

Submitted By: Gurpreet Kamboj

Student ID - DE240218

Distinguish between Illicit Competition and Unfair Competition Practices in the Tourism Sector

Unfair and illegal competition can affect businesses, tourists, and the reputation of tourist spots. A lot of people use these words to signify the same thing, but they don't.

Illicit competition means breaking the law in a way that is evident. The government or tourism body has set some restrictions that these behaviours break. For instance, running a tour company or tourism business without a licence or providing services that are against the law, such taking people on illegal wildlife tours or gambling without permission. Illicit competition usually involves big infractions that can result in fines, penalties, or even criminal charges. These measures affect businesses that respect the law and put tourists in danger since the services they offer might not be safe or follow the rules.

For example, tour operators can't schedule trips without getting the right safety approvals first. This is bad for both passengers and the tourism company because there is no way to be confident that consumers will be safe or secure.

Unfair competition, on the other hand, includes business activities that aren't unlawful but aren't fair or honest either. One corporation has an unfair advantage over another because they lie to customers or hurt their competitors. Sometimes, tourism might include things like lying in ads, spreading false rumours about competitors, copying another company's branding or website, and lowering prices in a way that is aimed to force other businesses out of business.

Unfair competition may not be against the law, but it is not how business should be done. When a hotel offers rooms for a low price to get guests to stay there but then charges them extra fees, it's not fair competition. It tricks customers and makes it hard for honest businesses to do well.

The most important differences are:

It may not be illegal to compete unfairly, but it is wrong. It's always against the law to compete in ways that are against the law.

Unfair competition usually involves breaking moral or industry rules, while unlawful competition usually means breaking the law.

Both of these things affect the tourism business, but unlawful competition can also make it less safe for travellers.

To protect the tourism industry, governments and business groups often have rules and procedures in place to enquire into and punish both illegal and unfair competition. This allows travellers know that they can trust the services they use and that businesses are competing fairly.

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