



Socio-economic Prospectives and Challenges for Rural Tourism in Dakshina Kannada and Kasaragod Districts

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Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go'

- T. S. Eliot

Introduction and Significance:

Rural tourism focuses on actively participating in a rural lifestyle. It can be a variant of ecotourism. Many rural villages can facilitate tourism because many villagers are hospitable and eager to welcome and sometimes even host visitors. Agriculture is becoming highly mechanized and therefore, requires less manual labor. This trend is causing economic pressure on some villages, which in turn causes young people to move to urban areas. There is however, a segment of the urban population that is interested in visiting the rural areas and understanding the lifestyle. The development of infrastructure in rural areas having potential for tourism is being supported under the existing scheme of destination development.

The objective is to showcase rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations and in villages, which have core competence in art & craft, handloom, and textiles as also an asset base in the natural environment. The intention is to benefit the local community economically and socially. This also enables interaction between tourists and local population for a mutually enriching experience. Under this scheme, the thrust is to promote village tourism as the primary tourism product. The objective is to spread tourism and its socio-economic benefits to rural and its new geographic regions, thereby stopping the exodus from rural to urban areas. For the visitor, whose expenditure creates revenue for host community service providers, rural tourism adds value through packaged programmes in art & craft imparted by skilled local artisans. Village entertainment groups unveil local history and culture, natural and oral treasures.

Dakshina Kannada and Kasaragod - The Myriad Marvel of rural tourism explores into the Mangalore and Kasaragod's tourism potentiality as a destination in general and as a rural tourism destination in particular. The present study adopts a narrative style as far as tracing the evolution and emergence of rural tourism in both the districts is concerned. The main respondents selected for the primary survey data are the people who are undertaking rural tourism activities and the service providers in the rural tourism.

Objectives of the Study:

The current study is carried out with the following objectives:

- ☞ To study and understand the possible prospectives in rural tourism.
- ☞ To Identify and explore the innovatives and sustainable service packages in rural tourism.
- ☞ To find out the SWOC (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges) of Dakshina Kannada and Kasaragod districts in developing rural tourism.

- ☞ To develop the strategies to resolve the emerged complexities and challenges of rural tourism in these districts.

Hypotheses

Following assumptions have been opted during the study.

- ☞ The gender does not have any influence on rural tourism activities.
- ☞ The rural tourism is not dependent on seasonal and climatic changes.

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Methodology

This is purely an empirical study and is exploratory one. The study is based on the sources of Primary and Secondary Data like Questionnaires, Books, Magazine, Internet sources.

Data Analysis and Interpretation and Hypothesis tested.

Part-I: Analysis of Customers

Table 1- Type of activities tourists undertake in business tourism.

Type of activities				
Trekking	Rock Climbing	Mountaineering	River rafting	Total
15	06	03	06	30

Source: Survey Data

Table 1 shows that out of 30 respondents, all are tourists and they engage themselves in the different types of rural tours. Out of 30 respondents 15 respondents are undertaking trekking activities, 06 respondents undertaking both rock climbing and river rafting and remaining 3 respondents undertaking Mountaineering. So it is clear from the survey that, majority of the respondents undertakes trekking as a rural tourism activities compared to other activities.

Table 02: Period of length tourists undertakes rural tourism.

Length of a period	Respondents	Percentage
Since 1-10 years	08	26.66
Since 10-20 years	16	53.33
Since 20-30 years	03	10
Since 30-40 years	03	10
Total	30	100

Source: Survey Data

Table 2 shows that out of 30 respondents, all are tourists and they engage themselves in the different types of rural tours. Out of 30 respondents 20 respondents are undertaking rural tourism activities between 10-20 years, 08 respondents undertaking it between 1-10 years 03 respondents are undertaking it between 20-30 and 30-40 years. So it is clear from the survey that, majority of the respondents undertakes rural tourism since 10-20 years and they frequently visit to rural tourism venture places.

Table- 03: The number of people participating in rural tourism activities:

The number of persons undertaking	Respondents	Percentage
1-10	12	40
10-20	08	26.66
20-30	06	20
30-40	04	13.33
Total	30	100

Source: Survey Data

Table 03 indicates that out of 30 respondents, all are tourists and they engage themselves in the different types of rural tours. Out of 30 respondents 12 respondents are undertaking rural tourism activities with 10-20 members, 08 respondents undertaking rural tourism activities with 10-20 members, 06 respondents are undertaking with 20-30 members and remaining 04 members are undertaking rural tourism activities with 30-40 peoples. So it is clear from the survey that, majority of the respondents undertakes rural tourism activities with 1-10 members and they frequently visit to rural tourism venture places.

Table: 4 -Perception towards the practice that person can independently engage in rural tourism activities.

Gender	Respondents opinion that they independently engage in rural tourism activities		
	YES	NO	Respondents
Male	10	08	18
Female	----	12	12
Total	10	20	30

Table 4 shows that out of 30 respondents, 18 are Males and 12 are females. And majority of both the genders (20 out of 30) have the opinion that independently they cannot undertake the rural tourism activities, because the reason being is insecurity, loneliness, boring etc. Hence, it may be concluded, no travelers want to undertake the rural tourism activities independently.

The female tourists do not undertake tourist activity in rural areas may be also due to the fact of gender itself. The hypothesis that gender does not have any any influence on rural tourism is hereby proved as Null Hypothesis, therefore it may be rejected.



Table 5- The main challenges they face undertaking rural tourism activities.

Lack of training	Lack of support from family	Lack of qualified guides	Lack of knowledge in the field	Total
06	12	08	04	30

Table 05 indicates that out of 30 respondent's tourists engage themselves in the different types of rural tours. Out of 30 respondents 12 face the challenge that they lack support from their family, and 8 respondents lack of qualified guides is the main challenges they face, lack of training is the another major challenge for 06 respondents, for 4 respondents lack of knowledge in the field is the major challenge. So it is clear from the survey that, majority of the respondents (12 out of 30) face lack of support from the family as the major challenge in undertaking rural tourism activities.

Table 06: The season tourists undertake rural tours:

Which season they undertake rural tours			
Months	Respondents	Total	Percentage
Jan-April	14	14	46.66
April-June	07	07	23.33
June- September	04	04	13.33
Sept- December	05	05	16.66

Source: Survey Data

Table 06 indicates that out of 30 respondents, all the tourists engage themselves in different types of rural tours. Out of 30 respondents 14 respondents undertake rural tourism activities between the month of Jan-April, 07 respondents between April-June, 05 respondents between September-December and remaining 4 respondents between the months of June-September. So it is clear from the survey that, majority of the respondents (14 out of 30) undertaking rural tourism activities between the months of January to April.

On the analysis of the above, the second hypothesis that the rural tourism is not influenced by the seasonal climate changes proved to be a Null Hypothesis and therefore may be rejected. Highest level of rural tourism is undertaken during winter in coastal parts of India.

Part-II: Analysis of Service Providers:

Table 07: Training methods adopted and daily hours spend with their employees.

No. of hours they spend with the employees	Training methods adopted				Total	Percent age
	Training	Consultation with senior staffs	Motivation	Self directed learning		
01-04 hours	04	03	---	02	09	30%
04-06 hours	05	04	01	01	11	36.66%
06-08 hours	03	02	01	01	07	23.33%
08-10 hours	01	01	---	01	03	10
Total	13	10	02	05	30	100%

Source: Survey Data

Table 07 shows that out of 30 respondents, 36.66 percent of the respondents spend 04-06 hours with their employees, 30 percent of the respondents spend 01-04 hours with their employees, 23.33 percent of the respondents spend 06-08 hours with their employees, 10 percent of the respondents spend 08-10 hours with their employees. And majority of the service providers train their employees through proper methods of training (43.33 percent) and 33.33 percent of the service providers train their employees in consultation with the senior employees, 16.66 percent of the service providers train their employees with self directed learning and 06.66 percent of the service providers train their employees through motivation. So it may be observed that the service providers wish to spend most of their time with the employees and thus cultivate various methods of training to motivate their employees effectively in the enterprises.

Table 08: The future dream of service providers about rural tourism business.

Future dream of their business	Total	Percentage
Become successful entrepreneur	12	40
Provide standard facilities	08	26.66
Wish to establish another plant	04	13.33
To provide all the facilities under one roof	06	20
Total	30	100

Source: Survey Data

The Table 08 shows that, out of 30 respondents 40 percent of the service providers future dream of business, to become a successful entrepreneur, 26.66 percent of the women entrepreneur's future dream of business is, to provide standard facilities in their business such as, the tour operators can own their own CRS to issue the air tickets, Hoteliers wish to go for higher standard from their existing one, 20 percent of the service providers future



dream of business is, to provide all the facilities under one roof, if tourist or guest comes to the organization means his or her need to go for outside for services should be reduced for any travel related services, 08 percent of the service providers future dream of business is, to start another business plant in local area or outside. Thus it may be observed that, all the rural tourism providers have their own future dream of their business and they are working hard in fulfill those dreams.

Findings of the Study:

The rural tourism activities are same for men and women, there are however, many problems faced by women, which are of different dimensions and magnitudes, which prevent them from realizing their full potentiality as adventure tourists. Few findings of the study may be detailed as;

- 1) Trekking is one of the major rural tourism activity compared to all other activities.(Table1)
- 2) Out of 30 respondents, majority of the customers undertake rural tourism activities since 10-20 years. (Table-02)
- 3) Majority of the customers engage themselves in rural tourism related since 1-10 years. (Table-03)
- 4) Majority of the respondents have an opinion that, independently they cannot undertake rural tourism activities. (Table -04)
- 5) Lack of support from the family and lack of qualified staffs are main challenges faced by them. (Table-05)
- 6) Most of the service providers train their employees through the method of training and consultation with the senior employees.(Table-06)
- 7) Majority of the Women entrepreneurs spend at least 04-08 hours in a day with their employees. (Table-07)
- 8) All the service providers have their own future dream of their business and they are working hard to fulfill those dreams.(Table-08)

Suggestions:

As per the survey data, the following suggestions are framed on the basis of findings, they are:

1. There should be more encouragement for rural tourism activities, so that it can create more job opportunities for others as well as new destinations can be explored.
2. Specific obstacles for rural tourism activities should be removed. Most of the rural areas lacks from the basic infrastructure.
3. The government and the local authorities like GramaPanchayaths should support rural tourism and

should give the financial assistance for the development of the infrastructure.

4. Gender bias need to be regulated and controlled, there should be much security and encouragement for the women travelers as an adventure tourists.
5. Increase the carrying capacity of a destination ensuring the availability of enough parking facilities in the destination.

Conclusion

Tourism growth potential can be harnessed as a strategy for Rural Development. At the same time this trend of urbanization has led to falling income levels, lesser job opportunities in the total areas leading to an urbanization syndrome in the rural areas. Rural Tourism is one of the few activities which can provide a solution to these problems. Besides, there are other factors which are shifting the trend towards rural tourism like increasing levels of awareness, growing interest in heritage and culture and improved accessibility, and environmental consciousness. In the developed countries, this has resulted in a new style of tourism of visiting village settings to experience and live a relaxed and healthy lifestyle. This concept has taken the shape of a formal kind of Rural Tourism. Rural tourism is essentially an activity which takes place in the countryside. It is multi-faceted and may entail farm/agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism. As against conventional tourism, rural tourism has certain typical characteristics like; it is experience oriented, the locations are sparsely populated, it is predominantly in natural environment, it meshes with seasonality and local events and is based on preservation of culture, heritage and traditions.

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