

RURAL TOURISM CHALLENGES IN INDIA : AN ANALYSIS**Dr. Pramila M. B.**Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology,
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Rural tourism is gaining importance in Indian tourism with its economic and social benefits it is estimated that Rs. 4,300 Crore additional revenue can be generated through rural tourism. This is going to play a vital role in bridging the gap between Rural and Urban India by balancing urbanization and counter urbanization by creating Jobs that typically occurs in the hotel and Catering trades, but can also take place, in transport, retailing and in heritage interpretation. Farmhouse accommodation can create jobs even the Caravan Campsites are yielding Jobs and revenue.

Rural tourism means any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art culture and heritage at rural locations. There by benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience that can be termed as rural tourism Rural tourism cash flows can assist job retention in services such as retailing, transport hospitality and medical care. it also provides additional income for farmer and in some cases, for foresters and fisherman Job retention is not as politically glamorous as Job creation, but helps the Viability of small communities for the survival of marginal areas. It is multi-faceted and may entail farm / agricultural tourism, Cultural tourism ,nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco tourism also.

The tourism industry often promotes an exciting and growing industry suited to the energies and enthusiasm of young people. Career options are enhanced with the opportunities for training and direct involvement in running tourism businesses, especially those within small communities.

INTRODUCTION:

A large population in India staying in rural areas are still primarily dependent on traditional age old practice ie. cultivation but the profit generating from agriculture is falling down day by day and these villagers are lacking sufficient alternative Job scope. This situation is enforcing them to settle down in nearby urban localities in search of better income and better livelihood. In rural India this can be re-developed, rejuvenated and promoted as tourist spots, these villagers will obviously get adequate number of alternative job scope that can possibly reduce the tendency of leaving their native villages and in such way the socio-economic condition of rural India can also be improved In india. Rural Tourism is still an emerging concept and this Sector is quite open and untouched for marketing.

The main aim of tourism development in rural areas is to solve key business objective outside motivation and satisfaction of tourism and economic issues related to the population of areas caused by migration of rural population to urban Centers. Rural Tourism is playing a significant role not only at the global scenario but also it has the potentially to become equally important in rural India. Such from of Tourism not only provides rewarding and individualized holiday products to tourists by ensuring absolute peace from monotonous urban city life and its traffic noise and pollution but also it generates - employment for the local community and diversities of the economy and regional employment can be traced.

Rural tourism is any form of tourism that showcases rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, out of which local community is going to be economically and socially benefitted. The distinguishing feature of tourism products in rural tourism is the wish to give visitors personalized contact, a taste of the unique village life and, as far as possible allows them to participate in the activities, traditions and lifestyles of local people. Hence rural tourist destination could be defined as a wider area dominated by the natural and formed / forested environments where specific natural economic and socio- cultural features, such as tradition local cooperation, trust and reciprocity are harmoniously embedded and as such create a unique tourist product that is predominantly small scaled, nature friendly ethno cultured, in other words sustainable.

Rural India has much to offer to the world. Rich in traditions of arts crafts and culture parts of rural India can emerge as important tourist spots . Those in the developed world who have a craze for knowledge about traditional ways of life. arts and crafts will be attracted to visit rural India , if the concept of rural tourism is marketed well.

RURAL TOURISM TO EMPOWER RURAL INDIA

The concept of rural tourism has a noble cause, it is another kind of Sustainable tourism that exploits resources in rural regions causes little or no harmful impact and generates increasing benefits to rural areas in terms of rural productivity, employment improved distribution of wealth conservation of the rural environment and the culture of the local peoples involvement, and a suitable way of adapting traditional beliefs and values to the modern items. Rural Tourism can develop a win-win situation for both the rural and urban communities for developing the rural tourism one needs to understand the rural environment, demography, socio-culture economic and political background of that place.

Rural tourism will bring people of different cultures, faiths Languages and life styles close to one another and it will Provide a broader outlook of life. It will not only generate employment for the people but it can also develop social, cultural and educational values and can prevent rural urban migration. Thus rural tourism could attract tourists by providing excellent glimpse of the village ambience with local cuisine.

The accommodations for tourists should be constructed by the villagers in traditional design and architecture. Bank finances should be made available at attractive terms and conditions for promotion of such projects. rural tourism has now been, an essential part of the tourism industry. This is a kind of sustainable revenue generating activity that ensures inflow of money from urban to the rural economy and side by side it also prevents the tendency of migration from rural villages to urban cities in search of better livelihood. Such form of tourism motivates host community to stay in their own soil fostering them the alternative opportunities of earring. It is an important instrument for sustainable human resource development.

NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Tourism generates new opportunities for this new growing industry of the rural business which is not directly involved in tourism but can benefit.

From tourist activity through developing close relationships with tourist facilities where local foods can be used as part of the Tourism offering in a locality. Rural tourism facilitates expansion of complementary business new businesses which are created to cater to tourist needs for hospitality services recreational activities arts and crafts. Promotion of village tourism as the primary tourism product to spread tourism and its socio- economic benefits to rural and its new geographic regions. Key geographic regions would be identified for development and promotion of Rural Tourism.through the following approaches:

Community diversification

Community diversification is an important activity in many upland and climatically marginal regions. Forest regions have suffered seriously due to the socio-economic problems because of the mechanization of the falling prices following the reduced timber demand. Rural Tourism can assist Forestry by diversifying income sources for forest communities.

Preservation of Rural culture Heritage and restoring Arts and Crafts

In rural tourism is a fundamental element in both the tourists and host community's feelings this makes the area attractive to visit and live in rural museums play a vital role in preserving heritage Arts and Crafts to have a special place in the cultural heritage of regions and nations, support between the arts and tourism that can be a two-way process. Many communities now use arts and Crafts festivals as a marketing mechanism to encourage visitors to come to their areas.

Environmental improvements

Environmental impotents such as village paving and traffic regulation Schemes, Sewage and litter disposal can be assisted by tourism revenues and political pressures from tourism authorities. These help to develop pride of place, importance in retaining existing population and business and in attracting new enterprises. Landscape conservation has become an increasingly important form of heritage protection. Landscape is of crucial importance to rural tourism visitor .

The rural people can be brought to the mainstream with financial Empowerments societal developments and cultural adjustments with the following set of benefits from rural tourism.

- By creating employment opportunities especially for the rural youth and to rise the income level of the rural community
- Generat foreign exchange and improve the demand for other goods and services that will increase the revenue.

- To improve the public services and to generate revenue for the government.
- Modernization of agriculture and other rural small scale activities and local small businessman will be benefited.
- Education and health of the rural community will improve and definitely this will increase the standard of living.
- Foreign tourist will bring cultural change faster in rural areas.
- Market for agro products and handicrafts will develop with rural tourism
- Farmers and artisans will develop direct link with the customers and this will help to develop the rural areas.

Rural tourism in India has great future since it not only provides natural elements of beauty but also the indigenous local traditions, customs and foods. Direct experience with local people can be a unique selling proposition to attract tourists. Every state in India has some unique. Handicraft, traditions and variety of food.options Marketing the Rural Tourism products is not an easy task but specialized attempts should be made for it.

The rural tourism should not go for a mass marketing . whereas,this should develop deterrent strategy for different segment to make it successful. Trying to appeal everyone is a common mistake. To be effective and successful marketer need to focus on particular segments.

Tourism is predominantly a consumer activity, it should be demand. driven, concentrated on the visitors and their needs and motivation. Hence the motives attracting people to the villages are seen as a reflection of a growing interest in the outdoors and a number of other general trends of tourist motivation. The attractiveness of rural areas for tourism and recreation can first be associated with the image of rurality.

Rural tourism also promotes social integration and international understanding preservation of nature and natural resources. Besides, market awareness and active participation with legalised sustainable marketing policies and realistic planning and marketing strategies are also crucial for flourishing of rural tourism in India. Improvement of the basic infrastructure development in rural areas can make the future bright one.

SUGGESTIONS TO PROMOTE RURAL TOURISM IN INDIA:

Rural tourism can help in creating sustainable development in our villages.

Governments should consider rural tourism as an important criteria at Priority basis and help in creating healthy competitive business environment. Along with Government, the local community NGO should also participate in developing rural tourism destinations and provide high quality of services to the tourists. Some of the Suggestions to promote rural tourism are:

- To create adequate facilities and suitable infrastructure like accommodation, roads, airport facilities, rail facilities, local transport communication links and other essential amenities which are essential for development of rural tourism
- liberalization of policies and approaches to communication will promote rural tourism.
- Identifying villages with immense potential for development of rural tourism destinations to showcase the core competency of rural India. Encouraging and involving the local community to participate all levels for their benefits.
- Promotion of public private partnerships. The government should promote rural tourism to ensure sustainable economic development and positive social change with many projects of rural tourism through encouragement of community participation and mobilization.
- To continue to build the capacity of the Rural tourism Units
- To Improve the quality of stay with a focus on creativity and innovation
- Ensure and Update the rural tourism database and Produce an annual report on rural tourism on yearly bases.

CONCLUSION :

India with its glorious historical past, cultural heritage, varied landscapes and natural beauty has attracted tourists from times immemorial from different places to enjoy its natural endowments, cultural, religious and spiritual heritage The tourism industry in India has emerged as one of the major economic drivers for growth, contributing substantially to Foreign exchange earnings. Tourism is one of the leading global

industry contributing 11 percent of global GDP. The world tourism organization estimates that there will be 1.5 billion tourists in the world in 2020, representing 21 percent of world population. The world Tourism organization further notes that within the next 5-10 years, range of products on offer to tourists seeking the rural experiences is to increase significantly. There is a clear trend in growth of rural tourism India's vast, rural diversity and heritage offer tremendous potential for tourism in rural areas.

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