



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Tourism

THE STUDY OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KARNATAKA STATE

KEY WORDS: Sustainable Tourism, Inclusive Growth, Swachh Bharat

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is recognized as an effective tool for economic development of nations; by way of employment earning revenues and foreign exchange. It is one of the world's fastest growing industries and is a major source of income for many countries. The main positive socio-economic impact of tourism is that it generates income for the host economy as well as foreign exchange earnings. Tourism does not only have positive impact, it some negative impacts too; these are depleting resources, increase in waste output, and impact on environment and excessive commercialization. These are the serious concerns in most tourist destinations across the country. This led to the emergence of Sustainable tourism, where in efforts are made to increase positive externalities in the tourist destination. In the present research paper the author has examined the meaning and importance of sustainable tourism along with the role of government in promoting the idea of Sustainable tourism with special reference to Karnataka state.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is considered as a people-oriented industry, as it provides many jobs which have helped revitalize local economies. Tourism stimulates investment in the economy and promotes the infrastructure development, which leads to generation of employment and an increase in income for the local population. Further, Improvements in water and sewage systems, roads, electricity, telephone, public transport networks and improving the quality of life of people are other important benefits of tourism. Tourism development is ecologically sustainable, economically viable as well as ethically and socially equitable.

"Tourism and its related economic activities generate 11% of Global Domestic Product, employ 200 million people directly and support 215 million jobs indirectly, and transport nearly 700 million international travelers per year". - World Travel and Tourism Council During the recent times, with greater emphasis on climate and ecological conservation, Sustainable tourism is one of the most used terms in tourist industry. The year 2017 has been proclaimed 'as the year of sustainable tourism for development' by United Nations.

Review of Literature

a. Monika Singh (2018) had studied some of the key features behind sustainable tourism and the reasons for growth of sustainable development. According to the study, Sustainable tourism is built around four pillars of tourism, economic sustainability, ecological sustainability, cultural sustainability and local sustainability. All four of these elements must be addressed if we are to achieve sustainable tourism.

b. Booking.com (2018), According to the survey by Netherland-based travel e-commerce company Booking.com, around 97 per cent of Indian travelers want to travel sustainably in 2018, with 88 per cent of them willing to pay an extra premium to ensure the same. The survey found that Indian travelers are the most willing to pay the premium closely followed by Brazilians and Chinese. Many Indian travelers indicated they engage in sustainable travel behavior because it adds a positive experience to their trip.

c. Tippeswamy G (2016) observed that tourism in India helps in preserving and sustaining the diversity of the India's natural and cultural environments. Tourism in India should be developed in such a way that it accommodates and entertains visitors in a way that is minimally intrusive or destructive to the environment and sustains & supports the native culture.

d. Gao-Liang Wang, Harold Lalrinawma (2016) proposed that Sustainable tourism is an emerging trend around the world. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous procedure and it is entirely consistent in monitoring. Indian travelers are increasingly looking to explore and experience the world in a sustainable way.

e. Renu Choudhary (2014) analyzed that Sustainable tourism development requires the establishment of education and training

programmes, to improve public understanding and enhance business, vocational and professional skills especially for the poor and women. Training should include courses in Tourism, hotel management, creation and operation of small businesses and other relevant topics.

f. Himani Kaul, Shivangi Gupta, (2009) explores the economic importance of sustainable tourism by outlining the strengths and challenges of the Indian tourism industry. The paper provides a road map for some of the initiatives that government and industry could adopt. It combines a policy perspective for government and industry.

Objectives

The major objectives of the study are-

- To understand the scope of Tourism in India and meaning of Sustainable tourism.
- To study the forms and importance of Sustainable Tourism.
- To examine the plans and strategies of government for the development of Sustainable tourism in Karnataka.
- To suggest ways for promotion of Sustainable tourism.

Research Methodology

The research paper titled "The study of sustainable tourism: with special reference to Karnataka state" is done on the basis of descriptive method. Where in the meaning, significance and forms of Sustainable tourism are described. An analysis of the role of state government in promoting Sustainable tourism is examined. For this various articles and research papers on the relevant topic are comprehensively studied. More emphasis is given on Articles published in newspaper and editorials. Online internet sources and debate and discussions conducted in news channels also form an important secondary source for the research paper. All these sources have helped the author in producing the research paper in a comprehensive way.

Tourism in India

India has certain unique features that make it especially suited for taking maximum advantage out of tourism. India's Travel & Tourism industry is the 7th largest in the world, contributing nearly 9.6% to India's GDP. India ranked 3rd among 184 countries in terms of travel and tourism's total contribution to GDP in 2016. Tourism creates a multiplier impact on India's socio-economic growth through infrastructure development, job creation and skill development. At the national level, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India formulates national policies and programmes for the development and promotion of tourism in India. The ministry also plays a crucial role in co-ordinating the activities of various central and state government agencies. The role of ministry is not limited to co-ordination, but also supplementing the efforts of the State Governments/Union Territory. Some of the major works are-

- Social awareness campaign under the 'Atithi Devo Bhavah'.
- Sustained cleanliness drives at important tourist destinations in the form of 'swachh Bharat abhiyan'.
- Sustainable Tourism criteria for India (STCI) and indicators for hotels.

Sustainable tourism

With the global emphasis on sustainability and combating climate change, the concept of sustainable tourism creates a major opportunity for Indian tourism industry. Sustainable tourism means tourism that respects the local people their cultural heritage, the environment and promotes the local economy. It seeks to provide people with an exciting and educational holiday that benefit the people of the host country. Thus, Sustainable tourism has the potential to provide solutions to the issues of inclusive growth.

“Sustainability implies that tourism resources and attractions should be utilized in such a way that their subsequent use by future generations is not compromised”.

-World Tourism Organization

Sustainable tourism can be practiced for unlimited time without worsening the conditions. It helps to maintain the diversity of plants and animals, respecting cultural heritage of the society and also promotes economic success and fair distribution of social benefits. The importance of sustainable tourism lies in its motives to conserve the resources and increase the value of local culture and tradition. Thus, Sustainable tourism is a kind of responsible tourism intending to generate employment and income along with alleviating any impact on environment and local culture. Sustainable Tourism seeks deeper involvement of locals, which provide local people an opportunity to make their living.

Forms of Sustainable tourism

a. Environmental Sustainability: Environmental sustainability means making efforts to preserve the resources of an area for use by future generations. The environment is obviously important to tourism, both the natural environment (Forests, Beaches, Landscape and waterways) and the built environment (Historic buildings and ruins) must be preserved for sustainable tourism.

b. Economic Sustainability: For making a tourism venture sustainable, Economic sustainability has a key role to play in building linkages and reducing leakages. This means keeping the local economy vibrant. A hotel or company owned and operated by a foreigner or huge international brand is not likely to contribute much to the local economy. But the starting off own new businesses, shops to serve tourists, building entrepreneurship is likely to see tourism in a sustainable way. Because native people will feel a sense of ownership and pride in it. This is sustainable in the long run.

c. Socio-cultural Sustainability: Socio-cultural sustainability means promoting cultural exchange, sharing of local customs and preserving local traditions. This can usually be achieved by getting the locals involved in the tourism industry. When an area starts being visited by tourists, there are some social and cultural impacts of those tourists on the host community such as congestion and overcrowding. This kind of impacts can be better solved by promoting socio-cultural sustainability.

Tourism potential of Karnataka state

Tourism falls under the State list of the Indian constitution; hence issues of land, transport, hotels, industry, law and order and the development of tourism infrastructure are handled by the State Governments. Karnataka has the second highest number of nationally protected monuments in India, second only to Uttar Pradesh. The waterfalls of Karnataka and Kudremukh National Park are listed as must-see places and among the “1001 Natural Wonders of the World”. A part of the state encloses the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Five National Parks, 30 Wildlife Sanctuaries, thick Western Ghats and mesmerizing coastal area provides a

plethora of opportunities for nature based tourism activities. One of the earliest examples of Public Private Partnership (PPP) in tourism; Jungle Lodges and Resorts (JLR) was established as Joint Venture by the Government of Karnataka way back in 1980s. The state showed a remarkable degree of consistency in adherence to policies towards tourism and of local employment thereby adopting the model of sustainability. Recently the decision on the formation of new protected areas, conversion of reserves into sanctuaries/tiger reserve and expansion of a few sanctuaries in the state are taken by the government. A decision on raising the compensation amount in cases of man-animal conflicts from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh will soon be taken.

Some important forest habitats that will now get the tag of conservation reserve include Mulliyaganigiri in Chikkamagaluru, Bhukupatna (for chinkaras) in Tumakuru and Mulabagilu in Kolar for bats. In Kolar, the Malur-Kamasamudra Wildlife Reserve for leopards and sloth bears and an elephant corridor too got the nod from the state government. Further, 15 acres of Munishwara forests adjoining the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary will be added to it. About 32,000 acres of hill ranges of Kappatagudda Conservation Reserve will now be a wildlife sanctuary. Two sanctuaries – the Sharavathi Valley Wildlife Sanctuary and Gudekote Sanctuary will see expansion in their areas with the addition of more than 201 and 103 square kms respectively. Through consistent conservation efforts, Karnataka has firmly established itself as the premier destination of tourism in India.

Recent steps taken by the State Government

All tourism activities of various motivations such as holidays, business travel, conferences, adventure travel and ecotourism – needs to be sustainable. For this the state government has taken various initiatives.

a. New Tiger Reserve: with the State Wildlife Board deciding to propose to the Centre to notify Malai Mahadeshwara Hills Wildlife Sanctuary (MM Hills) a distinguished tag tiger reserve, now Karnataka is all set to get its sixth tiger reserve in the state. The MM Hills sanctuary is spread over a total area of 1,93,372.25 and by announcing it as Tiger reserve will benefit the protection of tigers and encourage tourism in this region.

b. Year of the Wild: Karnataka Declared “2017 as the Year of the Wild”, with the aim of the state government to promote conservation of flora and fauna. The Year of the Wild campaign isn't restricted to eco-trails with good connectivity and accessibility, state wants to lives up on its tourism tagline 'One State, Many Worlds' having diverse landscape and topography.

c. Developing Local tourist destinations: In February 2017, the State Government of Karnataka signed 2 Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) of Rs. 2,595 Crores, with the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, for development of tourist destinations in the state. Other states (Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Chattisgarh) also participated in this event and signed MoUs worth Rs. 1, 2198 Crore for developing local tourist destinations along with Karnataka.

d. Tourism Policy 2015-2020: Prioritized green banking in tourism by inducing the stakeholders to adopt internet and soft-related technology such as mobile apps, social networking, internet banking and e-guide facility etc in tourism. The tourism policy 2015-2020 is much concerned about the innovative sustainable and nature oriented tourism. The policy aims at achieving cumulative investment of Rs 54000 crores by the end of 2019-2020.

e. Tourist guides and Tourist Mitras: Introduction and Posting of 600 trained tourist guides and tourist mitras (home guards posted at tourist destinations) were provided with basic communication skills, knowledge about the history, art and culture of tourist destination. Tourist Mitras are trained by the police department and will be the first responders when a tourist is in trouble. Their role is crucial in ensuring that tourists feel safe and confident.

f. Tourist Taxi Scheme: In the past 3 years, 3804 tourist taxis have been distributed with a subsidy of Rs.2 lakhs each to the unemployed candidates belonging to SC/ST, Backward classes and Minorities to provide self-employment.

g. Belli Shrunga: Historical places of Lakkundi, Hampi, Badami, Pattadakallu, Aihole, Banavasi and others of North Karnataka are being revived and made attractive by establishing a 'Belli Shrunga' from Karwar to Vijayapur, from Belagavi to Ballari and from Bidar to Koppal district.

h. Jungle Lodges and Resorts: development of Jungle Lodges and Resorts in the form of Jungle Camps for middle income tourists at an affordable cost in Bhagavathi of Chickmagalur district, Sakrebailu of Shivamogga district, Anejari and Seetha Nadi of Udupi district, provides employment to local community.

i. Adopt a Tourist destination program: The state government has launched the 'Adopt A Tourist Destination' program. A first of its kind in India, the aim of programme is to rope in as many corporates to take up measures to ensure cleanliness and development of tourist destinations along with the government.

Table No. 1 - Grants Provided to Tourism Department

Sl.No.	Year	Fund allocation (in Crores)
1	2017-2018	572
2	2016-2017	507
3	2015-2016	406
4	2014-2015	339
5	2013-2014	347

Source: Department of Tourism, nammasarkara.in

From the above table the annual grants provided to the Tourism department is increasing from year to year. This shows the commitment of state government for developing Karnataka as a premier tourist destination along with promoting sustainability by safeguarding the interest of local community.

Importance of Sustainable Tourism

The importance of Sustainable Tourism worldwide has increased significantly due to the impact of increased human activity on climate. Sustainable tourism implies minimizing the negative and maximizing the positive effects of all forms-

a. Resource efficiency and environment protection: Supporting the protection of the natural and cultural environment sustainable tourism allows the use of natural and cultural resources for gaining economic profit while at the same time guaranteeing that these resources are not deteriorated or destroyed. The fundamentals of "reduce, reuse and recycle embrace sustainable tourism.

b. Inclusive and sustainable economic growth: Enhancing the well-being of communities, Sustainable tourism development supports and ensures the economic growth where tourism takes place. Product quality and tourist satisfaction offered by a region is the key factor for the economic success of tourism and purchasing local products helps in ensuring that the financial benefits stay with the local people.

c. Heritage (cultural and natural diversity): It shows respect for the communities who live there, as well as their traditional cultures and customs. Sustainable tourism is sharing of cultures (without imposing them), and ending stereotypes about different cultures and religions. Thus, Sustainable tourism helps to preserve heritage both cultural and natural for future generations.

d. Social Inclusiveness: Sustainable tourism builds social integrity of the local community with rest of the world, in terms of subjective well-being of the local population. Enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues.

e. Employment and poverty reduction: Purchasing goods from small, locally owned stores will favour local business and help in employment generation of various kinds for the native people; this encourages economic sustainability from sustainable tourism.

f. Mutual understanding peace and security: Sustainable tourism emphasizes to promote tolerance and break down barriers. Visiting different places learning local languages and understanding cultures will bring better understanding and bond the various civilizations towards peace and security.

g. Positive Impact on Local communities: heritages and living cultures encourages respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence. It helps in development of as a community and local people in undertaking leadership roles in the planning and development of their regional assets with the assistance of government, financial, business and other stakeholders.

Suggestions: Some of the important measures that can contribute towards sustainability of tourism are:

• **Role of Government**

1. Positive intervention of the Government is a necessary step for building Sustainable tourism. Creating an environment where not only the government but other stakeholders able to influence tourism in a more sustainable way.

2. Effective and long-term sustainability management system that is suitable to its reality and scale, which considers environmental, socio-cultural, quality design and locally appropriate principles of sustainable construction, will be helpful step forward.

3. Maximizing social and economic benefits to the local community by initiatives of social and community participation. Development of basic infrastructure, education, health helps the local community to take advantage of opportunities offered.

4. Maximizing benefits to cultural & historical heritage by contributing towards protection of local, historical, archaeological both culturally and spiritually.

5. Maximizing benefits to the environment by using eco-friendly products for building materials, goods, food and consumables. Wastewater, including gray water, should be treated effectively and reused where possible.

6. Reducing pollution from noise, light, ozone depleting compounds and air and soil contaminants and taking measures to counter runoff and erosion. A solid waste management plan must be implemented, with the quantitative goals of minimizing waste.

7. Information and interpretation of the natural surroundings, local culture and cultural heritage should be provided to tourists, as well as explaining appropriate behaviour while visiting natural areas.

8. Protection of cultural and environmental heritage of an area by the tourists themselves through appropriate code of ethic which will sustain rather than damage host cultures and environments.

9. Feasible use of local materials, styles and skills and most importantly involving local people in decision making that affect their lives provides more. Introduction of innovative solutions in information and communication technologies. Research support for the development of tourism.

• **Role of citizens**

1. Purchasing goods from small, locally owned stores will favour local business.

2. Getting involved in clean up campaigns, community projects, teaching, volunteering will encourage others too.

3. Learning languages and understanding local cultures will increase respect for the community.
4. Taking reusable bags for shopping and reducing the use of plastic items, such as cups, straw, bottles.
5. Trying to find out alternative uses of things.
6. Staying in hotels that are eco-friendly in nature.
7. Avoiding use of petrol and diesel vehicles for safari and movement in ecologically sensitive regions, instead hiring electric vehicle, cycles, CNG fuelled vehicles for short trips will benefit a lot.
8. Using water and electricity precisely in tourist destinations.

CONCLUSION

Tourism is a service industry and a major source of income and employment for many countries. It can assist in address the problems of unemployment and poverty. The research paper tried to analyze the meaning and forms of sustainable tourism. It also examined the importance of Sustainable tourism and efforts of Karnataka state towards developing sustainable tourism. The challenge's of sustainable tourism development is to make use of tourism's positive impacts. The necessary thing to face this challenge is that along with government, different stakeholders such as private bodies, local community, NGOs and most importantly the tourists themselves need to cooperate and stimulate with each other in order to achieve the goals of sustainable tourism and to put the principles of sustainability into practice.

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