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A STUDY ON CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TO THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF KERALA

SINU.M

ASST. PROFESSOR IN COMMERCE
SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
CALICUT UNIVERSITY
CALICUT

ABSTRACT

Tourism and hospitality has been an effective instrument for generating employment, earning revenue and foreign exchange, enhancing environment, preserving culture and tradition. It can ensure an overall development in a sustainable manner. Economic diversification and technological improvement have created a conducive environment for tourism development in the present age of globalization. Tourism Industry Contributes Significantly to National GDP, it is a Major Contributor of SDGP of Kerala. Total tourism revenue of Kerala (both direct and indirect) during 2015 was Rs 26,689 crore, showing a rise of 7.25 per cent over last year. This shows an increasing trend over the past few years. And the aim of the study is to analyse the contribution of tourism and hospitality industry to Kerala's economic growth. Here, the economic growth is measured in terms of employment generation and impact on GDP. And also examine the various marketing initiatives in Kerala tourism and hospitality industry to attract tourists and impact of these initiatives to economic growth. Therefore, the careful management of the sector is essential in order to reap in the maximum benefits with the minimum negative impact and to make it more environmentally and socially sustainable.

KEYWORDS

GDP, tourism and hospitality, economic growth, initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an economic and industrial activity in which many individuals, firms, corporations, organisations and associations are engaged and are directly concerned with many others. It is economically important as it provides a source of income, provides employment, brings infrastructural improvements and may help regional development. The present-day state of Kerala was created in 1956 from Travancore, Kochi and Malabar. Malabar was formerly part of Madras state. Kerala is one of the most progressive, literate and highly educated states of India. Unlike in other part of the country, in Kerala, tourism is not a seasonal activity since the state has some event or the other which is being celebrated in regular intervals that covers almost eight to nine months in a year. Many religious functions are being celebrated in a big way to attract overseas and inland tourists. In addition to these, many beautiful hill stations, world famous beaches, backwaters and nature destinations do attract thousands of tourists into the state every year. In the recent past, tourism has emerged as Kerala's core competency sector. The private sector will be encouraged to participate only if the financial assistance and basic amenities such as quality access, water, power, communication and waste management facilities are provided at places where the tourism infrastructure is to be provided. The support of the Central and State government should be in the form of a facilitator by providing investor friendly atmosphere, policies and initiatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the regional context of Kerala, a few scholars have attempted to discuss some of the pertinent issues of tourism. As an attempt on the economic aspects of tourism in the State, the study conducted by **Joseph (1990)** is worth mentioning. Through a primary survey of foreign tourism to Kerala, he reveals the economic background and the pattern of preferences of the tourist for different types of tourism attractions. **Sudhir (1993)** reveals that banks and travel attractiveness of the agencies are the facilities that rank the highest regarding sufficiently in the state and facilities which are considered relatively more important to the tourists, namely accommodation and transport area ranked second and third respectively. **Kamalakshi (1996)** argues that the growth of the hotel industry in any place is an index of the economic development of that region, especially industrial development in terms of tourist industry. **Kumar (1998)** observed that the psychological factors have influenced their spending pattern during their tourist map. **Dileep (2004)** conducted a study on the current tourism scenario at Kovalam in view of its prominent position among the best beaches with tourism activities in India. **Biju (2004)** examined the potential of eco-tourism in Kerala. **Sreekumar & Parayil (2002)** analyzed the role of tourism as a development model in Kerala and has pointed out the lack of economic, cultural and social benefit sharing to the local population. However, on the other side some of the tourism operations like house boat operations has been confirmed by **Kokkranikal & Morrison (2002)** as an entrepreneurship involving much of local participation. **Ravindran and Vinodan (2009)** in a study seek to identify the role of micro finance in the changing tourism development scenario as it is considered as one of the viable option for inclusive growth. The investigation is to unravel tourism options in micro finance not only to the destination facilitation but travel enhancement among the low-income people through an exploratory study on tourism sector by citing the case studies from Kerala. Even though both models of destination facilitation and travel enhancement found to be viable, destination facilitation model is more conducive to employment generation, gender development and inclusive growth.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The state government, either directly or indirectly has to take further initiatives to encourage private investment in providing tourism infrastructure at all potential tourist destinations.

OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the contribution of tourism and hospitality industry to Kerala's economic growth
2. To examine the various marketing initiatives in Kerala tourism and hospitality industry to attract tourists and impact of these initiatives to economic growth.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Kerala is today the most acclaimed tourist destination in India with its distinctive 'God's Own Country' branding. Kerala is increasingly rated as one of the must-see destinations, not only by the discerning foreign tourists, but also by the domestic tourists. In Kerala, where unemployment among the educated youth is a burning problem, tourism is considered to be a major employment generating industry. Tourism would not be a focus of economic development strategy based on its job creation potential, turnover for local companies and millions of capital investments, but it also has a deep impact on the social and cultural life of any country or city

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the secondary data which has been collected through websites, newspapers, magazines, govt reports, books, research papers etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kerala has projected that tourism sector would contribute almost 20 per cent to the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) in the next five years. Currently, tourism accounts for roughly 12 per cent of the GSDP, Kerala Tourism Deputy Director Nandakumar K P told Business Standard here. He said that the tourism and Information Technology (IT) sectors were the two major services sectors making maximum contribution to the state economy. About five years back, tourism sector contribution to the Kerala economy was just 6-7 percent; he said that adding the state government had been taking several measures to boost tourism. "The state has been acting as a catalyst in creating and expanding the vital infrastructure for tourism such as roads, power, water etc. The state provides subsidy and various other assistances, apart from quicker clearances to proposals from the private sector related to tourism," he informed. Total tourism revenue (both direct and indirect) during 2015 was Rs 26,689 crore, showing a rise of 7.25 per cent over last year. "This year, we are targeting over 10 per cent growth in domestic tourist inflow,"

Over the last few years, Kerala tourism has been proactively holding promotional meets and events at various tier II and III towns in the country, which has paid rich dividends in the form of higher tourist inflow and revenue.

- Foreign Tourist arrival to Kerala during the year 2016 is 10,38,419. It shows an increase of 6.23% over the previous year's figure of 9,77,479
- Domestic Tourist arrival to Kerala during the year 2016 is 1,31,72,535. It shows an increase of 5.67% over the previous year's figure 1,24,65,571.
- Foreign exchange earnings for the year 2016 is Rs. 7749.51 Crores which recorded an increase of 11.51% over the previous year.
- Total Revenue (including direct & indirect) from Tourism during 2016 is Rs. 29658.56 Crores, showing an increase of 11.12% over the last year's figure.

Month wise foreign and domestic arrivals during the year 2016 as shown here:

TABLE 1: MONTH WISE FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC ARRIVALS DURING THE YEAR 2016

Sl no	Month	Foreign	Domestic
1	January	136539	1077231
2	February	141143	1006111
3	March	107037	960467
4	April	78099	1012844
5	May	37994	1206350
6	June	37368	891614
7	July	56666	913886
8	August	81070	1043362
9	September	62599	1129260
10	October	82551	1337191
11	November	96155	1187620
12	December	121198	1406599
Total		1038419	13172535

From the table it is clear that the domestic arrivals to Kerala is increasing month by month, except in March and June. But in the case of foreign arrivals shows a fluctuating trend in the previous year. But in last four months it shows an increasing trend.

EARNINGS FROM TOURISM

TABLE 2

Year	Foreign exchange earnings (in crores)	Percentage of increase	Total revenue generated from tourism (in crores)	Percentage of increase
2010	3797.47	33.09	17348.00	31.12
2011	4221.99	11.18	19037.00	9.74
2012	4571.69	8.28	20430.00	7.32
2013	5560.77	21.63	22926.55	12.22
2014	6398.93	15.07	24885.44	8.54
2015	6949.88	8.61	26689.63	7.25
2016	7749.51	11.51	29658.56	11.12

Tourism is the biggest industry in the world from the point of view of turnover. The capital investment in this industry is now even more than oil-industry. Many countries in Europe and Asia now completely depend on the income coming from tourism. Again being labour oriented industry, tourism generates maximum number of employment directly or indirectly.

In India, tourism is a late started industry. After the independence, the Govt. started taking plans to organize and develop the tourism destinations scattered all over the country. Now tourism in India is in such a position which is desirable countries economy. From the civil aviation to hotel industry, everywhere the infra-structural development is remarkable. After the reformation of Indian economy in 1990 with the open policy taken by the then Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is now increasing gradually.

The steps taken by Central Govt.:

1. Plans for regional development with the help of tourism where other industries are not in their best.
2. Started one – window policy to boost the direct and as well as indirect investment in tourism.
3. Plans preservation of cultural, heritage and environment at tourist destinations to attract more tourists.
4. Development of infrastructure to meet the present and future needs of tourist.
5. Started different types of luxurious trains like Palace on Wheels, Royal Orient or Deccan Queens.
6. Developing basic infrastructure.
7. Started overseas offices at different countries to promote India as a tourism destination.
8. Proper coordination between the states and central tourism departments been ordered to develop the destinations.
9. Started different packages to attract for those destinations attracting more tourists.
10. Developed different Tourism Circuits like Golden Triangle or Buddhist Circuit to attract more tourists.
11. ITDC is now taking part in different tourism fairs all over the world.
12. Trying to provide best of the services in Air India and in Indian Rail.
13. Building accommodation in Govt. level and encouraging the private companies to invest in accommodation sector by giving them different tax benefits.

Kerala was a relatively unknown state among tourist circles until the early 1960s. The first initiative to popularize Kerala as a tourist destination was undertaken by Travancore's Prince Consort Col. Godavarma Raja started Kerala Tours Limited to popularize key tourist locations in Travancore Kingdom. When Travancore merged with India, Kerala Tours Limited became a private entity under the Travancore royal family. For more than 20 years since Independence, Kerala trend to ignore tourism as a key industry, leaving KTL and other private players to lead the role. In the 1960s, KTL struck gold, by collaborating with Thomas Cook and started popularizing Kovalam in western countries which started the advent of hippie culture in Kovalam Beach. The strong inflow of tourists into Kovalam started Kerala government to consider tourism as a key industry. Though it tried to nationalize Kerala Tours Limited, it soon fell into legal issues. This resulted in the government to think starting a new entity known as Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) IN 1966.

Started as a government department, KTDC became a separate commercial entity by the 1970s. Several premium guest houses of Kerala Government were identified and converted into hotel brands. Lt. Col. G. V. Raja was also the President of Tourism Promotion Council of Kerala. He was the main architect in developing Kovalam as an international tourist spot.

Framework of Kerala Tourism- This framework below is as per the National Tourism policy for Kerala State on which the whole strategy is formulated.

FIG. 1



Source-a report on Kerala's Approach to Tourism Development: A Case Study Ministry of Tourism Government of India and CRISIL

MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF THE KERALA TOURISM IMPLEMENTS

- 1. Web Promotions**—Kerala Tourism website receives nearly 1.5 million hits and 2.50 lakhs page views per month. The key contents in the website includes Key Contents of the Website include Ayurveda, Cuisine, Boat Races, "Plan Your Trip", Festival Calendar, Shopping Options, Picture and Video Gallery, Destination Gallery, and Visitor Queries.
- 2. MICE Tourism**—It is positioned as the 'Corporate Playground'. This product is highlighted in all road shows and trade meets. The websites through its strategy of trade promotions uses its USP like the backwater and promote foreigners in the pictures to indicate tourism while they are on their business trip.
- 3. Separate promotion of Eco Tourism and Business Tourism**
- 4. Separate International Print and Website Advertising**—Promoting Beaches and other destinations with a foreign people in the advertising.
- 5. Sponsorship of Events** like Co-sponsor of Kovalam Literary Festival, the India International Boat Show, organized by Kerala Tourism jointly with India Tourism, Sponsored VAGA Fest at Kerala
- 6. Participation in International Fairs**—Kerala tourism participates in all the major international events related to its identified source markets. Some of the key international fairs the state has participated in the year 2003 were-International Tourism's Bourse (ITB) 2003, Berlin, Arabian Travel Mart (ATM), 2003, Dubai, PATA Travel Mart 2003, Singapore, World Travel Mart (WTM) 2003, London etc.
- 7. Overseas Partnership**—Kerala is the first state in India, and indeed the world, to become the 'partner state' to the World Travel and Tourism Council which is a global forum for travel and tourism
- 8. Collaboration With PATA and Germany for international Branding** by participating in meets and forums and using the Bilateral Agreement Germany has agreed to development of tourism market in Kerala example development of backwaters, Solid waste management, Human Resources Development in Kerala are some of the initiatives
- 9. Certification of Places**—Certifications of tourist resources like 'Gold Star' and 'Silver Star' Certifications for Houseboats, 'Green Palm' Certifications for Eco-friendly Measures, 'Green Leaf' Certifications for Ayurveda Centres, 'STEP' Certification for Safe-To-Eat Places certification creates benchmarks for tourist spots and gives tourists an Idea about tourism credibility in terms of food, safety and services.

MAJOR FUNCTIONS OF THE KERALA TOURISM DEPARTMENT

The Department of Tourism has three major functions such as (i) Hospitality wing of the State Government (ii) Estate Office duty and (iii) Tourism Development.

i. Hospitality Wing

The Department provides accommodation and transport to the State Guests including VVIPs and VIPs. Maintains 24 Guest Houses at Kovalam, Thiruvananthapuram, Ponmudi, Attingal, Varkala, Kollam, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Aluva, Devikulam, Munnar, Peermade, Cheruthuruthy, Idukki, Thrissur, Guruvayoor, Malampuzha, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Sulthan Battery, Kannoor, Kasargod, Yathri Nivas at Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam and Kerala House at Kanyakumari and New Delhi. All reservations to these establishments except Yatri Nivas, Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi are made through GAD (Political) Govt. Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Department of Tourism has a fleet of cars of various models and brands to provide transport to the guests as well as the Ministers, Speaker, Leader of Opposition, etc.

ii. Estate Office Duty

It is the responsibility of the Department of Tourism to provide furnished Residential Bungalows to the Ministers, Leader of Opposition, Chief Whip, Speaker etc. The transport facility is also provided to the above by the Department of Tourism.

iii. Tourism Development

A shift in the emphasis from Hospitality Management to Tourism Planning, Development & Marketing was the major change the Department witnessed in the 1980s.

The Budget pattern underwent a sea change by the 1990s to provide more for Tourism Development. The activities under this head can be broadly classified into:

- (a). Marketing & Promotion, (b). Planning & Development. and (c). Support to other agencies.

Effective marketing and promotional measures are essential to attract tourists and to highlight Kerala as a distinct destination. For this, various measures such as media advertisement, printing and distribution of multi-colour brochures, hospitality to travel writers, conducting festivals, participating in National and International fairs & festivals etc are being adopted.

As part of Tourism Development, new destinations are being identified and various schemes are being implemented to develop them as important tourist spots in the State. Department is providing assistance to District Tourism Promotion Councils (DTPCs) in all the districts. Private sector investment needs encouragement from the Government. Accordingly, Tourism was declared as an industry way back in 1986 and certain concession/incentives were offered for investment in this sector.

Online Tour Operator accreditation

A completely online system has been instituted for accrediting Tour Operators based in Kerala. The system includes facility for online submission of applications. Please click here for details in www.keralatourism.gov.in.

E-submission of Tourist Arrivals

As a part of its efforts to streamline and expedite collection of tourist arrival data, Kerala Tourism has introduced a facility for e-submission of tourist arrival data. The accommodation providers in the state have been provided with a unique user id and password, with which they can upload details of tourist arrivals in their properties on a daily basis. The details can be submitted nationality-wise in terms of foreign tourist arrivals and state-wise in terms of domestic tourist arrivals. It will help Kerala Tourism to have real time data on tourist arrivals and plan the promotional strategies accordingly.

Online Homestay accreditation

Accreditation process is initiated for ensuring the quality and competence of homestays working inside the state. Now all homestays must get accreditation from the Dept of Tourism, Govt of Kerala, for its operations. An online system is introduced to facilitate the process of homestay accreditation. Homestays can fill accreditation form, upload documents and images through this system.

CONCLUSION

Kerala have been giving their health tourism a boost. The eye-catching sceneries and traditional health care system really becomes a perfect combination to lead their state at the top of the fierce competition in medical tourism. They were lucky enough to be blessed with such natural wonders that become very much advantageous to them in the promotion of tourism. It would be very much adequate if they manage to continue such practices among the entire state and also within the entire country of India. Their highly develop health care system really enables them to attract foreign patients from abroad. Moreover, the government of the State of Kerala is noticeably very responsible enough to come up with activities that would be beneficial not only for the state but as well as the inhabitants of the state. They become capable of eliminating poverty, unemployment and suicide rates within their area. Hence, if one is capable of providing such changes that will result to good outcome to the welfare of the state and the people, then this should be considered as a change among other states in India and even the other nation within the globe.

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