

A study on multi-faceted growth of Karnataka tourism

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Abstract

Tourism industry is one of fast growing industry in the world. It is an industry that has assumed global proportions. The importance of tourism to economic development has been recognized widely due to its contribution to the balance of payments, GDP and employment. Since last few years, Karnataka tourism industry has been growing at a rapid pace and it has vast potential for generating employment and earning large amount of foreign exchange. Karnataka state is known for its rich culture and scenic beauty. It has immense tourism potential to attract foreign tourist's as well domestic tourist all over the world. There are many tourist destinations which are untapped and which can be developed as major tourist destinations. The present study makes an attempt to analyse the multi-faceted growth and development of Karnataka tourism industry.

Keyword: tourism industry, tourism development, foreign exchange earnings, adventure tourism, culture, eco-tourism, wellness tourism

Introduction

Tourism is a sum total of activities, services and industries that delivers travel experience such as transport, accommodation, eateries, shops, entertainment and hospitality services. It comprises of all travel and visitor related services. It is defined as a movement of people away from their normal place of residence.

A tourist seeks various experiences and satisfaction and the choice of his destination depends on the experience he seeks. In turn the business while providing the tourist the goods and services that he demands take the opportunity to make profits. In 1942 Hunziker and Krapf defined tourism as the "sum of the phenomenon and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-resident in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected to any earning activity". Two things are clear from this definition that is travel and stay. This definition tries to convey the meaning that a tourist is one who is not a resident of the place and that he also is only travelling to the place and such travel entails his staying also, but not for the reasons of finding any employment or of making any earnings.

Tourism has emerged as a revolutionizing activity that is, developing rapidly at the national levels, in particular as well as global level, in general besides contributing substantially and sizably to the economy of various countries in terms of GDP, employment, standard of living and, of course, balanced of payment (foreign exchange). It has indeed emerged as a winner in the major export oriented industries in several economies involved in the activity while some of the third world countries depend on it for survival- All practical purposes. However, the discipline unlike others lacks a clear cut meaning.

Indian tourism industry is thriving due to an increase in foreign tourist arrivals and greater number of Indians travelling to domestic destinations than before. In the past few years the real growth has come from within the domestic sector as around 30

million Indians travel within the country in a year. India's demographic dividend of a younger population compared to developed countries is leading to greater expenditure on leisure services. India has significant potential to become a preferred tourist destination globally. Its rich and diverse cultural heritage, abundant natural resources and biodiversity provides numerous tourist attractions. The total tourist visits in India have been growing at a steady rate of about 16 per cent over the past five years. The travel and tourism sector in India provides significant socio economic benefits. According to World Travel and Tourism Council, India is set to emerge as a tourism hotspot during 2009-2018. It boasts of the highest 10-year growth potential. According to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2009 released by the World Economic Forum, India is ranked 11th in the Asia Pacific region and 62nd overall, moving up three notches on the list of the world's attractive destinations. It is ranked the 14th best tourist destination for its natural resources and the 24th for its cultural resources. It boasts of many World Heritage Sites, both natural and cultural, rich fauna, and strong creative industries in the country. India is ranked 37th for its air transport network. The Indian travel and tourism industry ranked 5th in the long-term (10-year) growth and is expected to emerge as the second largest employer in the world by 2019.

Growth of Karnataka Tourism Industry

Karnataka is one of the leading states in India; it is emerging as IT and BT capital of India. Karnataka is blessed with natural beauty and breathe taking historical monuments. Karnataka offers a number of tourist attractions that are sufficiently varied and interesting so as attract different types of tourists. Karnataka's has every attraction include everything that interests the visitors. The wild life sanctuaries at Bandipur, Nagarhole and Dandeli, the Ranganathittu Bird's Sanctuary, hill stations like Nandi Hills and Kemmannagundi and Mercara, beach resorts like Karwar, Ullal, Malpe and

Maravanthe, the world famous Brindavan Gardens at Krishnarajasagara, the monolithic statue of Gommateshwara at Sharavanabelagola, Gol Gumbaz with its whispering gallery at Bijapur, the Jog falls and other waterfalls at Shiva Samudram, Magod, Unchelli or Lushington near Siddapur, Lalguli at Yallapur and other places indicate the variety and richness of the attractions that Karnataka State holds out to the visitors. There are many places of historic and religious importance. The great Acharyas, Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa, preached in this region. Great reformers like Sri Basaveshwara, mathematicians like Baskaracharya, commentators like Sayana, saint poets like Purandaradasa and Kanakadasa, great writers like Pampa, Harihara and Kumara Vyasa have all enriched the heritage of Karnataka.

Karnataka is located in the southern part of India. It is surrounded by the Arabian Sea on the west, Goa on the northwest, Maharashtra on the north, Andhra Pradesh on the east, Tamil Nadu on the southeast, and Kerala on the southwest. At current prices, the gross state domestic product (GSDP) of Karnataka was approximately USD 156.23 billion in 2015-16. The average GSDP growth rate between 2004-05 and 2015-16 was approximately 13.93 per cent. The per capita GSDP rose at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.91 per cent between 2004-05 and 2015-16 to USD 2,557. The state of Karnataka is one of the top ten domestic tourism destinations in India and was ranked 4th in 2011. The state has various tourism assets such as beaches, hill stations, heritage monuments, national parks, wild life sanctuaries etc. Given the variety of the tourism assets, the state is promoted under the tagline "One state, many worlds."

Types of Tourism

Heritage tourism/culture tourism

Heritage tourism/culture tourism is defined as "travelling to explore and experience places, activities, and authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present". It is oriented toward cultural heritage of the tourist location. It involves visiting historical or industrial sites, religious travel or pilgrimages. Karnataka is well known for its rich heritage and ancient culture. The state's rich heritage is amply reflected in the various temples, majestic forts, pleasure gardens, religious monuments, museums, art galleries and urban and rural sites which are citadels of civilization. The world heritage centre Hampi attracts no tourists all over the world.

Medical tourism

Medical tourism also known as health tourism. Health is emerged as one of the important segments of the tourism industry. It refers to the form of tourism where the tourists will be travelling from their home country to a lesser developed nation for seeking medical care that is provided at a lower price. The term has been coined by travel agencies and tour operators and the mass media to describe the rapidly-growing practice of travelling across international borders to the destinations for seeking better healthcare. Travellers typically seek services such as elective procedures as well as complex specialised surgeries such as joint replacement (knee/hip), cardiac, dental, and cosmetic surgeries. Psychiatry, alternative treatments, and convalescent care are also available. In Recent days Karnataka has emerged as a hot spot for health care and medical tourism. Karnataka has the highest number of approved health systems and alternative therapies in India.

This is a fast-growing industry in Karnataka because of state's lower prices for key health care treatments (prices are typically up to 30 percent lower in India compared to the United States and the United Kingdom). The state has promoted by way of providing tourists with personal healthcare services.

Wellness tourism

Wellness tourism is a one of the important sub-segment of medical tourism. Here, the primary purpose is achieving, promoting or maintaining good health and a sense of well-being. People are getting more conscious about their health and well-being. Karnataka state with widespread presence of Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha, and Naturopathy, complemented by its spiritual philosophy, is a well-known wellness destination. Wellness tourism includes ayurvedic therapies, spa visits, and yoga meditation. The government is promoting this form of tourism with publicity and promotional activities.

Rural Tourism

Now a days the rural tourism is gaining more popularity with growing no of tourists visiting the rural areas. Rural tourism encourages rural life, art, culture and heritage of rural destinations, benefitting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and locals for a more enriching tourism experience. Rural India has much to present to humanity as a historic civilization rich in arts, crafts and culture. Thousands of foreign tourists visit rural areas in Karnataka state every year.

Adventure tourism

Travelling with the aim of exploring the unknown tourists' places or travelling to the remote, exotic and possibly hostile areas is known as adventure tourism. With many domestic and foreign tourists looking for different options, adventure tourism is recording healthy growth. Adventure tourism refers to performance of acts, which require significant efforts and some degree of risk or physical danger. The activities include mountaineering, trekking, bungee jumping, mountain biking, river rafting, and rock climbing. Karnataka with its diverse topography and climate offers tremendous potential for the growth and development adventure tourism. The state hilly regions present many opportunities for adventure activities such as mountaineering, rock climbing, trekking, skiing, skating, mountain biking and safaris, and the rivers that flow in the state are ideal for river rafting, canoeing and kayaking. Either on land, in water or in the air, tourists can enjoy whatever form of adventure they may desire.

Ecotourism

Eco tourism also referred as environmental or ecological tourism. It is a form of tourism, where the tourists travel to natural or ecological areas to appreciate the cultural and natural history of the environment, while not disturbing the integrity of the ecosystem and creating economic opportunities that make conservation and protection of natural resources advantageous to local people. It involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna and cultural heritage are primary attractions. Ecotourism also minimizes wastage and the environmental impact through sensitized tourists. It can be one of the medium to preserve local culture, flora and fauna and other natural resources of the state. The Karnataka state tourism has chosen Jungle Lodges and Resorts to conserve ecology and wildlife

because of its responsibility and commitment to preserve wildlife and protect our environment from deforestation, air and water pollution, and more. To make it easier for you to take a break from urban living, Jungle Lodges and Resorts provides creature comforts at all its eco-tourism destinations in Karnataka.

Conclusion

The tourism industry in Karnataka has vast potential for employment generation and earning large sums of foreign exchange for the state. This industry has also contributed towards overall economic development and social development. Karnataka is a unique and perfect destination for both domestic and foreign visitors. state's wide variety of flora, fauna, tourist destinations, health and wellness centers, eco-tourism spots, adventure activities, culture, heritage, educational institution etc attract both domestic as well as foreign tourists towards it. The main objective for developing various forms of tourism in Karnataka is to promote our state's rich cultural heritage and environment, which in turn enhances eco-tourism for sustainable livelihoods of local people. There is also a great demand of rural tourism in Karnataka as modern day tourist is keen to explore and experience the cultural heritage of the tourist destination. Since tourism is a multi – dimensional leisure activity, it is necessary that the state govt should indentify the different forms of new tourism such as adventure, culture, wellness, wildlife and eco-tourism, so that Karnataka state achieve the no 1 position in India

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