



RURAL TOURISM: AS ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITY THROUGH HOME STAY

KEYWORDS

Home stay- Entrepreneurship, Rural tourism development and Impacts

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ABSTRACT *This study provided a brief discussion of home stay and rural tourism entrepreneurial opportunities. Home stay is a potential economic activity in tourism sector. The home stay provides the various infrastructure facilities that cater to the differed interests of the people and tourist in particular who make the journey towards the countryside. India has numerous rural tourism resources including, agricultural activities, rural sports and games, art and culture including cuisines, customs, fairs and festivals, folklore and folk art tradition, art and architecture and many more to say. Home stay should emphasize on the cultural practices as well as to create a genuine interest and entrepreneurial opportunities for the local people in the region. The study focused the potentialities of home stay for rural tourism development. The study also discussed the positive outcomes of promoting home stays at the rural and remote areas.*

Introduction

Home-stay is an emerging concept in tourism & hospitality industry which is also considered to be the best alternative to hotel accommodation. Home stay helps you come across land, people, culture and cuisine of any place in its perfect aspect unlike hotel accommodation. Different types of houses are converted to home-stay like heritage homes, farm houses, estate bungalows, ancestral homes etc. that gives a pleasant stay away from busy towns and cities but near to places of tourist attractions. Home-stays contribute to conserve the local cultural and natural heritage at the same time ensuring sustained income to the local population.

Objectives of the study

- To create awareness on the concept of home stays entrepreneurial at the rural areas.
- To understand the potential of rural tourism,
- To find out the impact of home stays and rural tourism to our society

Methodology

- **The primary data** has been retrieved through interview method that conducted at the concerned authorities such as, departments of Tourism at different levels, forest departments, non-governmental organizations, local self governments and travel and tour operating companies and most importantly, interaction with the local community.
- **The secondary data** for the paper was perceived from the sources such as, books, journals and even useful websites.

Scope of the study

The study confines to the role of home stays and rural tourism and focuses on their benefits to the different stakeholders of the area.

Concept of Home-stay

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Definition of Home Stay

Is a stay at a residence by a traveler and especially by a visitor

who is hosted by a local family? "A house primarily as the residence of the owner but with the business of accommodating paying guests, a system whereby Tourist board with a local family at an affordable price

Home Stay - The New Concept of Tourism in India

The number of tourists visiting India has increased manifold during the past few decades. Especially after the tourism attraction programme of Incredible India, India is witnessing a large influx of tourists, even our countrymen have also started coming out of their shells and visiting every nook and corner of the country.

Not only the foreign tourists even many local tourists also prefer to stay in the comfort of a homely environment where one is not bounded by the so called protocols and freely mingle with the local people, enjoy homemade food and relax in the cozy comfort of a house away from the hustle and bustle of the city life. The desire for such holidays has given rise to a new concept Home Stay i.e. a home away from home. It has enabled tourists enjoy their stay in these Home Stays and a scope to learn local culture and traditions. One can clearly say that these Home Stays definitely offer a home away from home feel.

Though the concept of a home stay opportunity is popular globally, it is now slowly catching on in India as earlier, most cautious-by-nature natives were entrenched with feelings of insecurity, lack of communication with foreign guests due to language barriers (read not knowing English), the demands on privacy a home stays opportunity would cost in term of opening the doors of one's home to outsiders, especially in a joint-family set-up, like many Indian households were prone to have. All this has changed with the times and India too is fast emerging as a tourism-sector partner in budget accommodation provider in the form of home stays opportunities that Indian families have decided are an effective way to utilize free space of old bungalow plots and extra rooms in even high demand metro or seasonal tourism zones, so much so that older fears of lack of awareness about planning, offering and managing house-guests, planning board and lodging options, have given way to opening the doors to 'temporary members.'

What can we expect in Home Stays?

As already said, Home Stays are quite different from hotels and lodges. Here one can expect the following things:

Homely Comfort

Home Stays allows you freedom. It provides you a comfortable stay in a homely atmosphere. Here you can relax with your family members; play games or listen to music all in a homely

atmosphere. It really refreshes you mentally as staying with your near ones is always pleasurable. Having an entire space for you and your family and enjoying home-made food along with a great vacation is definitely a great luxury in this fast paced world.

Personal Care

Since there is only one family staying with the host, the guests are treated with utmost care and due attention is paid to their comforts.

Mingle With People and Make New Friends

Staying in the Home Stays together with some other families with different culture and habits will give you a chance to know them better. It would become more enjoyable as it would be like a social gathering with only a few people to interact and know. All these would make your vacation a great fun.

Learn new things

When you choose to stay in Home Stays, you get a better chance to mix with the local people and know more about their cultures and traditions.

Responsibilities and Duties of Guests in a Home Stay

Guests are expected to be amiable and cooperative. The guests should honor and value the sentiments of the hosts. They should never think that only monetary relation is there between the host and the hosts. Both should honor and respect one another.

Benefits of Home stay in India

There's a saying in India, "Athithi Devo Bhava", which means "the guest is God". Indians consider it a huge honor to have guests in their home, and go out of their way to please them. There's nothing like Indian hospitality. Sadly, most visitors who come to India and stay in hotels never get to experience true Indian hospitality. The good thing is that all this is changing as a result of the growing popularity of home stays in India. Guests are either accommodated in the family home, or in separate quarters nearby. Nowadays, most home stays provide their guests with just as much comfort as a reputable hotel. There are a number of reasons why staying at a home stay can be preferable to staying in a hotel. The benefits of home stays in India include:

1. Distinctive and Characterful Accommodations -- Tired of sterile hotels? There's no better way to experience the incredibly diversity and charm of India than at a home stay. The options are almost endless and include plantation bungalows, historic havelis (mansions), and remote rural cottages.

2. Personalized Service -- In contrast to a hotel, a home stay usually only has a few rooms. The family who resides there runs it, and acts as host. This guarantees that guests receive plenty of individual attention. You can spend as little or as much time with the host family as you like. Some guests choose only to dine with them, while others spend hours chatting to them. Regardless, staying with an Indian family is the easiest way of finding out about Indian culture and way of life. Many guests and hosts find that they bond with each other so much, that they keep in touch long after the vacation is over.

3. Local Knowledge -- The wealth of information that the hosts have about their local area makes deciding what to see and do a breeze. Such local knowledge is extremely helpful in getting the most from your visit. Many hosts are delighted to show their guests around their local area, providing them with invaluable insights that simply aren't available from a guide book.

4. Home Cooked Food -- There's a huge difference between the Indian food served in restaurants and hotels, and the food that's cooked in an Indian home. By staying at a home stay, you'll be able to taste authentic Indian home cooked food, made to order. It's a lot lighter, and has more variation and flavor than

restaurant food. Some home stays even welcome their guests into their kitchen, and let them watch and participate in the cooking process.

5. Unique Activities -- As a guest at a home stay, the focus is on you, and your likes and preferences. The hosts are usually very accommodating and will put a great deal of effort into arranging activities that are of interest to you. These activities will vary depending on location. Exploring a coffee plantation in Coorg, watching a polo match in Rajasthan, herding animals in remote northern India, village visits, picnics, and temple tours are just some of the options. Guests are often invited to attend weddings, or other festivals that are happening, as well. Staying at a home stay in India is all about immersing yourself in India, rather skimming over it on the tourist trail.

How the Home stay does grow in India?

As the number of educated people grew these gave rise to nuclear families and many Indians go for work and study abroad. Thus it makes it possible for intercultural experience and house owners to earn extra money. There are many comfortable home stay in different parts of India. Home stay in Mahabaleshwar, Delhi, Manali, Goa, Kerela, Coorg, Harihareshwar, Lonavala, Karnataka, Shimla, etc is far more preferable as these are the places which are most visited by the travelers. Such websites make it easier to make online reservations together with vary traveling packages to explore India with fruitful and enriching guest-host interaction.

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Home stay scheme in India by Union Tourism Ministry

Union Tourism Ministry has been launched the revised and more liberalized Incredible India Bed & Breakfast/ Home stay Scheme. It has been advised the States/ UTs to formulate their own scheme to develop Bed & Breakfast and Home stay units. It has been suggested that a State Level Monitoring Committee for the speedy implementation of tourism projects. Advised to these Committees should not only regularly monitor but also send a quarterly or half yearly report to the Union Ministry of Tourism.

Further, States are requested to acknowledge by indicating the name of the Ministry on the Foundation Stone at the projects financed by the Union Ministry of Tourism. Tourism ministry further urged that all the projects should not only be completed but made functional so that the tourists and other stakeholders may take full benefit of the central financial assistance. Needless to say that any tourist amenity should essentially have proper water supply, electricity, well maintained approach road and proper landscaping, the Minister added.

Ministry has taken a number of initiatives for the overall development of India's tourism sector. These include development of mega tourism destination and circuit development projects. In this regard, a total of 29 sites, which include three in the East and Northeast Regions, have been identified and have already, sanctioned 21 projects in these destinations.

Components of Home Tourism

The important components of home tourism are:

1. Accommodation
2. Local Cuisine

3. Cultural Interaction
4. Knowledge of the household about tourist sports and culture.
5. Time to spare for the local people to engage in home tourism.

Findings and Suggestions

Findings

The major challenges are need to preserve the environment and natural resources, the need for education, proper understanding for both tourists and local people, and the need to generate a democratic movement which helps people at all levels to participate in tourism development. Also they need to focus on occupation training, handicraft promotion, and improvement of both the landscape and the basic infrastructure, to increase the villagers' quality of life by creating a healthy environment. The cooperative system in developing home stays and rural tourism can be an effective approach in bringing positive impact in rural areas. Local people can monitor and control the negative impacts of tourism on their own society, if they have an equal stake and authority in management and development.

- Legislation Problems
- Lack of Trained Manpower
- Insufficient Financial Support
- Lack of Local Involvement
- Underdeveloped people
- Lack of proper physical communications
- Lack of Basic Education
- Language problems
- Business Planning Skills
- Trained tourist guide
- Communication Skills

Suggestions

The tourists look for quality environment and meaningful experience. Most of the tourists are interested in rural tourism, if the trip can bring pleasure and relaxation of body and mind. Once in a year, urbanites have expressed their interest to go for rural areas.

Essential elements for development of home stays and rural tourism are:

- Creation of infrastructure
- Restructuring and liberalization of policies
- Encouragement for investment
- Law and Order
- Tourist Police
- Complaints Handling
- Standardization of goods and services
- Government support
- Rural tourism can help in creating sustainable development in some of our villages in the rural areas

Conclusion

The study revealed that home stays operation could be create alternative accommodation opportunities and a tool for promoting rural tourism and entrepreneurial opportunities to the local community, economy, and art and culture of the region. At the meantime the study came to realize that there are some obstacles to be overcome then only primary purpose of promoting such tourism in any part of relevant area. If a proper marketing plan is done rural tourism, it could bring lots of benefit to our society. It could be a sustainable revenue generating project for rural development of our government. It can help inflow to resources from urban to the rural economy and encouraging rural entrepreneurship. It can prevent migration of rural people to urban.

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