the small city Jind (Rajasthan) and working as volunteers.

Welcome all of you to a new innovative and captivating segment of tourism – Reality Tourism, where the tourists are charged a very nominal fee and provided a chance to see the reality of hunger, mal-nutrition, terrorism, position of women in such part of society.

Since last two decades the world has witnessed a successful transformation of tourism industry into the means for local economic development in various parts of the developing nations (Dondolo 2002, Rogerson 2004, Pirie 2007, Frenzel 2012). The demand of niche tourists from developed nations with the intention of social services or to witness the reality of other half has given a reason to emerge a new alternative form of tourism (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). The preferences of such niche category of tourists are indifferent to that of mass tourists in their pattern of consumption of tourism-led-services, which has given a new reason for various tourism agencies to switch to new form of tourism (Swarbrooke et al., 2003).

Tourists are moving away from traditional tourism now-a-days. They are searching for a new, unique more real concept of tourism. Therefore each of the developing nations has been observing this new concept of an alternative tourism ((Rogerson, 2001). There are several views about the commencement of this alternative tourism. Some researchers argue that it had started around 1980s (Weaver, 1995, p. 595), while some argue about in 1990s in South Africa (Brohman, 1996, p. 63, Dondolo 2002, Pirie 2007; Frenzel 2012) while some can be traced in publication in early 2000 (Shackley 2001; Rogerson 2002a, b, 2003; Visser 2002, 2003a, b).

1. TOURISM RESTRUCTURING IN INDIA

Tourism is not a new phenomenon to India. The *mehmaan-nawaji* (Welcoming the guests) or *'Atithiti Devo Bhava'* (The Guest is the God) is in the blood of Indians since ancient times. History tells about India's first foreign tourists were Huen-T-Sang and Fi-Huan during 700 B.C. India has lost its independence when it has welcomed Portuguese during 1498, Dutch in 1600 and the English in 1612 as guests only. After independence in 1947, the Indian government gave special focus on tourism industry as it was one of the major sources of foreign exchange earnings. Major attention has been given in ninth year plan (1997-2002) when Indian government has categorised the tourism in form of business tourism, incentive tourism, indigenous and natural health tourism, eco-friendly tourism/back to nature, wildlife tourism, spiritual tourism / pilgrimage tourism, heritage tourism, rural tourism / village tourism, sports tourism, social tourism, shopping tourism, regional circuit tourism, and adventure tourism (Gour, 2005). Also some traces are found about new trends in tourism in India in the form of agri-tourism (Sznajder, 2009), mass tourism (Bedding, 1997), educational tourism (Quezeda, 2004), indigenous terrorism (Smith, 1996), movie induced tourism (Gjorgievski, 2012), beach tourism (Calderon, 2004), cuisine/culinary tourism (Duttagupta,2013), medical / healthcare/drug Tourism (Singh, 2014), disaster tourism (Athukorala, 2005), fashion tourism (Bernama, 2008), halal Tourism (Battour, 2010; Mukherjee 2014), honeymoon (Rao, 2001), jihadi tourism (Wynne, 2002), kosher tourism (Merz, 2008), sacred / ashram tourism (Sharpley, 2005) and reality tourism (Meschkank, 2011).

2. REALITY TOURISM

The majority of the slum townships all around the world are now known for reality tourism as a place of genuineness which depicts the true and honest picture of their culture and country. The tourists who visit such places do not see any negative image while they find the people working hard and innovatively and real picture of people and surrounding area (Rolfes 2010, Freire-Medeiros 2007, 2009). The tourists feel here a socio-economic development impulse in the form of under-developed commercial and technical infrastructure of the people living there. Before the tour, the tourist have a negative image of such area such as corruption, apartheid, social exclusion, malnutrition, and underprivileged living conditions but after the tour they have felt much move positive vibrations in the form of constructive features like new off-beat technology, happy children, and much better infrastructure and good business sense all around (Rolfes 2010).

The term 'reality tours' is given to the social tours which have been advertised as authentic or real experience of culture and values in terms of visit to actual and original sights (Freire-Medeiros 2009, p. 581; MacCannel 1999, p. 92). Such tours also have been quoted as cultural or ethnic tourism (Ramchander 2004, Jaguaribe and Hetherington 2004) where the cultural exchange has been incorporated. Another nomenclatures are 'Poverty tourism' or 'Pro-poor Tourism' or Poorism have been dubiously acronymed due to wary nature of category of tourism in slums, streets, small townships and undue social exploitation of poor people (Wiener 2008, Gentleman 2006, Daniekzik and Khan 2006).

3. REALITY TOURISM – AN OUTLINE

3.1. Slum tour

This term 'slum' has been used first time in 19th century when the visitors used to tour to the poor people living in the streets of London (Koven, 2006) while first time 'slum tourism' has been noticed in New York where tourism practices have been noticed to area dominated by Black Harlem people (Welz, 1993). Today the slum tourism has been widely accepted and much noticed all around the world among poor people living areas (Rolfes 2010, Steinbrink and Pott 2010).

Almost one billion people all around the world live in slum areas which constitutes 32 percent of the world's urban population. 72 percent of Sub-Saharan African urban people and 59 percent of Southern Asia urban people live in a slum area. These slum areas have no proper living houses, illegal development and houses, with no access to proper sanitation, electricity and other daily-routine necessities (UN-Habitat, 2006).

3.2. Bicycle tour

The bicycle tour is the best mode of transport to witness the daily happenings among the slum dwellers. Since the streets in the slum area are too narrow to allow any other vehicle other than bicycle to pass through easily, are the preferred choice of reality

tourist to visit such places (Frenzel 2012). One of most economic mode of transport in terms of affordable cost, easy availability, environmental friendly, effortless parking, and a good way of exercise, the tourist nowadays prefers to visit around the city on bicycle only.

3.3. Night tour

Indian weather (Mumbai) is mostly hot during most of the time in a year. The night tour provides the relief to tourist from scorching heat. There is famous local proverb 'Mumbai never sleeps', the tourist might get a chance to see the various places in a very calm and soothe circumstances. No traffic, sans crowd, smooth discussion, fresh cool breeze, perfect nice panoramic view of sights make the night tour the best use of leisure time of the tourist. Proper safety is taken care of each tourist.

3.4. Street Food tour

Indian cuisine is famous worldwide for its taste and fragrance due to specialized usage of Indian spices. Within India people love to eat at street vendors at least once in a week. These street vendors food kiosk do exist since generations. It is said that the taste and fragrance also exist since generations only. Therefore in India, the tourists too are given chances to relish the true flavour of Indian street food. In Mumbai various places like Juhu Chaupati, Church gate, Birar and Worli while in Delhi, the Chandni Chowk, Old Delhi, Greater Kailash, The street food not only provides the tasty food with desi flavour but also gives a chance to foreign tourist to interact with local youth and families (Fyfe 1998). But it is not advisable to go for the street food due to some unhygienic issues.

3.5. Market tour

Another attraction of reality tourism is shopping the ethical and local objects. Actually majority of tourists give preference to shopping during their tour itineraries (Kent *et al*., 1983; Moscardo, 2004). The tourists try to understand the local culture and taste with the help of shopping. It also gives them an opportunity to interact with local shopkeepers and residents. They spend fairly a good amount of money on various objects which are not available in their country easily and also give them a memory for tour to such destinations (Dimanche, 2003; Jansen-Verbeke, 1991; Timothy and Butler, 1995, Hsieh and Chang, 2006). Tourists prefer to visit small shops in dense streets and purchase the Indian ethnic clothing, art and crafts material, wooden sculptures, various pots and sculptures made by mud at pottery, food items such as spices, dry fruits and flowers and other ornaments. Common places for shopping in Mumbai are Craford market, Managldas market, Flower Ally, Hill Road, Bandra, Linking Road, Bandra, Fashion Street, Colaba, Colaba Causeway, Lokhandwala Market while in Delhi the Old Delhi, Chandi Chowk, Gaffar Market, Hazratganj, Delhi Haat at Janakpuri, Tibetan Market at Janpath, Paharganj, Sarojni Nagar and Lajpat Nagar are few famous destinations for shopaholics tourists.

3.6. Local transport tour

Except bicycle the tourists also can enjoy a ride on the local transport by means of ricksaw, auto, cab and local trains (in Delhi it is Metro). There are several such destinations in both Mumbai and Delhi, where the local transport work as multi nodal transport system (Pearce 2001). Tourists have so many options to visit those streets. Economic, full of fun, colourful, friendly discussion with ricksaw puller or auto-driver on various topics with the help of translator, provides a sense of reality tourism to the tourists.

3.7. Street sightseeing tour

Slum tourism exists in streets. The tourist operators arrange several tours visit to witness the live reality of area. How do people live there? How do their children get educated there? Where are the schools? What are the modes of transport for them? What are their eating and other habits? Tourist also visit to those areas where majority of orphanage are located and thousands of home-less children are living (OBrien, 2011). Their tour guide is generally the same man who has spent his childhood among these streets only. The paintings on wall of homes, the method of *Pooja* (Worshipping the God), Rangoli, and domestic way of living, daily chorus activities are the highlights of street site visit of tourists.

3.8. Village tour

Tourists also prefer to visit Indian villages to live the lifestyles of rural areas. This tour is full of peace, fresh and natural environment, and close to nature. Some of the tourists live in hut, a small house made of mud and also take part in daily chorus of villagers. This tour is too much cost-effective and there is a much scope for scientific and business research. (Kamat, 2011)

3.9. Festival tour

India is country of festivals. The nation is full of national, religious, harvest and seasonal festivals. There is no day in whole year, when any festival is not celebrated. Tourists are fascinated with the diversities offered by Indian in terms of festivals. Right from *Ganesh festivals*, *Holi, Diwali, Durga Pooja,* various state festivals the list is endless. It was noticed whenever a group of tourist make a plan to visit to India, they prefer to attend at least one festival in India during their tour itineraries.

4. BENEFITS FROM REALITY TOURISM

Most of the researches have been kept Africa in focus and discussed whether such category of tourism can help in economic develop of underprivileged area. (Ramchander 2007, Koens 2012, Rogerson 2008). There is no economic barometer or very little researched indication about contribution of such tourism towards welfare of township. Several research study foresee a ray of hope for development in terms of

better education, higher literary, poverty eradication and new avenues for businesses (Booyens 2010). Still there is no full proof research on means of alternate tourism and its benefits of society. There is lack of quality research on it (George and Booyens 2014).

Majority of the players engaged in reality tourism claim that a major proportion of their profit goes for the welfare of slum area only. The reality tour has transformed the slum area passiveness into active residents. People now actively take part in such tourism activities. The crime has transformed into community. People have started to work as a group. They also start to think to provide basic and primary education to their kids since the revenue earned by such tourism has been invested into various schools run by different NGOs. There is all around no patch of stagnation but people talk about development after such tourism activity in slum areas (Meschkank, 2011).

Table 1: **Reality Tourism in the world**

World's Top Reality Tourism Destination				
Slum	**Country**	**Slum area (Approx)**	**Population (Approx)**	**Tour operators engaged**
Rocinha	Brazil	2.5 Km^2	1 Million	Exotic Tours Favela Tours
Khayelistsha	S Africa	39 Km^2	4 Million	Khayelistsha Travels Sanam Jama Transport
Manshiet	Egypt	5.6 Km^2	3 Million	Nubian Egypt Cosmos Tours
Kibera	Kenya	2.5 Km^2	1.2 Million	Kibera Tours Victoria safari
Neza-Calko-Itza	Mexico	4.5 Km^2	4 Million	Tourism Concern
Dharavi	India	2.2 Km^2	1 Million	Reality Tour and Travels Reality Tourism
Hindalgo County	US	4100 Km^2	1 Million	Chuck Olson Pharr
Orangi Town	Pakistan	57 Km^2	1.6 Million	Reality of Pakistan
Gecekondu	Turkey	4.6 Km^2	15 Miilion	Tourism Concern

Source: Joshua, 2014

There are more than 2200 slum areas in the world and majority of them have ample scope for the reality tourism. But only few of them have harnessed such opportunity. Actually a pro-active approach is required from various tour operators to make the reality tourism successful. Very few tour operators provide full-fledged services for reality tourism. Now the bigger tour operators have also started to cater these services to their customers. Still there are lot of comprehensions about safety, security, easy-going, and hygiene issues.

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Table 2: **Slum areas in India**

India's Top Slum Area			
Slum area	**City**	**Area**	**Population**
Dharavi	Mumbai	2.5 Km^2	1 Million
Bhalswa	New Delhi	2.0 Km^2	0.20 Million
Nochi Kuppam	Chennai	1.8 Km^2	0.20 Million
Basanti	Kolkata	8.5 Km^2	2.5 Million
Rajedra Nagar	Bangalore	2.0 Km^2	1 Million
Indiramma	Hyderabad	2.5 Km^2	0.65 Million
Saroj Nagar	Nagpur	1.6 Km^2	0.15 Million
Mehbhullapur	Lucknow	1.5 Km^2	0.20 Million
Satnami Nagar	Bhopal	1.8 Km^2	0.4 Million
Parivartan	Ahemdabad	1.8 Km^2	0.6 Million

Source: Silicon India, 2012

Over 65 million people live in slum area in India up from 51 million from 2001. The growth of slum population has been decreased. The average family size in slum area is 4.7 (Rukmini, 2013).

Some of the tour operators are engaged in almost all of top slum areas of country but Dharavi, Bhalswa, Basanti, and Indiramma areas are more in demand due to their geographical locations. Very few players are involved in such tourism due to limited response only from foreign tourists. Local tourists don't vouch for this tourism because such slums areas are available almost in every city in India. Indian tourists are not interested in poverty tourism. Only few NGO and social workers from India do visit regularly to those people to tackle various management related issues (Meschkank, 2011).

ORCBT (Organization for responsible and community based tourism) is a not-for-profit NGO who works for better living for poor people living in slum area since last decades based in New Delhi. They have started 'reailitytourism.org' and offer various volunteer tourism, community-based holidays, educational travel, cultural exchange programs and international work experience/internships etc. While another start-up initiated in 2005 by Mr. Chris and Mr. Krishna Pujari under the name of 'realitytoursandtravel.com'. They too offer same services to various tourists group. They have also started a charity foundation under the name of 'Charity Gives' and claim that 80% of the profit earned by them go to the welfare of slum areas. Another tour operator 'Thomas Cook' is also offering sightseeing in Dharavai, the second largest slum of Asia.

Both of the operators have won so many awards and received several accolades. Various documentaries have been filmed on the both the operators and several articles have been published in newspapers and magazines on the work done by them for societal welfare exercise.

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The comprehensive research has been done on various forms of alternative tourism. They have extensively covered the vast range of such tourism in South Africa (Rolfes et al. 2009; Ludvigsen 2002; Ramchander 2004, 2007; Rogerson 2003, 2004; Margraf 2006), Kenya (Kumar 2013), Brazil (Freire-Medeiros 2007, 2009; Menezes 2007; Jaguaribe and Hetherington 2004), China (Lianbin and Kaibang, 2008) and Mexico. The majority of the researches have been done on types of alternative tourism, covered area, affected people, tourism policies and other related topics. There is no fundamental conclusion whether the image of poverty has been perceived in negative or positive aspect among tourists. The questions still persists that whether such tourists go for observation of poverty or they go for a transformed image which has been reflected to them. Still very few research work has been done in India to measure the impact of such tourism on image transformation and economic impact on slum areas. Therefore the study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What is the image of reality tourism for the tourists and how do the reality tour operators manage with this image?
2. What is the purpose of the reality tourism?
3. Which different features do the tourist attribute to the reality tourism?
4. How do tour operators do motivate the tourist to visit such poverty-ridden area?
5. How to measure the impact of the reality tourism on the satisfaction level of the tourist?
6. What are the economic and moral implications of such tourism?
7. Does the reality tourism have the potential to become top notch category for the tourism in real future?

5.1. Research methodology

The research topic and objectives are so much extensive and stimulating, it is very difficult to answer each of them in one single research study. Since very little evidences and researches are available for such study, the statistical analysis can be aptly applied to prove the model and exact reasons behind such type of tourism. The entire research study can be divided into five stages:

a) The case study approach to identify the factors triggering reality tourism in India. Case study approach is the most appropriate tool to understand the reality tourism (Dürr and Jaffe 2012; Steinbrink et al. 2012).
b) Developing a modelling structure accountable for the growth of reality tourism.
c) Descriptive details of tourist and objectives of the reality tourism
d) Factor analysis to analyse various variables responsible for this process.
e) To calculate the covariance among observed factors and frame out policies for such tourism.

In this part of the study the focus has been given to first three stages. Three short case studies have been developed and illustrated here. The case studies are based on live interaction with the tourists and respected tour operators in four different locations of India. As promised to the tour operators, the real name of the respondents have been changed. The location we have selected were three different regions of India, Dharavi (Mumabi, Maharashtra), Jind (Haryana), and Bhalswa (Delhi). The case studies have been prepared after thorough analysis of the entire tour itineraries right from the approach of tourist to operator, asking for reservation and their queries, their mode of transport, staying arrangements, their day to day tour details, their experience and feedback.

The data has been collected between 2013 and 2014 in the form of personal interaction with tourists with open-ended questionnaire. The prior permission has been taken from tourist and tour operators working for reality tourism. The other information has been collected from various tour operators and tour guides working in India with a structured questionnaire. Total 18 various tour operators working in various regions have been interviewed. We have also collected the information from 21 tourists (4 groups, and 6 individual tourists)

On the basis of interactions and feedback, the various factors responsible for such reality tourism has been structured in a modelling format. The descriptive information provides us the individual profile of tourist, objectives of their journey and other details. The findings have been further associated with previous research done and a study for covariance has been proposed among various variables.

6. CASE STUDY APPROACH

6.1. Case study 1

Location: Dharavai (Mumbai)
"'*Dharavi, a different world where you are sceptical about is it the worst place to live or a place with full of energy and passion but it is also not worth to live too. The slum tourism is all about rattle one's cage. If you don't bother all about such stuff, you are welcome to slum area. Nail down be cautious about your pocket, bag or shoes, any time you may lose either one.*"

I am Richard, a research scholar of social science from Singapore recently visited to Dharavi. I have booked the tour online on the website of reality tours and travels. I have been charged €16 only for one day visit. The visit to Dharavi was add-in program to my academic trip to participate in a workshop organized by a NGO in Mumbai in November 2013. Pick and drop facility was provided from my hotel.

The driver told me that we have reached to Shammi Nagar situated near to Dharavi. Here I meet my tour guide Vijay. He welcomed me by '*Namaste*' first and then he offered me a firm handshake. He told me he will be with me throughout the day.

I was bit amazed and curious about a slum visit. It was my first visit to such areas. I didn't know whether I have taken a wise decision for one day visit to Dharavi. I knew slum-touring is a new trend nowadays following touring to favela (Brazil) and slum areas in S Africa. Now you can visit to maundering slums of Mumbai with the help of professional tourist guides.

Fascinated by the advertising done by 'Reality Tours and Travels' who manages these tours, claim that at least 80% of their profit go to welfare of such areas. Preference is given to smaller group, maximum five to six persons and strictly No camerawork was allowed. But, I was not sure whether have they brought any reform, still I found, few schools run by them, they have provided training for children of poor families for different small scale business which has just soften my culpability about doing rather attractive insalubrious.

Suddenly Vijay has just interrupted my provoked thought process making me cautious to watch my footstep. I was just following him through a very narrow pass full of garbage. The time was almost 11 am the entire lane was calm, a pungent smell of spices and washing soaps was felt which has just intrigued me. There were lots of women washing the clothes in open area outside their house and smoke can be noticed coming out from small windows of cooking areas. Children were playing with colours, kites and rubber tubes. Each wall was painted differently with various colours and designs.

Along with Vijay I have just entered a filthy house, a place where recycling business was going on. Where used plastic were recycled into toys and plastic rods, affordable kitchenware, trash bags, carpets, and countertops.

Whole floor was one of the finest example of assembly line where each stage was managed by a person. There was hardly any space left empty. There was almost 750 kg of plastic were recycled a day. We moved to nearby second house which was a small factory of readymade shirts with a local brand named ''. There was no plaster on any of the walls of entire house. The flooring was very rough but the owner told me his monthly target of stitching was 2500 shirts with the help of 35-40 labours. The third visit to another small factory where many of women were engaged in making solar-bottle bulb. From the roof top I have observed all around thousands of houses with tin roof covered with black polyethylene.

The entire slum area is hub of small scale industry. The other industries you may find everywhere are leather, textile, dying, printing, glue, soap, pipes, soaps, candle, sheepskin, bakery and many more other industries. I have been informed that in Dharavi, almost 16000 one room factories are operational. Which have annual turnover of US$ 750 million.

I found Dharavi is not just an acronym for poverty or adversity but it has economic strength of entrepreneurship, energy, and never ending approach. I have also visited one primary school run by an NGO also funded by our tour and travellers. Kids have just surrounded me to practice their communication in English.

The visit to Dharavi has just abetted me to overcome various misconception about slum area. I thought the area would be full of filth, poverty, hunger and malnutrition all around but I found people of all age groups have some aim in their life, ready to take chance, hardly sit idle, always eager to learn new things, in short there are happy people.

The best part of my visit was my welcome everywhere. The people don't feel offended when the tourist come to witness their poverty. They feel proud, they don't have enough money yet they smile when you try to talk to them, they respond politely with confidence. They know they have to change their life and come out of this world one day.
Still I am bit apprehensive whether the picture I have been demonstrated about Dharavi is the real picture of the slum area or they were sourced crowd. I noticed few kids not in good health, there were several issues of clean water, safety, security and fresh air which are fundamental necessities of daily life.

I don't know what that was but I loved the visit. I learnt a new refreshing way of living the life. Thanks Dharavi!

6.2. Case study 2

Location: Jind (Haryana)
'India is undefined country, you can't envisage the reality of India unless you have lived its own. The essence of life exists in the economic way of living which can be simply perceived in rural India. The real India resides in villages. They may be poor financially but extreme rich in culture, love, and welcoming the guests. Poverty is not a curse really!'

Henry and Martha two graduate students from Mexico sought after to reconnoitre Indian culture, lifestyle, for their project/research obligations. They have invested their holidays with *ORCBT* in a village *Baroli* in *Jind* district in Haryana.

Fascinated by Indian culture, customs, rituals, and to see the real India closely, both have decided to experience it and stayed in Indian village for two months in a house made up of mud and brick only.

Henry has worked with farmers and learnt about various crops of *Zayad.* He used to wake up very early in morning and go to farms and work with farmers till noon. In scorching heat of almost 40 degree Celsius temperature, they both have learnt how to live without AC and refrigerator. They have learnt a new ecological way of living, where no body waste water, electricity and food. He used to play cricket with local youths and talk to elderly people in evening about Indian politics and history of India.

Martha has learnt the Indian way of cooking, Indian cuisine, festivals, attire, and the best part of her learning was how to manage the money from the village women who has not enough education. She has also worked with women of '*Aanganwadi*' organization where women learn the new ways of small scale businesses.

After a span of two months both Henry and Martha were more responsible, happier, and more self-confident and most of all were a better human being. Poverty lies in mind only, it can be seen easily but people are happy. They have no regret and they are positive about future that their coming generation will be prosperous.

Thanks India! For a wonderful lesson.

6.3. Case study 3

Location: Bhalswa (New Delhi)
New Delhi is not only the capital of India but it is a cultural capital too. This is only city perhaps in India where one can find easily all the colours, traditions, markets which represent entire nation. This is the city where most number of migrant workers come in pursuit of employment. Several large size slum are easily traced in this city. Largest number of NGO are working here for rehabilitation and welfare of slum dwellers. These slum dwellers have contributed lot to the economy of Delhi in form of small scale business. Several politicians, educators and entrepreneurs have been emerged from the narrow streets of Bhalswa.

Professor Cathy Ibrahim a doctor and professor from Oxford University has visited Bhalswa in February 2014 along with her scholars to work for rag-pickers in the region. Bhalswa, the largest slum of north India, is situated in the heart of New Delhi, the capital of India. Like Dharavi, it is a hub of hundreds small scale industries but majority of slum dwellers are migrates from other part of nation like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and from other states.

The entire area is not different from other slum areas. No specific access to clean drinking water, no permanent shelter, illegal power connection, crime and illicit activities are very common. A large number of children between the age group of 5-14 years are engaged in rag picking activity. The strength of such children is almost 10% of the total population of entire Bhalswa.

Professor Cathy has decided to visit the area. Her main objective of the visit was not only to understand the plight of these rag pickers children but also to work for their better social life. She and her scholars identified such hundreds of kids and transformed their way of living. The entire modus operandi was divided into several stages:

a) Identification of children while visiting to dump areas.
b) Contact with their families or relatives to discuss the plan in details
c) Providing basic education, training and basic amenities to children
d) Guiding them for hygienic method of rag picking by gifting them required material like long shoes, gloves, mask etc.
e) Keeping a tab on their health related issues by organizing medical camp regularly and providing required medicine and vaccines free of costs
f) Giving access for basic education free of cost in the odd hours after their work.
g) Providing basic training for children above 15 years of age for various small scale businesses with the partnership of other factories situated in same area.

The entire process was completed in rotation. At a time a group of 7 or 8 scholars along with volunteers from different NGOs have worked in tandem. These scholars have invited several other students, their families and NGO based in other countries to visit, learn and to help these children.

It seems that only these children were benefitted with this unique effort Dr. Cathy told they are surprised with the talent and enthusiasm of those children to learn new things so fast. Their grasping power is no less than ordinary rich kids. Today if you go you may find these educated children as tourist guide for you speaking fluently in English and will tell you the history and other details of the area.

This is not the slum. This is a learning place!

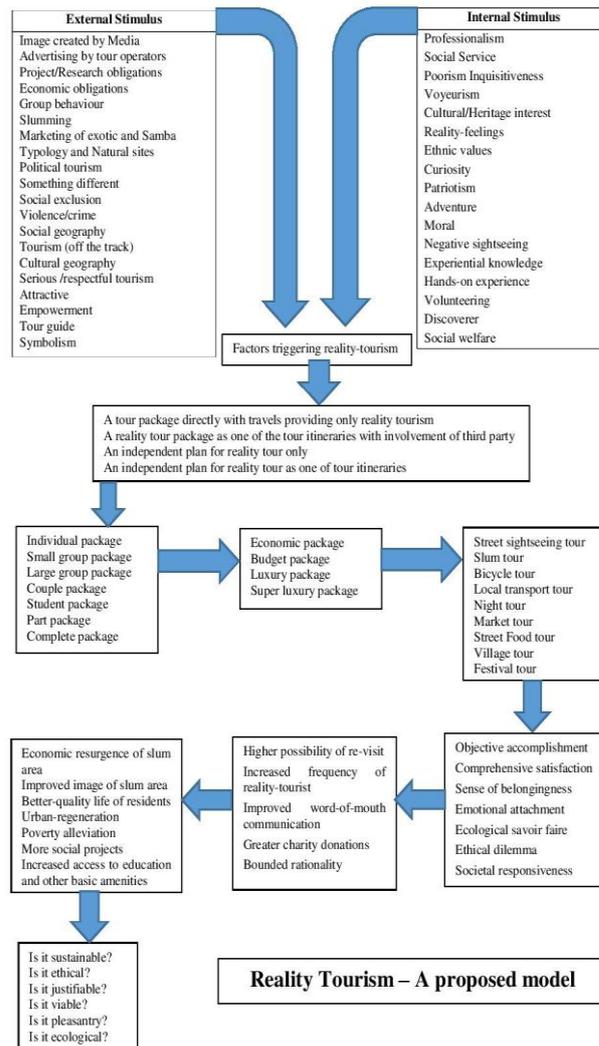## 7. IDENTIFICATION OF VARIABLES AND PROPOSED MODEL

From the case study analysis and direct interaction with the tourists, tour operators and tour guides, several variables have been emerged and noticed, which trigger the scope of reality tourism in India. The tourists want to feel the reality of tourism (MacCannell 1999, p. 92; Freire-Medeiros 2009, Butler 2012). They think that other forms of tourism are utmost similar offered by other commercial tour operators, therefore they need something different (Egner 2006, p. 98) or a tourism which is just off the track (Elsrud 2001, p. 599; Binder 2005; Desforges 2000; Noy 2004). While some of them are very much curious (Simone-Charteris 2009, p. 3) about poverty (Weiner 2008; Gentleman 2006; Danielzik and Khan 2006) and slumming (Koven 2006; Pott and Steinbrink 2009). Another factor which drags the foreign tourists to such type of reality tourism, is the cultural and ethnic values of that country (Ramchander 2004, 2007; Jaguaribe and Hetherington 2004; Margraf 2006, p. 55; Aderhold et al. 2006, p. 144; Pott 2007, p. 10; Rolfes 2010, p. 3), which should be attractive (Wacquant et al. 2014) because of its vast cultural geography (Gebhardt et al. 2003) and social geography (Werlen 2004). Few tourists also want a feel of adventure (Freire-Medeiros 2009) during their touring plan itineraries in form of negative sightseeing (Welz 1993, p. 39) and wants to see the reminiscence of violence/ crime (Machado 2007, p. 72; Menezes 2007; Nassehi 1999, p. 204).

The reality tourism also in demand for various research scholars who are working for social exclusion (Davis 2006), have a flare for social service (MacCannell 1999; Higgins-Desbiolles 2009) or social welfare (Higgins-Desbiolles 2009) and with hands on experience (Freire-Medeiros 2007, p. 62) or experiential knowledge (Matthews 2008, p. 106; Wang 2000), they want to study the lifestyle of people living in slum area to frame various mitigation policies.

Some real tourists can be categorised as discoverer (Urbain 1993; Farı́as 2008, p. 19) who come on a mission of scientific tourism (Pott 2007, p. 137) in pursuit of typologies and natural sites (Stone 2006, p. 145). Still the reality tourism is considered as serious or respectful tourism (Urbain 1993: Farı́as 2008, p. 19) where all the players (the tourists, tour operators and tour guides) together practice as volunteer tourism (Wearing 2001; Wearing and Lyons 2008) feel the privilege and moral (Spencer Brown

1969/1997), for the empowerment (Wattanawanyoo 2012) of people living in slum area.

Figure 1: **Reality tourism – A proposed model**

External Stimulus	Internal Stimulus
Image created by Media	Professionalism
Advertising by tour operators	Social Service
Project/Research obligations	Poorism Inquisitiveness
Economic obligations	Voyeurism
Group behaviour	Cultural/Heritage interest
Slumming	Reality-feelings
Marketing of exotic and Samba	Ethnic values
Typology and Natural sites	Curiosity
Political tourism	Patriotism
Something different	Adventure
Social exclusion	Moral
Violence/crime	Negative sightseeing
Social geography	Experiential knowledge
Tourism (off the track)	Hands-on experience
Cultural geography	Volunteering
Serious /respectful tourism	Discoverer
Attractive	Social welfare
Empowerment	
Tour guide	
Symbolism	

Factors triggering reality-tourism

A tour package directly with travels providing only reality tourism
A reality tour package as one of the tour itineraries with involvement of third party
An independent plan for reality tour only
An independent plan for reality tour as one of tour itineraries

Individual package	Economic package	Street sightseeing tour
Small group package	Budget package	Slum tour
Large group package	Luxury package	Bicycle tour
Couple package	Super luxury package	Local transport tour
Student package		Night tour
Part package		Market tour
Complete package		Street Food tour
		Village tour
		Festival tour

Economic resurgence of slum area	Higher possibility of re-visit	Objective accomplishment
Improved image of slum area	Increased frequency of reality-tourist	Comprehensive satisfaction
Better-quality life of residents	Improved word-of-mouth communication	Sense of belongingness
Urban-regeneration	Greater charity donations	Emotional attachment
Poverty alleviation	Bounded rationality	Ecological savoir faire
More social projects		Ethical dilemma
Increased access to education and other basic amenities		Societal responsiveness

Is it sustainable?
Is it ethical?
Is it justifiable?
Is it viable?
Is it pleasantry?
Is it ecological?

Reality Tourism – A proposed model

Source: Compiled by author

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Not only has it generated the feelings of patriotism (Simone-Charteris (2009, p. 3) among the tourists but also creates a consciousness in form of heritage tourism (Jamal and Lelo 2009) and political tourism (Simone-Charteris 2009). Another major issues is the communication in the local language, therefore the tour Guide (Curatorial) Butler (2010, 2012) is also one of the important variables which affects the mood and plans of tourists who takes the reality tourism in form of symbolism (Arendt 1990; Walker 2014) as image created by different media through the advertising done by tour operators.

Various tourists go for reality tourism in form of their project or research obligations and some of them also prefers due to economic obligations because of the economic cost of such tourism. On the basis of all these variables a model has been proposed to test the various objectives of study:

7.1. Data analysis and findings

The new trend of tourism in India is reality tours. The Trend has started in 2002 but data is available since 2008 only. A definite predictable relationship has been noticed in the increasing number of reality tourists in India. This can be expressed as a linear equation in form of

Y = - 8270380 + 4120 X

(Where *X* denotes the number of years while *Y* represent the number of tourists going to visit every year). The tours have been organized generally for one or two days, maximum for four days. The preferred season for such tourism is from October to March.

Figure 2: **Number of tourists**
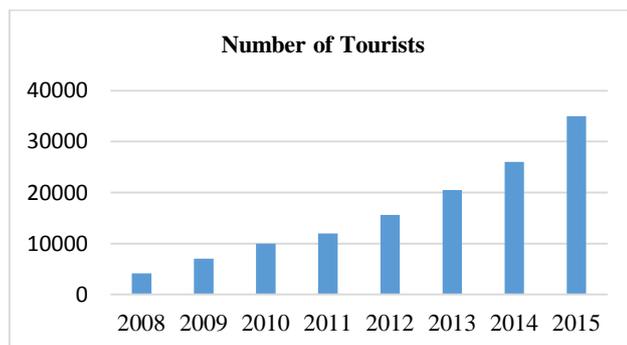
Source: Compiled by author

The demographic details about the reality tourists is quite different and interesting. The majority of the tourists are between 25-45 age groups. They prefer to visit in smaller groups which is also one of the constraints from the tour operators. Some of them preferred solo visit while some of them come as couple. Photography is strictly prohibited. As far as the objectives behind such off beat tourism, there are several

reasons intrinsic and extrinsic but on a majority part the research obligations and a sense of social service draw the attention of foreign tourists to visit India for reality tourism.

Figure 3: **Demograpfic profile of tourist**

Demographic Profile of Tourist
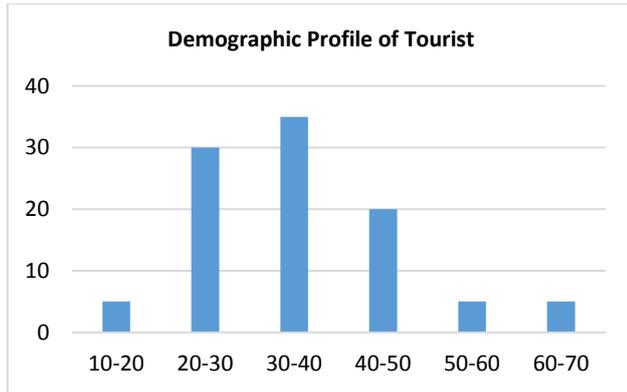
Source: Compiled by author

This category of tourist demands for a unique experience of holidays sans any type of luxury contradictory to that of the difficulties raised by mass tourists (Weaver, 1998, p. 31). Another changes have been noticed in contemporary tourism industry like, tourists visit in smaller group or individual group, more flexibility in terms of packaging, more inclination towards nature and reality of life & people, and real forms of tourism (Mowforth and Munt, 1998).

Figure 4: **Reason for involving in real tourism**

Reason for involving in real tourism

- Reseach work
- Curiosity
- Social service
- Voyeurism
- Experiential
- Discovery
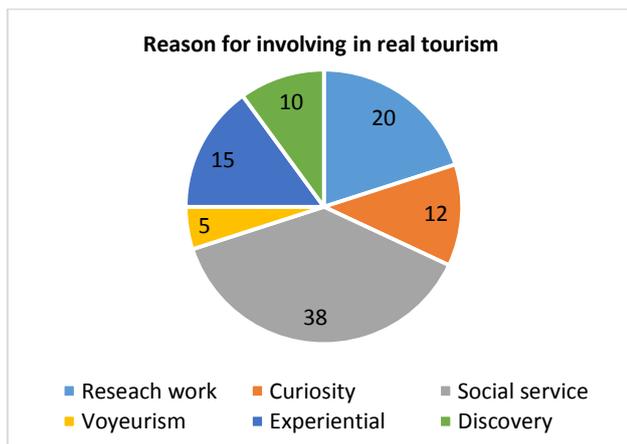
Source: Compiled by author

One of the interesting reasons behind success of such reality tourism about the increasing role of mass media dealings to such slum areas. A Brazilian crime drama 'Cidade de Deus' or 'City of God' which was released in 2002 and in 2009, the 'Slumdog Millionaire' academy award winner for best film have stimulated the world tourists to investigate the reality of repugnance and poverty of slum areas (Urry 2002, Freire-Medeiros 2009 pp. 582–583; Machado 2007, p. 72). The Dharvai has been come into picture to the world's reality tourist through a book 'Shantaram' written by Gregory David Roberts in 2003 (Meschkank, 2011)

8. DEBATE SURROUNDING REALITY TOURISM (CHALLENGES AND CRITICISM)

Several questions have been raised about the conceptual objectives behind such categories of tourism. How can a visitor spend his or her thousands of dollars in visiting the scarcity, nudity and sexuality of poor people? There are many scholars who has asked about the specific goal of such exercises. Some of the reality tour operators advertise and provide the details about the morbidity of poor people living in slum areas, they write about the plight of economic conditions, the repugnant picture of one of the sections of society as the main theme for tourist attraction. But there is no literary work to support these presumptions.

Several tour operators working in reality tourism in Favela, Dharavi and other parts of the world have given a new directions to this pro-poor tourism. They are using such tourism as the means of welfare of such societies (Booyens 2010; Koens 2012; Ramchander 2007; Rogerson 2004, 2008, 2013, Frenzel 2014). The majority of their profit goes to school education, cleanliness of streets, health related issues. These tour operators never focus repugnance and paucity of resources to these people in front of tourists, neither this is obvious part of agenda of their tours' itineraries.

Majority of research has tried to prove that the reality tourism is focused on mitigation of poverty and it is a pure economic activity (Frenzel 2013), and it has established an eloquent connection between tourism and poverty (Scheyvens 2010). Now the tourism has been become a boon for such areas and has also become a means of social welfare (Higgins-Desbiolles 2009).

Also several cases have been noticed where, poor girls have been educated and informed well about the use of sanitary napkins and how to maintain hygiene during the menstrual cycle periods, sometimes even they have been provided a training how to make those napkins at home with used and waste material. Young boys, males and women have been trained and advised about various STDs and how to take precautions. They have been also provided help how to make a comparatively better house with minimum investment. It can be observed easily some areas in Dharavi and Sanjay Colony are nice example of economic buildings.

CONCLUSION

The concept of reality tourism in India is new and extensive. Very few independent players are involved in this so far but it has enormous potential. Since it targets niche category of travellers who are interested in visiting slum and poverty ridden areas, it is not luxury tourism and it is not a cash cow like other categories of tourism. Even the objectives and focus of tourist are not same. Poverty look same in all areas but the reason and lifestyles are different.

Therefore in the standardized survey of reality tourists in four different cities, the focus was given on qualitative study. However the findings provide significance results about the aim and objectives behind such tourism. Yes no doubt the tourists perceive an image of the poverty and nudity before their visit but while returning they have a sense of responsibility, belongingness and satisfaction. There is no poverty, no hunger, no negative image about Dharavi or other township in the advertisement given by various tour operators yet the advertisements have been dominated by lifestyles of poor people, informal or marginal settlements, and impulses for socio-economic development. The main emphasis of reality tourism has been given to show the innovativeness and creativity of slum people in various business ideas, infrastructure, unaided projects, taste and foods, and various other economic activities.

This is not the other half of the world where people live in area full of shit, crime and violence but this area proves how bravely people are tackling the shortage of funds in their life with their hard work. People are happy because their wants are limited and they are eager to learn the new ways of living. Their eyes are full of pride, confident voice and no-fear approach simply drags the attention of the tourists. They only need the education, right direction and little financial support, there is no dearth of talent or enthusiasm.

The local guides (Young chaps who are residents of slum only) are the most authentic sources for conversation with the local residents of slum area. These tour guides know what to show to tourists and where to go also they do not hide any information which has been asked by tourists. The best way to visit the slum area either a bicycle tour or to walk along the narrow ally of slum areas. The tour operators prefers to make small groups of tourists for the visit also advise to have enough drinking water, some eatables, sanitizer and few towels during the visits. It is also advisable to have light canvas shoes and while walking always watch your steps. Not to try to feed any street animals (cows, buffaloes and dogs) neither try to play with them. It is also advised not to make fun of people clan in funny attire, not to stare at women who may not be in complete attire and no for photography.

The tour operators have already developed few point of contacts in different slum areas where the smooth interaction takes place between tourists and local residents known as contact zones (Freire-Medeiros 2007, p. 69). It is good for the tour operators because they fulfil the promise done to the tourists but sometimes it creates the monotonous impact on the tourists. Therefore it is very difficult to analyse the true impact of reality tourism on the lifestyles of local residents.

These all three case studies also narrate the same stories about the slum areas. There is a huge differences in the objectives, modus operandi of the visit, tour itineraries, and outcome of the visits. As already discussed that each visit can be regarded as beautiful case study on reality tourism but the case studies mentioned here provides three different scenario.

The first case study narrates the daily life routine of Dharavi, it is one of the major business hub of small scale industry in economy capital of India Mumbai. The visit to Dharavi is a symbol of people without money but are happy. They are laborious, work hard for better life but a lot is required to make their life healthy and hygienic.

Another case study tells about a village in India. It is said that real India lives in their villages. One can really harness the charm of Indian tradition and modesty by living among the villages only. Every day is a new hope for them, they are not educated yet well versed in various techniques in farming and dairy industry. Still the basic amenities are beyond the reach of a common villager.

And the third case study tells about the humanity and social service being done by several volunteers from various parts of the world in the heart of India, New Delhi slum areas. The residents of areas are being provided different services and training for a better livelihood.

I don't know what is the reality tourism meaning to the rest of world? But in India it is a boon for the people residing in a hope for a better tomorrow. The tourist don't come here mere for sightseeing, poverty, nudity or morbidity, they have respect for them, and they want to do something for them for themselves. Simply 'Hands that serve are holier than the lips that pray'

यो मां पश्यती सर्वत्र सर्व चः मयि पश्यती

तस्याहम न प्रणश्यामी सः च मे न प्रणश्यति

"He who sees me everywhere, and sees everything in Me, he never gets separated from Me, nor do I get separated from him" - Bhagwat Geetha Ch. VI verse 30.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The topic is too extensive and interested and provides a profound consequence for majority of the tourism players and policy makers. Since the limitation of time and space only three of the five sections of research phases have been covered in this section of study. Different variables in the proposed model will be analysed and a covariance among observed factors will help the policy makers to draw some productive strategies for such tourism. This will be given in second part of this study.

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