

# Chapter 10

## Development of Positioning Taxonomy for a Tourist Destination Ladakh, India

**Natasha Saqib**

*University of Kashmir, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Positioning strategies designed by organizations for the destinations might fail when implemented if they are designed from the organization's perspective and not from the consumers' perspective. The chapter develops a positioning taxonomy for a tourist destination by measuring the perception and satisfactions of consumers of the tourism product of Ladakh, India and identifies potential niche markets that could be used in the development of the destination's positioning strategy. Self-completion questionnaires were distributed to tourists visiting the region. Data from 468 completed questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively. Results indicate three positioning strategies for the tourist destination: adventures and sports, natural attractions, and cultural attractions. Also four possible niche markets are identified that can inform the development of the destination's positioning strategy: adventure tourism, cultural tourism, nature-based tourism, and wildlife tourism.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism, the generic concept, is defined as the travel for entertainment, and offering all services relating to this activity (World Tourism Organization, 2007). Travel & Tourism is an important economic activity in almost every country of the world. This sector has a direct impact on an economy of a country, the sector has reflected

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significant indirect and induced impacts over the past six decades; tourism has experienced continued expansion and diversification, to become one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world. According to the United Nations World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) 2015, the Travel & Tourism sector reported 2.8 per cent growth in 2015. While traditionally Europe and America have remained high among the tourism markets, new emerging markets are expected to witness high growth in international tourist visits over the next decade. The WTO forecast indicates an increasing tourism preference towards East Asia, the Pacific, West Asia and South Asia. With 279 million tourist arrivals, nearly one fourth of the world's total international tourists in 2016, Asia and the Pacific is the second most visited region in the world with a 6 per cent growth rate. It is above the 4 per cent global average. Asia and the Pacific continues to consolidate its position as one of the fastest growing regions in the world that is expected to increase its share of global tourism to 30 per cent in 2030 accounting for an estimated 535 million international arrivals. In Asia, China has emerged as a leading tourist destination and is poised to become the world's top tourist destination by 2020. The WTTC has also identified India in Asia as one of the world's foremost tourist growth centres in the coming decade. India with its diverse states having rich scenic beauty offers huge opportunities for growth and development of the tourism sector. India is a country of all reasons and all seasons, full of different natural resources and varieties of tourist destinations and one such tourist destination is Ladakh.

### **Ladakh: Tourist Destination**

Jammu and Kashmir the northern-most state of India comprises of three very distinct special regions i.e. Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. All the three distinct regions of the state have immense potential for tourism for both domestic and international tourists. Ladakh, a word which means "land of high passes", is a region in the state of Jammu & Kashmir of Northern India sandwiched between the Karakoram mountain range to the north and the Himalayas to the south and is situated at the height of 11,400 ft. The Indian portion of Ladakh is composed of the Leh and Kargil districts. The Leh district is the second largest district of India, covering more than half the area of Jammu and Kashmir, of which it is the eastern part. Ladakh hosts three mighty parallel mountainous ranges of the Himalayas: the Zaskar, the Ladakh and the Karakoram Ranges. Between these, the rivers Shayok, Indus and Zaskar flow.

Since region is without industries and its natural resources are difficult to exploit, tourism offered seductive economic possibilities and therefore Tourism was abruptly introduced in Ladakh with inadequate planning primarily to foster economic development and growth. The economy of district to a large extent is dependent on tourists arriving from all parts of the world. Today Ladakh is known as one of

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