



NEED OF A STRUCTURE DESIGN TO CONDUCT AN ANALYSIS OF THE MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONVENTIONS, AND EXHIBITIONS SECTOR IN INDIA

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Abstract

This article reviews the key literature that is currently available regarding the meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions sector in India, its composition, and current trends and issues that are occurring within the sector and the tourism industry generally, and more particularly, within the Indian region. The meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions sector is a vital component of the tourism industry within the regions in India. The sector can assist the regions in achieving the objectives of both the Indian Regional Economic Development Strategy and the Indian Tourism Strategy 2025. At this moment, very little is known about the composition of the sector, Tourist visits for meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions purposes, or issues and trends of the regions of the country. Similarly, there has been no formal strategic planning undertaken for the sector. Without informed forward planning, it is unlikely that the industry will meet its full potential. The article reviews the current literature regarding meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions and strategic planning. From this literature, a framework has been developed for collecting the data required to conduct a comprehensive situational analysis of the Indian MICE Industry, meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions sector. This framework and the process by which it is currently being utilized within the India region are outlined.

Keywords: *Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions, strategic planning, India.*

Introduction

The meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions (MICE) sector is a vital part of the tourism industry within the regions in India. MICE tourist is recognized as highly beneficial for destinations of the country. They are commonly recognized as being high-yield tourist, with minimum negative environmental and socio-cultural impact. The term “MICE sector” is contestable and debatable and is referred to by several other names, including the meetings segment, Meetings, Convention, and Exhibitions (MCE), conventions industry, and business events sector. The name adopted has implications for what types of events are included within the study (Rogers, 2003).

A few new concepts, which have already won accolades from the travelers, include the likes of Eco – Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Wedding Tourism and the likes. MICE Tourism (or Tourism related to Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) is one such concept, which has started gaining momentum in recent times. As per the World Tourism Organization, there will be ten billion international travelers by 2020 and it is estimated that Business travel will account for approximately 14% of all international travel.

Within India, it is generally known as the Mice industry. MICE has been selected as the most appropriate name for this study, as it is inclusive of each of the components in the acronym ‘MICE’ and has widespread understanding within the academic society. This article provides an overview of the process that has led to the development of a framework for conducting a situational analysis for a regional MICE sector. The framework outlined is currently being implemented within the Indian



regions as part of a larger development. The ultimate goal of the article is to develop a strategic plan for the MICE sector for the regions in India. The process by which this strategic plan is being developed is included in this article. This article begins by highlighting how important the MICE sector is to the Indian region and how it has been identified in two important strategy documents as an aspect of the tourism industry to be developed within the region. The next section discusses the importance of strategic planning for the sector and identifies the model that is to form the basis of a framework. The model being utilized identifies key areas of information that are required before any strategic planning can commence. Accordingly, the next section discusses the composition of the sector along with key issues and trends arising from the model that are relevant for the MICE sector. An abbreviated version of the resulting framework is presented before a summary of the next stages of the overall research process.

Methodology

1. Research Design: A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining quantitative data analysis with policy review.
2. Data Collection
 - i. Primary Data: Interviews with MICE industry experts, event organizers, and government officials.
 - ii. Secondary Data: Reports from the Ministry of Tourism, ICPB, MICE industry reports, and market intelligence platforms.
3. Data Analysis Framework
 - a. Growth Rate Analysis (Year-wise and City-wise CAGR computation)
 - b. Visualization Techniques: Graphs and Bar Charts.

Research Background

The concept of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing and Exhibitions) tourism in India is the result of globalization and economic reforms. People have been gathering in the form of meetings since the beginning of time. Many Archaeologists in India have found primitive ruins that were used for specific gathering places by ancient tribes to discuss many topics including hunting plans, war time activities, crop harvesting, or the planning of community celebrations they were particularly known as Sabha and samiti. The current day MICE Tourism targets the high-volume travelers who travel for attaining specific professional objectives.

Tourism is an important component of the India's economy. As per the monthly estimates prepared by Ministry of Tourism, FEEs from tourism in India in 2022 in ` terms were ` 1,39,935 crore as compared to ` 65,070 crore in 2021 registering a growth of 115.05% in 2022 over 2021. In US \$ terms, FEEs(Foreign Exchange Earnings) from tourism in 2022 were US \$17.611 billion as compared to US \$8.797 billion in 2021 with a growth rate of 100.19%. The FEEs from tourism in India, in ` terms and US\$ terms, during 1991, 2001, 2011-2022(Indian Tourism Statistic Report 2023).

Indian MICE Tourism continues to be one of the major revenue spinners of modern times. Not only does this brings into play the various aspects of tourism into one solid concept but also allows the opportunity for the host city to develop its economy in leaps and bounds. According to UNWTO recognizes the inherent strength of the industry and has been instrumental in identifying and popularizing MICE destinations from across the world. As per ICCA rankings, India has improved its



position substantially in the recent times, when it hosted 175 meetings in 2017 compared to 143 for the previous year, thus leaping and improving its position by seven positions.

Despite the relatively small proportion of MICE tourist to the region, MICE tourists are still regarded as important for the country, and there is a clear desire to further develop the sector. This is due, in part, to the MICE sector being widely acknowledged as a high-yield sector of the tourism industry (Dwyer, 2002; Lau, Milne, & Johnston, 2005; Weber & Ladkin, 2004). The estimated Global market size for MICE is more than USD 808 Bn in 2017 which is going to touch down to 1200 bn in 5 years from now. The estimated market size of MICE in India is Rs 37576 crores in which nearly 60% comes from MICE i.e. meeting, incentive and conference. It is also important to mention that 65% are B2B events. The estimated market size from Event is in the tune of Rs 4800 crores from space rental but it has multiplier impact to economy in terms of accommodation, traveling, communication and advertisement, remuneration to skilled work force etc.

Primary Data Analysis

To establish a structured framework for analysing the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions) sector in India, primary data was collected from various stakeholders, including event government bodies, corporate planners, organizers and hospitality professionals. The data was gathered through surveys, interviews, and observational studies conducted across major MICE cities like New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Goa.

1. Data Collection Methodology

A. Sample Size & Respondents

1. Total Respondents: 100
2. Categories of Respondents:
 - a. Event Organizers (30%)
 - b. Corporate Planners (20%)
 - c. Hotel & Venue Managers (25%)
 - d. Government Officials (ICPB, Ministry of Tourism) (10%)
 - e. Tourism & Travel Agencies (15%)

B. Data Collection Methods

- Online & Offline Surveys (Structured questionnaires)
- In-depth Interviews (With key industry stakeholders)
- Field Observations (At major MICE events in India)

2. Key Findings from Primary Data

A. Challenges in MICE Market Analysis (As Reported by Stakeholders)

Challenge Area	Percentage of Respondents Affected (%)
Lack of centralized data collection	76%
Inconsistent market tracking across cities	70%
Difficulty in forecasting demand trends	65%



Challenge Area	Percentage of Respondents Affected (%)
Limited collaboration between stakeholders	60%
Need for real-time event performance metrics	65%

Insights

- 76% of stakeholders identified a lack of a centralized database to track MICE events, attendance, and revenue.
- 70% reported disparities in city-wise data collection, affecting national-level policy decisions.
- Forecasting demand trends was a major issue for 65% of respondents.

B. Preferred Framework Components for MICE Analysis

Suggested Component	Percentage of Supporters (%)
Centralized event registration & tracking system	80%
Uniform reporting standards for MICE events	75%
Stronger government-private collaboration	69%
Expansion of MICE infrastructure in Tier-2 cities	55%

Insights

- 80% of respondents supported a national-level MICE database for tracking events, attendees, and revenue.
- 75% wanted standardized reporting guidelines to ensure consistent data collection.
- 69% suggested stronger government-private collaboration.

C. City-Wise Stakeholder Sentiment on MICE Growth

City	Positive Outlook (%)	Challenges Reported (%)
New Delhi	85%	Lack of unified MICE policy (40%)
Mumbai	70%	Limited infrastructure for large-scale events (50%)
Bangalore	80%	High operational costs (45%)
Hyderabad	75%	Need for stronger global marketing (55%)
Chennai	72%	Less international connectivity (60%)
Goa	65%	Seasonal demand fluctuations (50%)



Insights

- New Delhi (85%) and Bangalore (80%) showed the strongest positive sentiment toward MICE growth.
- Chennai (60%) and Hyderabad (55%) stakeholders emphasized the need for global outreach programs.

Secondary Data Analysis

India has sound infrastructure in terms of hosting MICE events but there is a need for proper coordination and cohesiveness across different stakeholders for seamless implementation. The good news is the fact that India is identifying and adding cities wherein MICE can be a top draw to boost tourism and pep up economy of the particular location. These cities already have a good infrastructure as far as hosting conferences are concerned and/ or in the process of development. What needs to be done is to improve upon the connectivity, up skill people, empower local level organizations and grow the ecosystem in a focused way. As per latest statistics available from ICCA, the following cities of India has contributed immensely to improving rankings for India.

S. No	Name of the City	Percentage of Growth as per CAGR	For a period of
1	New Delhi	Grew by CAGR of 13.9%	5-Year Period
2	Mumbai	Grew by CAGR of 3.7%	5- Year period
3	Bangalore	Grew by CAGR of 14.5%	4-year period
4	Hyderabad	Grew by CAGR of 8 %	3-year period
5	Chennai	Grew by CAGR of 9.3%	5-year period
6	Goa	Grew by CAGR of 4.7%	5-year period

Source: Study on MICE Market and role of ICPB in promoting MICE Tourism, Ministry of

Tourism, Government of India, 2019

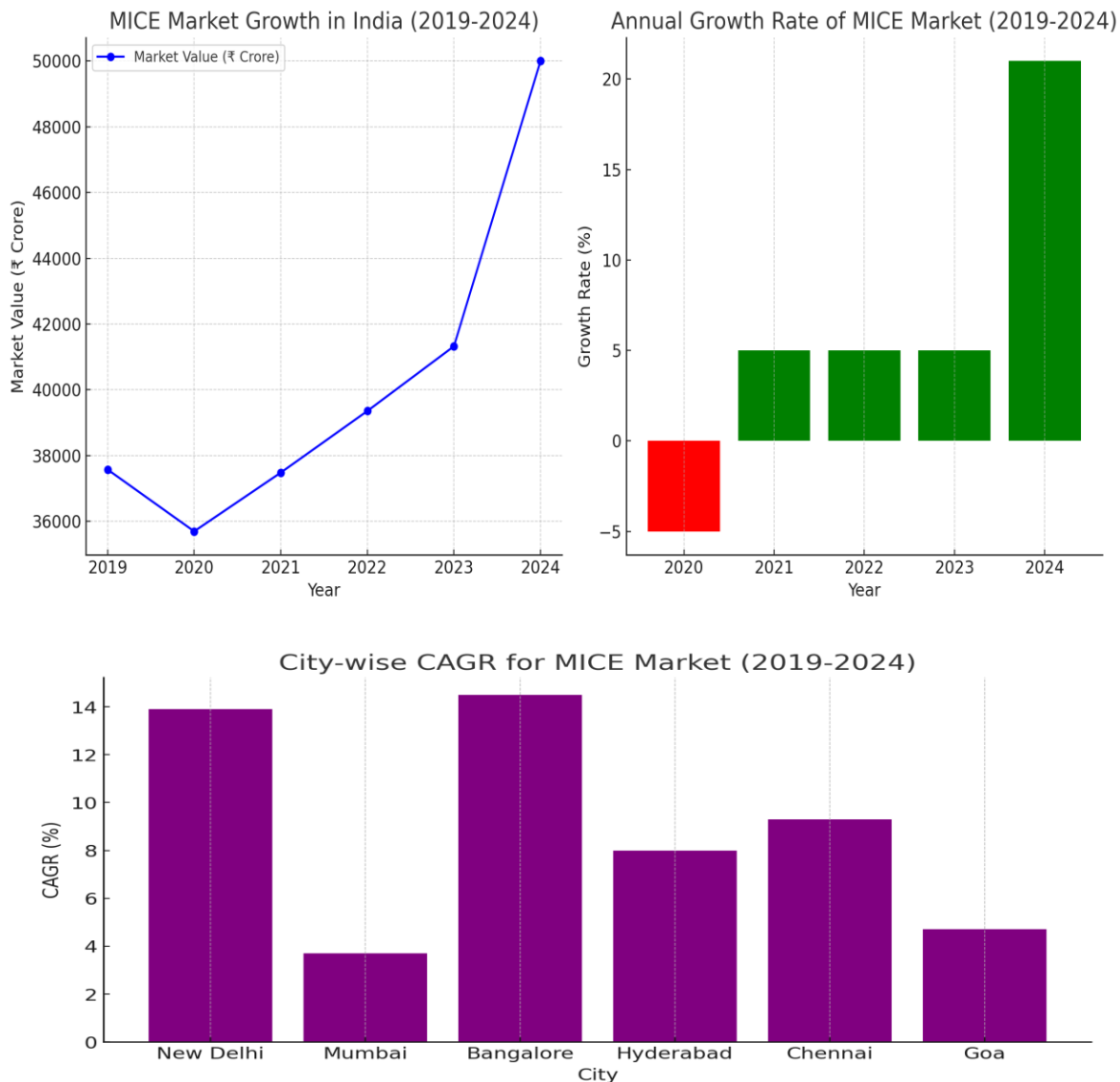
(* CAGR Compound Annual Growth Rate)

The Indian MICE market was valued at approximately ₹37,576 crore in 2019, with 60% of this revenue generated from Meetings, Incentives, and Conferences. By 2024, the market's value increased to around ₹50,000 crore, indicating a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 6%

Year-wise Growth Rates

Year	Market Value (₹ Crore)	Annual Growth Rate (%)
2019	37,576	—
2020	35,697	-5.0
2021	37,482	5.0
2022	39,356	5.0
2023	41,324	5.0
2024	50,000	21.0

Note: The negative growth in 2020 reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the MICE industry. The substantial growth in 2024 is attributed to the resurgence of in-person events and increased government initiatives.



Here are the key insights

1. The market declined in 2020 but recovered steadily, with a sharp rise in 2024.
2. Negative growth in 2020 (-5%) due to COVID-19.
3. Strong recovery from 2021-2023 (~5% growth per year).
4. A major jump in 2024 (21%) as events return in full force.
5. Bangalore (14.5%) and New Delhi (13.9%) lead in growth.
6. Hyderabad (8%) and Chennai (9.3%) also show steady expansion.
7. Mumbai (3.7%) and Goa (4.7%) have slower MICE market growth.

Strategic Planning and Management For Tourism

The benefits of strategic planning for long-term sustainability are well documented (e.g., Gunn & Var, 2002; Hall, 2000b; Inskeep, 1991; Laws, 1995; Oreja Rodriguez, Parra-Lopez, & Yanes-Estvez, 2008; Simpson, 2001) and are not unique to the tourism industry. These benefits include enhanced cooperation and coordination across the industry, which leads to the development of a unique,



satisfying product that can adapt and maintain its appeal for the long term (Hall, 1995). Clearly this is a desirable outcome for the MICE sector in India. The question then becomes, what is involved in developing and implementing a strategic plan for the sector.

Trends and Issues for the Mice Sector

Environmental Issues Environmental issues, particularly global warming, have in recent times been the subject of considerable media attention. The result of this attention has been a perceived pressure on business to be proactive regarding environmental issues and to manage their businesses in an environmentally friendly manner. This is a significant issue for the MICE sector due to the involvement of businesses in the sector as both suppliers and customers. It has resulted in responses to meet the demand for environmentally friendly MICE products, but also for MICE businesses to manage their business in an environmentally friendly manner (Locke, 2007). The most obvious examples of MICE businesses utilizing pro-environment strategies and tactics can be seen in the design and construction of event facilities. The design of modern convention centers now utilizes many pro-environmental features, such as the use of solar panels, natural air flows, and natural lighting (Lawson, 2000). Since 2003, a number of American convention centers have received U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification (Curley, 2008). The first convention center to be certified was the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh. At the time of its certification, it was called the largest green building in the world. The soon-to-be-opened Melbourne Convention Centre, which adjoins the existing Melbourne Exhibition Centre, will form not only the largest convention and exhibition center in Australasia, but is also the first convention center in the world to receive a six-star Green Star environmental rating. It incorporates a range of environmental initiatives that cover everything from energy and water consumption and the building material used, to the quality of the indoor environment (Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre). In addition, an ever-increasing number of tourism and hospitality businesses, including those involved in the MICE sector, are choosing to participate in schemes, such as Carbon zero and Green Globe that demonstrate their commitment to environmental harm minimization (Earthcheck Pvt Ltd and Landcare Research, 2007). Technology Trends It is no secret that significant technological advancements have been made in the last few decades. The advancements that have been made, particularly in the areas of information and communication technology, have had a significant impact on the MICE sector in all parts of the world. Virtual meetings, webcasts, podcasts, teleconferencing, video conferences, distance learning, blogs, and interactive multimedia are becoming increasingly common tools in the corporate world (Braley, 2008; Gecker, 2008; Hinkin & Tracey, 2003a). Within the United Kingdom, Weber and Ladkin (2004) utilized a Delphi study to assess the trends affecting the sector. They found that delegates and event planners increasingly expect to see a high standard of technology in venues and expect to be able to conduct registration and payment for events online. They also found that enhanced communication between event planners, venues, and suppliers has meant that lead times for events are decreasing. A similar trend was also found in the United States during the 2008 Meetings Market Survey conducted by Meetings and Conventions (Braley, 2008). Numerous articles can be found in trade publications such as Meetings and Conventions and Successful Meetings magazines highlighting the ways in which technology can be utilized to improve outcomes for events. One such example is the use of technology to assist in speaker–audience interaction. In September 2008, Experient (an event management company) announced a partnership with Zuku (a web and mobile communications company). This partnership allowed meeting attendees to send comments and questions to speakers as well as participate in surveys and polls via mobile phones (Alderton, 2008).



One trend that is perhaps of most importance to the MICE sector is the move towards telephone, video, and web conferencing. Ford and Peeper (2007), among others, are of the belief that these types of technologies will change the way in which people meet. In contrast is the view that these alternate means of conducting meetings will supplement, rather than replace, face-to-face meetings. Competition and Convention Center Development It is widely acknowledged within the literature that competition to host MICE events has increased dramatically in the past two decades, and it seems likely that this trend will continue (Chen, 2006; Morla & Ladkin, 2007; Ryan et al., 2007; Weber & Ladkin, 2003, 2004). This increase in competition can be seen at two levels within the sector. First, there has been a significant increase in the number of destinations looking to attract MICE events. Weber and Ladkin (2004) observed that new destinations are challenging more mature destinations.

There is a body of literature regarding convention center development. This literature, for the most part, examines the pros and cons of developing a new or expanding an existing convention center (e.g., Clark, 2006; Fenich, 1992, 2002; Morgan & Condliffe, 2006). This literature concluded that developing new or expanding existing convention centers is a significant financial investment, and to be successful in delivering the benefits of MICE tourism requires significantly more than just a convention center

THE FRAMEWORK FOR CONDUCTING A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS As has been shown in the above sections, there are a large number of issues, trends, processes, relationships, and components of the MICE sector that need to be explored in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the sector as it currently stands.

Implementation

Data Collection the next phase is to implement the above framework in order to generate sufficient information to give a comprehensive picture of the current status of both the supply and demand sides of the industry. It is recommended that it is to be conducted using a combination of self-completed questionnaires and structured interviews for the target populations of attendees/delegates, exhibitors, event venues, event managers, event/incentive travel suppliers, and event/incentive travel organizers/sponsors. It is suggested that sample frames for event venues, event managers, and event/incentive travel suppliers be generated by combining information readily available via sources such as the Internet, with information from the Tourism Auckland businesses database. Sample frames for attendees/delegates and organizer/sponsors can be generated by conducting an event inventory for future events to be held over a 12-month time period. Due to small sizes for all target populations except attendees/delegates, structured sampling should only be used in relation to the attendees Situational Analysis. The situational analysis needs to involve the identification of strengths and weaknesses of the sector and determining and prioritizing key issues, constraints, threats, and opportunities. One of the most identified obstacles to successful implementation of strategic planning and management is obtaining and maintaining stakeholder support and commitment to the process (Hall, 2000b; Mintzberg, 1994). Without stakeholder support and commitment, the implementation of plans becomes significantly more difficult and, in some cases, not possible at all. Many authors (e.g., Gunn & Var, 2002; Hall, 2000b; Jamal & Getz, 2000; Simpson, 2001) agree that taking a consultative or participatory approach to planning is the best way to avoid this pitfall. Collaborative approaches, where stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of plans, increases stakeholder's sense of "ownership" of the plan (Hall, 2000a, 2000b). It is thus important to ensure



stakeholder participation from the beginning of the planning process. To achieve this, the Delphi technique is recommended.

The Delphi technique is a tool for collecting opinions from and achieving a consensus of opinions from a group of respondents using multiple rounds of questionnaires and feedback between rounds (Tersine & Riggs, 1976). The objectives of the Delphi process would be to order the information collected using SWOT criteria and to identify priorities to be addressed by a strategic plan. The items for each questionnaire round can be drawn from the data collected using the framework outlined in this article. While there are a number of other techniques for managing this process, the Delphi technique has two major advantages. First, Delphi is useful in collecting information from a larger number of participants, as it does away with the constraint of numbers that can be involved in a meaningful face-to-face discussion. It also minimizes the time and costs constraints that may prevent participants from meeting in one place at one time (Mitchell, 1991), maximizing the number of stakeholders involved. Minimizing the time and cost to participate are seen as crucial to the success of this research project. The second major advantage of the Delphi technique can be found in the quality of information that can be generated from this approach. The anonymity of the approach overcomes the problems of influences of peer group pressure and institutional loyalties. Additionally, the process allows participants time to think through ideas before responding and to reconsider their position after receiving feedback (Garrod & Fyall, 2005). The depth and quality of information gathered will determine the extent to which this project is successful in meeting the set objectives.

Conclusion

The MICE sector is acknowledged as an important part of the tourism industry in the Indian region. However, despite this acknowledgement, little attention has been paid to the sector to date. If the MICE sector is to fulfill its potential as a means for achieving the objectives laid out for it in the Indian Regional Development Plan, this lack of attention needs remedying. As has been shown in this article, a strategic planned approach to development is most likely to lead to a robust and sustainable MICE sector for the region. The first step in any strategic planning process is conducting a situational analysis. To conduct a situational analysis, a significant amount of information is required, so that current strengths and weaknesses, along with future opportunities and challenges, can be identified. In the case of the MICE sector, this means gathering information from both the supply and demand sides of the sector, in other words, from venues and other suppliers as well as consumers and those attending, organizing, and exhibiting at MICE events. This article documents a strategic process to obtain the information required and then conduct a situational analysis for the MICE sector in the Indian region. This situational analysis will facilitate effective strategic planning for the sector as a whole and by individual organizations within the sector.

The Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector in India has witnessed substantial growth from 2019 to 2024, driven by economic expansion, government support, and infrastructure development. However, to sustain this growth and position India as a global MICE destination, a structured framework for analysis and evaluation is crucial.

1. Challenges in Data-Driven Decision Making

- Lack of centralized data collection on event sizes, attendees, and revenue generation.
- Inconsistent growth measurement across cities leads to unstructured policy planning.



2. Role of ICPB & Government Initiatives

- The India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) has played a critical role in branding India as a MICE hub.
- However, a more structured assessment approach is required to track event impact, international competitiveness, and policy effectiveness.

3. Need for a Structured Design for MICE Analysis, A framework-based approach is required to ensure consistent and data-driven policymaking.

- Standardized Data Collection: Regular tracking of market size, event frequency, and city-wise performance.
- Regional Expansion Strategy: Developing Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities to reduce market saturation in metros.
- Policy Benchmarking: Comparing India's MICE policies with global leaders
- Sustainability & Innovation: Green event initiatives and digital transformation in MICE operations.

A well-defined structure for MICE market analysis will enable India to maximize its economic potential, attract global conferences, and position itself as a leading MICE destination. The combination of data-driven insights, government policies, and industry collaboration will be key to sustained MICE sector growth.

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