



ECONOMICS OF TOURISM – A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO MALAMPUZHA TOURIST DESTINATION IN PALAKKAD DISTRICT

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in India. It is one of the world's largest growing and dynamic economic sectors in many countries. It is an instrument for economic development and employment generation, particularly in remote and backward areas which has been well recognized worldwide. It is the largest service industry globally in terms of gross revenue as well as foreign exchange earnings, infrastructure development, new management techniques and the training experience which affects different sectors of the economy, Which are positively contributing to the economic and social development of the a country. It is motivated by the natural urge of every human being for new experience, adventure, education and entertainment. The motivations for tourism also include social, religious and business interest.

Key Words: Economics Of Tourism, Tourism Industry, Employment Generation.

Introduction

Tourism has emerged as an economic activity of immense global importance. It has the potential to stimulate other economic sectors through its backward and forward linkages and cross-sectoral synergies with sectors like agriculture, horticulture, poultry, handicrafts, transport, construction, etc. Expenditure on tourism induces a chain of transactions requiring supply of goods and services from these related sectors. The consumption demand, emanating from tourist expenditure, also induces more employment and generates a multiplier effect on the economy. As a result, additional income and employment opportunities are generated through such linkages. Thus, the expansion of the tourism sector can lead to a large scale employment generation and poverty alleviation. The economic benefits that flow into the economy through growth of tourism in shape of increased national and State revenues, business receipts, employment, wages and salary income, buoyancy in Central, State and local tax receipts can contribute towards overall socio-economic improvement and can accelerate the growth in the economy.

Tourism is also considered as one of the economic sectors in India that has the potential to grow at a high rate and can ensure consequential development of the infrastructure of the destinations. It has the capacity to capitalize on the country's success in the service sector and provide sustainable models of growth. It is the central pillar of the service economy. It is considered as "passport of development". For the under developed countries, it was seen as "soft" development alternative for stimulating economic growth. In many countries tourism receipts account for up to 40% of the total export of goods and services and often helps to cover the trade deficit, thus improving the overall balance of payment situation.

When we move to the Indian context the pace of growth of tourism can be seen as incredible. It provides plenty of employment opportunities and strengthens the infrastructural support and facilities for new forms of tourism like holiday and leisure tourism, wild tourism and so on. According to the latest data our foreign exchange earnings is Rs.22, 926.55 crores per year. But India can do much better and earn more foreign exchange if the government gives more attention to this sector. A national Tourism policy prepared by the Tourism department of India includes all action plans for promoting tourism. It provides a relationship between economic development and the environment protection and preservation. It also provides provisions for foreign investment and the incentives for hotels and related aspects of tourism industry.

Kerala which is popularly known as 'God's own country' is one of the 50 tourist spots in the world. Tourism has emerged as one of the few economic alternatives to develop the state economy. Factors like geographical diversity and cultural heritage help the growth of tourism in our state. Kerala tourism development corporation hold the motto that "receive a guest and to send back a friend". So in order to satisfy a guest with full hospitality we have to improve our infrastructure with proper publicity and awareness not only to domestic tourists but also to foreigners.

Scope of the study

Since Malampuzha tourist destination has emerged as the most lucrative business having the tremendous potentiality for generating income and employment opportunities, promoting growth of ancillary industries, it can be said that this place can help the various sections of the society in numerous ways. But presently there are some problems associated with the maintenance and other aspects connected with this area. So an attempt to find out the extent of the problems is necessary to examine the condition of this tourist spot, hence this paper concentrates on the economic aspects of the Malampuzha tourist centre.



Objectives of the study

- To measure the growth trend of tourism of palakkad district with special reference to Malampuzha tourist spot.
- To find out the economic impact of tourism in Malampuzha

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data are used. Secondary data is collected from various books, journals magazines and so on. Data are also collected from official records of District Tourism Promotion council (DTPC), Malampuzha information centre and the publications of Departments like Bureau of economics and statistics. Primary data is collected from various institutions and shops in the spot and also from the visitors (twenty). Simple random sampling technique is used to get an idea about the overall situation of the spot.

Toursim in Palakkad

Palakkad- one of the revenue districts of Kerala- the land of palmyras and paddy fields and chief granary is often called the 'Gateway of Kerala'. The district is gifted with beauty of virgins and verdant Nelliampathy hills , the precious and unique silent Valley National park, the famous Parambikulam wild life sanctuary , Attappady hills and more than half a dozen dam sites and gardens like Malampuzha, Kanjirapuzha , Siruvani and so on. Endowed with rich history, Palakkad is known for its well preserved heritage.

Table 1- Foreign and Domestic tourist arrivals in Palakkad district

Year	Foreign tourists	Domestic tourists
2000	1517	300888
2001	809	274716
2002	611	266438
2003	661	271169
2004	947	256015
2005	801	266837
2006	809	300674
2007	615	315591
2008	785	324399
2009	1170	332787
2010	1270	359961
2011	1331	383027
2012	1557	404017
2013	1874	438552
2014	2093	475361
2015	3067	375255
2016	4093	256190

Source: Tourism Statistics

Foreign Tourist arrival to Palakkad during the year 2016 was 4093, it shows an increasing trend over the previous years. Domestic Tourist arrival to Palakkad during the year 2016 was 2, 56,190. It shows a decreasing trend compared to other previous years. Here during the year 2016 foreigners are highly attracted to this destination compared with the domestic visitors.

Description of the destination

Among the various tourist centres of palakkad, Malampuzha tourist centre is considered to be the most popular destination. It is the largest reservoir of Kerala. Malampuzha exudes the charm of the harmony of nature with a perfect synchronization of the grandeur of the mountains blending with serenity of rivers. There is fresh water Aquarium, a snake park and a children's park, which await the pleasure and delight of children. Adjacent to the reservoir there is an ideal lake for boating and fishing. A small garden in the Japanese style gives a touch of exotic charm to the land scape. Another item of interest in the park is the imposing concrete sculpture 'Yakshi' done by the renowned Kanai Kunhiraman. The passenger Ropeway, the first of its kind in south India , offers adventurous and delightful air journey across the gardens, giving a soul string view of the gardens, the distant hills that kiss the heavens and blue strip of the reservoir. There is telescopic tower in the garden providing terrestrial view upto forty miles. The first Rock garden emerged from the master creator Padmashree Nek Chand of



Chandigarh is at Malampuzha. It has found a niche for itself as an effective instrument for generating employment, earning revenue and foreign exchange, enhancing environment, preserving culture and tradition thereby facilitating over all development.

Table 2- Tourist arrivals in Malampuzha and earnings from the destination

year	Number of Tourists	Earnings (Rs)
2003	811138	3620573
2004	754007	3357466
2005	899621	3903592
2006	848982	3681942
2007	725694	3255373
2008	767838	6769620
2009	960328	8695840
2010	1240965	9114725
2011	464775	10360770
2012	1110048	24354195
2013	1401575	30425735
2014	1346918	33344133
2015	1518824	37166501
2016	1348428	51109861

Source: DTPC (Records)

The most important draw back in the spot is that it is not a major attraction to foreigners because eco tourism centres are more fascinating than busy centres. Malampuzha is progressing as a tourist centre and a variety of enterprises are developing in connection with it. This tourist centre lacks variety of entertainment items as compared to other tourist centres. High prices are charged from the tourist and so on. But Rope way and Boating enjoyed some benefits but it also shows a marginal benefit to attract tourists.

From the primary data we examined, the pattern of employment and working condition of the employees reveals that there is not much increase in the employment opportunities in the spot. The standard of living of the workers is not better. Differences of opinion exist regarding the working condition in the other categories. Thus majority of the employees are dissatisfied with their job.

Earnings from tourism occupy an important place in the national economy of a country. The flow of money generated by tourist spending contributes to various sections of the economy. It provides a number of other economic benefits, which vary in importance from one country to another and also depending upon the nature and scale of tourism. Tourist facilities such as hotels, parks, restaurants which are sued by tourists and visitors occupy a significant portion of the cost borne. Tourists also contribute tax revenue both directly through sales tax and indirectly through property tax. So tourism provides employment, brings infrastructural improvement and may help in regional development.

Tourism is one of fastest growing sectors in India. It is not only a good industry in the field of economic development but it is equally an important medium for international, socio- cultural and economic links. Mostly this tourist spot consists of visitors and not tourists. Our policy makers must pay attention to reduce the weakness of the tourism sector and at the same time appreciate and promote the positive impact of this sector on the economy.

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