



# A STUDY OF FACTORS LIMITING THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ALWAR DISTRICT

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## ABSTRACT

The states of India encourage tourism for the motive of revenue generation and the interchange of cultural ethos. People all around the world are travelling to enjoy the majestic views of mountains and forts, relish the scenic beauty of waterfalls, natural flora and fauna etc. The developing countries of the world enjoy the maximum tourist attraction due to several factors. These countries are less expensive and do not put an extra burden on the pockets of travellers and are less explored giving the tourists a chance of discovering themselves as well as new destinations. Our country, India has been bestowed with lofty Himalayan Mountains, the Thar Desert and islands of the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, Western and the Eastern Ghats and several other exquisite natural features making it a favorable tourist destination. India owns immense vast cultural, social, and religious diversity which is a result of a blend of various cultures like British, Mughals and native cultures over a long period of time. The rich past of India gives us the possibility to transform the nation into a tourism hub. India, a country of diversities and an amalgamation of various cultures like Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism, Parsis etc, has transformed the land of India according to their own sets of architecture. The plethora of diversity makes it clear that tourism is a promising field for the development of the nation. The study area of our research is Alwar district and has been studied qualitatively with the help of the Annual Tourism Progress Result published by the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation. This paper will going to analyze the factor limiting the tourism development in the study area.

*Key Words: Tourism, Revenue Generation, Cultural Ethos, Employment, Amalgamation* **Introduction**

The state of Rajasthan has also been a hotspot for tourists from all over the world. Alwar district is the gateway city of Rajasthan and also an NCR district that attracts tourists from the National Capital and adjoining areas. The district has the Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary which hosts a large chunk of tourists from every corner of the world. The wildlife sanctuary is one of the oldest tiger reserves in the state apart from the Ranthambore National Park.

Apart from Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary, the district is blessed with the several heritage monuments like Neemrana Fort Palace, Siliserh Lake Palace, Bala Quila, City Palace, Moosi Maharani ki Chhatri, temples surrounded by hills and small waterfalls and fountains like Pandoopol, Bhartrihari Temple, Narayani Mata Temple, Tijara Jain Temples and architectural marvels like Chand Baoli Stepwell, etc.

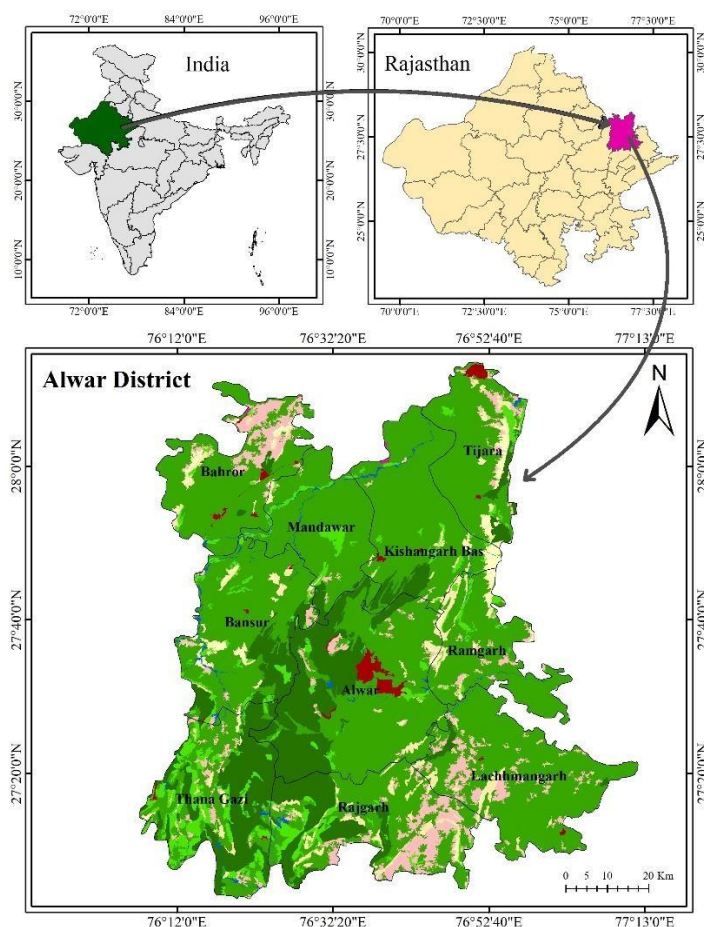
Alwar which used to attract tourists in large numbers is facing a crisis of tourists which is reflected in the low-income growth of the persons involved in the tourism sector. Tourism provides ample opportunities for employment and revenue generation but our study area has shown a decline in the numbers of tourists and income generation.

This paper will be going to analyze the reason behind the fluctuation in the number of tourists and how the trend of the number of tourists has been oscillating throughout the years. The paper will also highlight the steps taken by the district administration and the state government in the promotion of tourism in the district.

### ***Study Area***

Our study area i.e., Alwar district is located in the state of Rajasthan. It is present in the North Western part of the state. The latitudinal and longitudinal extent of the district is  $27^{\circ}4'$  to  $28^{\circ}4'$  N and  $76^{\circ}7'$  to  $77^{\circ}13'$  E respectively. Alwar is situated in the middle of both New Delhi and Jaipur. The district is surrounded with the Aravali hills and it is a distinguished feature of the district. Alwar district harbors many natural areas like Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary which provides habitat to many wildlife creatures like tigers, deers, swamp deers, monkeys etc. There are various seasonal rivers passes through the district which rejuvenates during the monsoon period like Ruparel and Sabi river.

Fig 1. Map of Alwar district



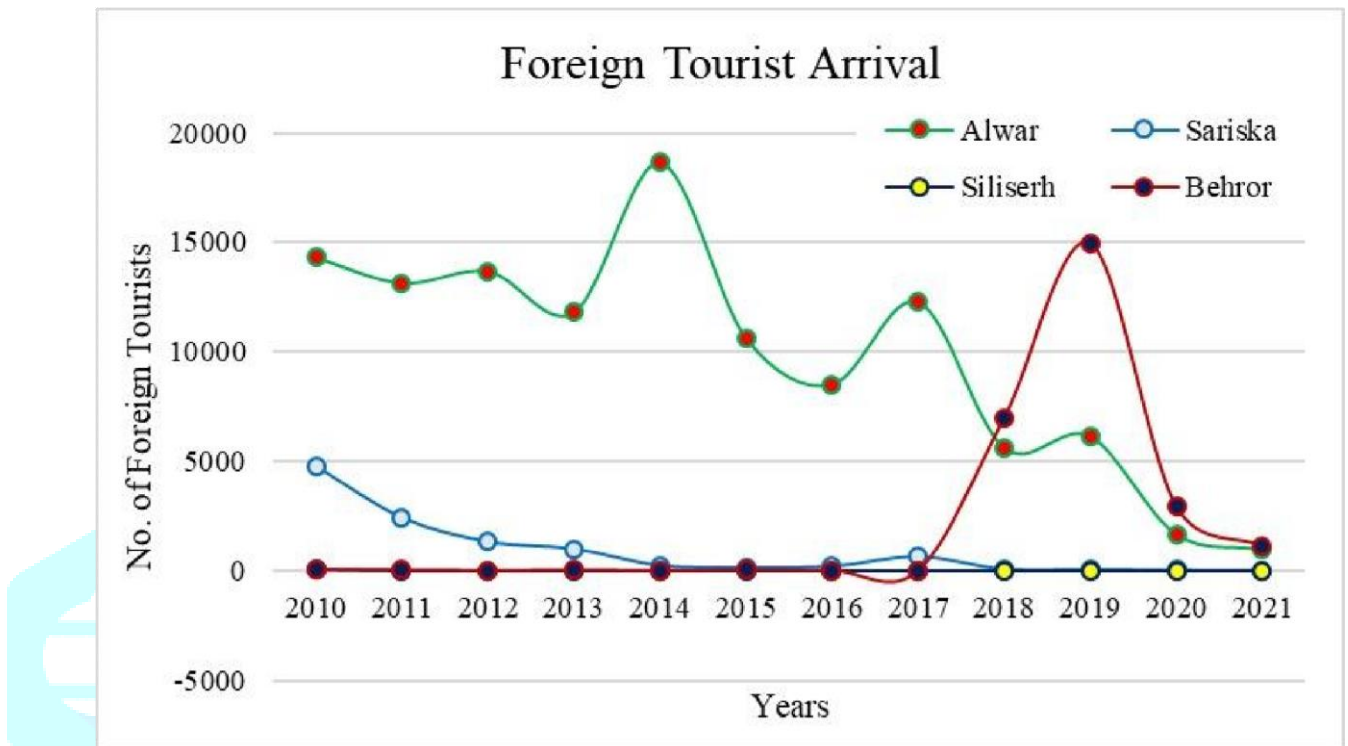
### ***The unstable pattern of the number of tourists in the district***

A tourist destination builds its reputation over years owing to the mouth publicity and other significant factors but the occurrence of some mishappenings in the area hampers the reputation of that district like thefts, robberies, kidnapping, crimes against women etc. Alwar district is surrounded by the Haryana on the North and North-Western side and Bharatpur on the eastern side. The connectivity of Alwar to other states gives criminals sufficient opportunity to escape to other states. This gives an edge to criminals but becomes a huge problem for the district administration as the police agencies often find it difficult to catch the criminals. Alwar district for several years has faced the charges of being a crime city all over India. This is because several incidents happened in all these years which has attracted the attention of most the Indians.

Foreign tourists try to explore the regions which are less explored and have a rich culture, magnificent heritage, diverse flora and fauna and biodiversity. Alwar district has been a hot spot for foreign tourists during the 2000s. The number of foreign tourists arriving in the Alwar district has not shown a gradual pattern of an increasing number of foreign. The number of foreign tourists has increased from 2013 to 2014 but has been continuously decreasing in the district till the year 2021. A major reason for the decline in the number of tourists may be due to the reputation of other major tourists hub in Rajasthan i.e., Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Udaipur. Another reason can be the increase in the number of crime cases in the district of Alwar. Behror a major destination for

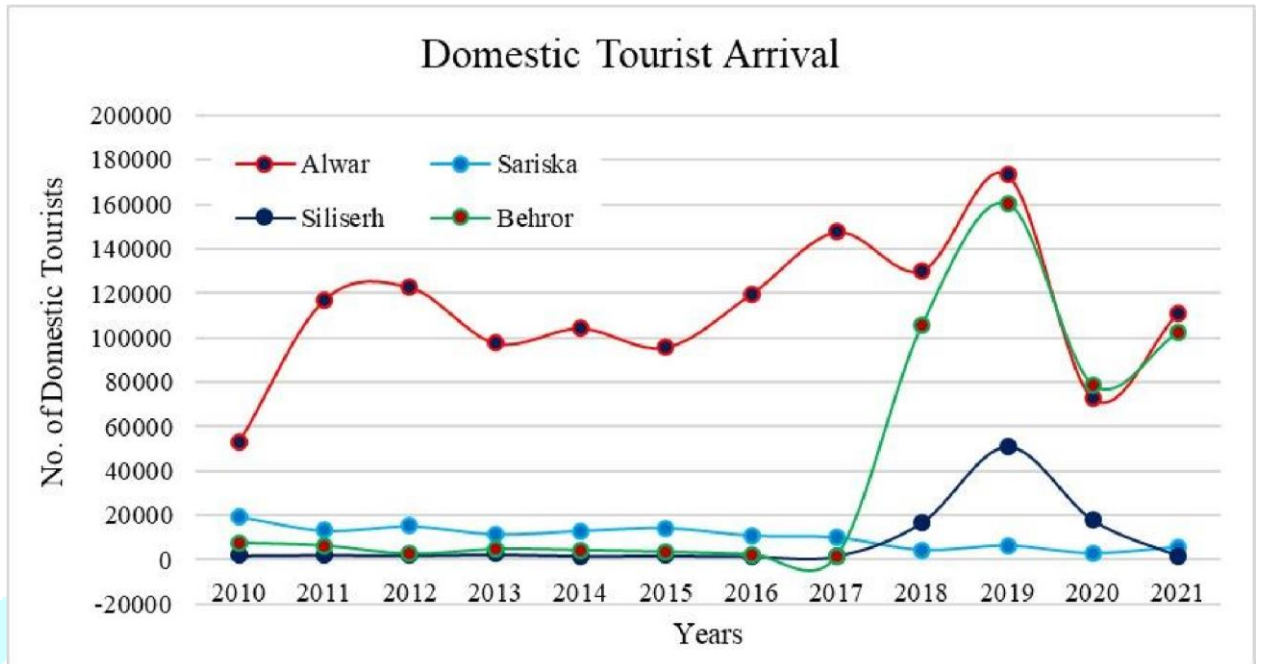
the travellers to stay between en-route Delhi and Jaipur has shown an increase in the year 2019 but then again decreased in the next year.

Fig 2. Line Graph showing the arrival of Foreign tourists in the selected spots of Alwar



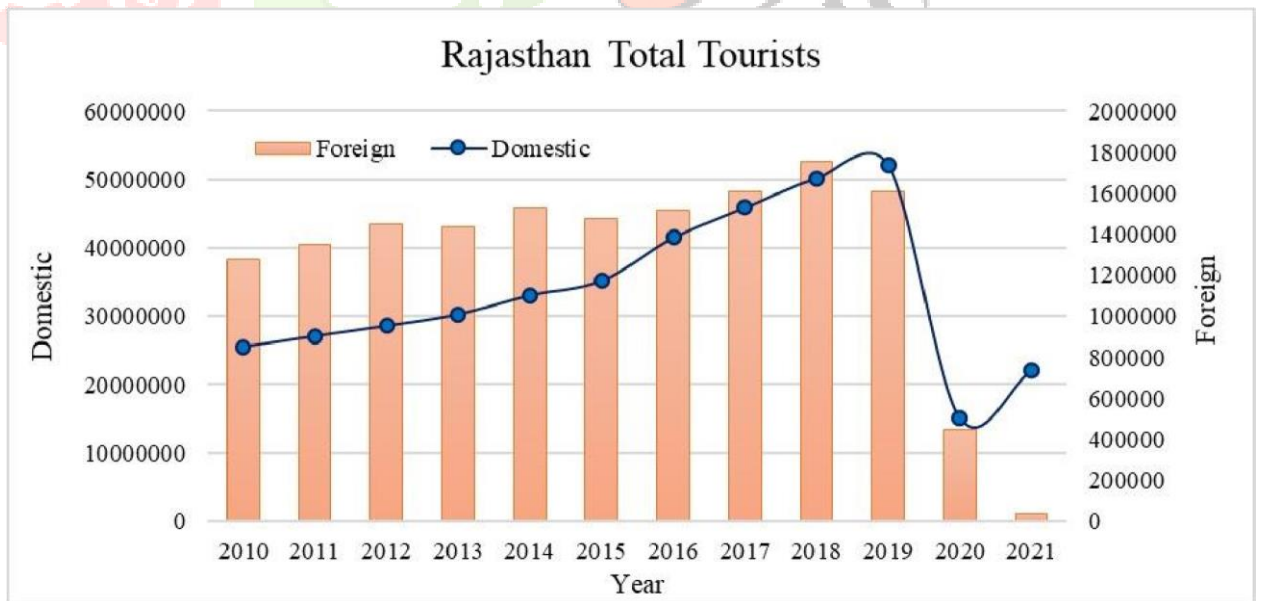
Alwar has been an important destination for domestic tourists since it has been the closest destination to the National Capital Region (NCR). Situated around 150 km from the National Capital, New Delhi and around 140 km from the state capital Jaipur it is been a major tourist hotspot. The better connectivity, presence of Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary having rich biodiversity and flora and fauna, tiger and bird watching site and ancient pilgrimage sites have made Alwar an attractive tourist destination.

Fig 3. No of domestic tourists visiting the Alwar district



If we compare to Rajasthan state, the total number of tourists declined was around 70% in Alwar district whereas in Rajasthan it was increased to 33%. If we analyze the domestic and foreign tourists, there will be a huge decline in domestic tourists in Alwar region compared to Rajasthan. The state administration and district administration have to take steps to increase the number of tourists in the Alwar district.

Fig 4. No. of foreign and domestic tourists in Rajasthan





There are several factors which have halted the number of tourists in Alwar. The first is the incidence of obstruction of road and railway networks in the state of Rajasthan due to ongoing demands of the Gujjar community for reclassification and reservation of jobs in 2010. The prolonged stir by the Gujjar community has forced domestic and foreign tourists to cancel their bookings and reservations to the city and visit to the district. This has led a bad impression of districts. Due to the tiger reallocation that happened in 2008, the tourist inflow has been increased to 50% but due to the agitation of the Gujjar community, has affected 99% of the business in the tourism industry.

The tourists also get diverted to the Ranthambore National Park which has been situated in the nearby district of Alwar i.e. Sawai Madhopur. The presence of the Ranthambore National Park and its magnum status of being a very renowned tiger reserve diverts the tourist coming to Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary. Although the area of Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary is comparatively higher than Ranthambore but it has lost its sheen during the phase of 2000-2005 when the number of tigers almost get diminished in the sanctuary. The Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary has an advantage over the Ranthambore wildlife sanctuary in that Sariska is very nearby to Delhi-NCR as compared to Ranthambore. The district administration has to harness this advantage.

Another reason for the tourist's downfall in the district is the increase in the number of criminal cases in the district. The district has shown the worst cases of mob lynching and hate crimes.

In the year 2017, a dairy farmer belonging to the neighbouring district of Nuh situated in the state of Haryana was lynched by a group of 200 cow vigilantes on the charges of cow smuggling. In the same year in November, Ummar Khan was shot dead while bringing cows to his village from Alwar.

Another case was reported in July 2018 when Rakhbar Khan has been succumbed to his injuries after being beaten up by cow vigilantes.

Another shocking incident of gang rape took place in the Thanagazi tehsil of Alwar which has raised eyebrows all over the country and the issue got heated in the state legislative assembly.

Recently another gang rape has taken place in January 2021 of a 16-year-old girl in the city. These all-reoccurring incidents have flattened the image of a district which was once a major tourist hub of the state. This can be shown with the data that the number of foreign tourists arriving in

### ***Need of the hour is the revival of the Alwar as a major tourist spot***

The major advantage of our research area is that it is the closest district to our national capital and state capital i.e., New Delhi and Jaipur respectively. The national highway connecting Delhi and Jaipur passes through Alwar but not from the city but from the peripheral areas of Alwar making it inaccessible to the tourists travelling from Delhi to Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary. A major chunk of the population travelling to Alwar district visits Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary. It is a distinguishing characteristic of our research area.

Alwar district has some other historical monuments having marvellous architecture and rich heritage and history. The district administration and state government should renovate these monuments and project these architectural buildings as the main highlights of the tourism in Alwar district. The Moosi Maharani ki Chhatri is a stepwell kind pond in the city which has the potential to attract tourists to the city but it always remains filthy, it needs proper maintenance and surveillance to remain clean throughout the whole year. The rainwater from the nearby Aravalli hills gets collected in the pond and makes it beautiful. The district administration has cleaned the stepwell and pond and started the facility of boating for the visitors.

In the same manner, there is another stepwell i.e., Laal Diggi in the city of Alwar. Due to less rainfall and the negligence of the local administration this site which is more than 400 years old is on the brink of losing its glory. Every year many local people and NGOs try to clean it but the condition of this stepwell remained the same. The local administration some few years ago have started the boating services and started the light show to attract the visitors. But there were not sufficient results. These are the hidden gems of the district which require deliberate attention and strategic actions.

It is the lack of infrastructural facilities and management of district administration and the spread bad mouth of publicity of Alwar district which has led to the decline of tourists.

The lakes such as Siliserh, Jaisamand, Vijay Mandir are facing water shortages due to erratic rainfall and climate change. If we need to make our district and these natural places more beautiful, we have to focus on increasing the green cover of the city. This step will be going to save the rainwater and will make the city greener and more beautiful. The increased tree cover will absorb the excess pollution. There should be a chain of green trees around these lakes which will going to provide the shed to the tourists and will retain the groundwater. The increased tree cover will also be going to bring more rainfall and will increase the level of water in the lakes.

The fort palaces like Hill Fort Kesroli and Neemrana Fort provide the tourists and visitors with an experience of leisure and comfort after travelling from far places. People coming from Delhi and adjoining areas stay at these palaces and they provide them with a place for recreation. This should be promoted under the aegis of leisure tourism. Another new infrastructural building has been constructed near the Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary i.e., Utsav Camp. This site provides nature lovers with a site for bird sightings and having dinner under the stars. Utsav Camp is an eco-hotel which should be promoted as a tourist destination for nature lovers travelling to Sariska. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is a model which has the potential to boost tourism.

Although the religious and mythological places in Alwar are very famous among the local people they still lack the attention of visitors outside the district. The development of pilgrimage tourism needs intensive development of shelter homes, dharamshalas, and lodges adjoining the pilgrimage sites. The places like Bharthari, and Narayani Mata attracts a large number of tourists during the picking season. These sites should be renovated with the help of government aid and local support of the people and should be promoted as other well-developed pilgrimage sites in India. A temple like Pandupol Maharaj situated amid of Aravali hills showcases immense beauty during

the monsoon period but the arrangements near the temple are not properly organized and they lack the proper infrastructure near the temple.

### ***Initiatives taken by State Government and district administration to boost the tourism***

Analyzing the potential of tourism to boost the economy and create tourism as a brand for the development of Rajasthan, the state granted the status of industry to the tourism sector in 1989 becoming the first state to do so. This initiative has set a path for the upcoming years in which Rajasthan has promoted tourism with various measures, programs and policies.

“Rajiv Gandhi Tourism Development Mission” was launched in the year 2001 by the State Government to give an impetus to the tourism sector. This has led to foreshadowing the rapid progress in tourism development in Rajasthan. There was a need to target the bull’s eye in the tourism sector, hence the Government launched the “Tourism Policy of Rajasthan” in 2001 becoming one of the first states to do so. It has paved the way for Rajasthan Tourism Policy, 2020 aiming to make Rajasthan a global destination for tourists and travellers.

The Recent Ecotourism Policy of the state released in the year 2021 states the future potential of nature-based tourism in the state and utilizing it for the revenue generation and helping the local and indigenous community. The policy and its better implementation will definitely be going to boost the rural economy.

These all are initiatives taken at the state level and reflect the top to bottom approach but to increase the tourist inflow we have to work on the bottom to up approach. The district administration has to work on the alteration of the behavioral structure and thinking process of the people of the district. To reduce the crime rate, the population has to become more aware and should act in a fast manner if something unusual happens.

The infrastructure facilities near the major tourist sites should be developed in such a manner that it solves both problems i.e., availability of world-class staying facilities and at the same time not harming the environment. The state tourism department has to promote the district with the same enthusiasm as the other districts and the district administration should have to prepare a roadmap for the tourism development and promote the tourism sites according to their characteristics.

If the study area, Alwar district has to become a major tourist destination again, there is a need for cohesive management and integration of the local population as well as district administration.



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