



A geographical study of tourism development in Karnataka State

Dr. Prasanna Kumar. K. R

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography

GFGC, Vijayanagara, Bangalore.

Abstract:

The term tourism is derived from the French word 'Tour' which means a journey from one place to another place. It is a movement of leisure time involving movement of journey or stay at new destinations. Tourism is a complex, prismatic and dynamic phenomenon. Tourism development is essential for economic growth, political legitimation, social integration and rural development especially in developing countries like India. It receives increasing attention as a major source for employment generation. With considering the significance of tourism it becomes a need of modern society and support to practices for sustainable development. Therefore, tourism is recognized as economically crucial and environmentally friendly activity. Tourism regards as a passport to peace and promotes spiritual development both at regional and intra-regional level. Tourism in the state has sprung up in recent past though it has a long history after liberalization of the economy, transportation, telecommunication, accommodation and positive government policies. It was observed that nineteenth century aristocratic people of Europe have organized institutional travelling for the sake of educational and experimental purpose. Now-a-days, term tourist is used to travel for pleasure or education but not for financial benefits. Tourism is function of diverse natural and cultural landscapes. It assimilates into environment and culture of destination. The relationship between destination and mankind is major focus of tourism as it is a combination of natural, socio-cultural and politico-historical base make suitable for tourism development in any region. Among them relief features are significant in determining suitable places and spatial distribution of tourist destinations which creates tourism opportunities. It is therefore, necessary to evaluate the profile of study region Karnataka state, through the salient features. Present research paper is an attempt to describe physical and socio-cultural characteristics of Karnataka State.

Keywords: Tourism, Economic development, employment, physio, socio-cultural features.

Introduction:

Karnataka is the eighth largest state in the country in terms of geographical area and has pre-dominant position in the field of Information Technology (IT), Bio-technology (BT) and Nano Technology. The share of Karnataka in Information Technology exports is nearly 38% of the country's exports. It has made it 'The Silicon State of India'. It is considered to be 'Melting Pot' of many cultures and languages from across the globe. The state lies between 11.5° North and 18.50° North latitude and 74° East and 78.30° East longitudes in the southern plateau. The state is bounded by Maharashtra and Goa in the North and North West; by the Arabian sea in the west; by Kerala and Tamil Nadu states in the South and by Andhra Pradesh in East. Karnataka extends to about 750 km from North to South and about 400 km from East to West. Its total land area is 1.92 lakh km², accounting for 5.83% of the total area of the country. As per 2011 census, the state population is 6.11 crore, making it the 9th most populated state with 319 density of population, which is lower than all India's density of population of 382 per km². The annual rainfall of the state varies roughly from 50 to 350 cm. In districts of Bijapur, Raichur, Bellary, Southern half of Gulbarga, the rainfall is the lowest varying from 50 to 60 cm. Karnataka is the largest producer of coffee, raw silk and sandal wood based products like perfumes and 75% of the Indian floriculture industry is located in Karnataka. The state accounts for 59% of the country's coffee production, 47% of country's Ragi production.

Geographical and Agricultural Profile of Karnataka

The state of Karnataka is an important agrarian economy in India. In Karnataka 62% of the land is cultivable. The percentage of cultivable land in Karnataka is higher than any other state in India. The normal net cultivated area in the state is about 117.48 lakh hectares and accounts for 62% of the total geographical area. The soil and vegetation are always correlated and complementary to each other. The state is divided into 10 agro-climatic zones. As a result of varied agro-climatic features almost all cereals, pulses, oilseeds and commercial crops are cultivated in different parts of the state.

The Western Ghats of the state is well known for Coffee plantations, Rubber, Pepper and Fruits. The Khariff crops (April to September) in Karnataka comprises of Millets, Paddy, Maize, Moong (Pulses), Ground nut, Red chilli, Cotton, Soya bean, Sugar cane, Turmeric. The major Rabi crops (October to January) are Barley, Mustard, Sesame, Peas.

Land use pattern in Karnataka State

Sl. No	Classification Area	Lakh hectare	Percentage
1.	Total Geographical Area	190.50	100
2.	Forest	30.73	16
3.	Not available for cultivation:		
	a) Land put to non-agri. Uses	14.36	7.54
	b) Barren & uncultivable land	7.87	4.13
4.	Cultivable waste land	4.13	2.17
5.	Uncultivated land excluding fallow land:		
	a) Permanent pastures & other grazing land	9.08	4.77
	b) Misc. Tree crops, Groves	2.83	1.49
6.	Fallow Land	23.57	12.37
7.	Net Area Sown	97.73	51.30
8.	Area sown more than once	19.55	10.26
9.	Total Cropped Area	117.48	62
10.	Cropping Intensity - %		120%

Source: Annual Season & Crop Reports of DE&S, Bangalore.

Core areas of Tourism in Karnataka

- *Heritage zones and clusters:* Developing heritage tourism through heritage clusters and zones. Many taluks and circuits are identified and a master plan will be prepared for developing these zones as heritage zones.
- *Sustainable and green tourism:* Emphasis is laid on sustainable development of tourism sector. Rural tourism, farm and Agri-tourism, estate walks are the prime concerns of sustainable and green tourism
- *E-Tourism:* One of the prime objectives of Tourism policy 2020 is e-tourism. The prime focus is on e-administrative system of tourism activities such as e-banking, online payment and net-banking, app tourism, social networking etc
- *Weekend and Film Induced tourism:* The department of tourism is also focusing on promoting weekend tourism to prime attractions such as Coorg and Chikkamagalore. Special interest is given on promoting film induced tourism and also to reduce environmental damages from film shootings.

Beaches as Tourist Centres:

Beaches are the natural attraction and choice of many. The beaches are formed by sea waves and load carried down by rivers depositing paralleled to coasts. Karnataka's coastline is known as Karavali stretches 320 km between Mangalore in Dakshina Kannada district and Karwar in Uttara Kannada district. Bhatkal is the main centre with around eight beaches. The coastline of Karnataka is along the eastern shore of Arabian Sea. Karnataka's coastline spans across 3 districts Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada. Some of the important beaches in the state are: Udupi Beach, Murudeshwar, Gokarna, Mangalore, Karwar, Tannirbavi Beach, Om Beach, St. Mary's Island, Devbagh Beach, Tilmati Beach, Malpe, Majali Beach, Kaup Beach, Suratkal Beach, Panambur beach, Someshwar beach, Sasihitlu Beach, Ullal Beach, Maravanthe Beach, Anjadip Island, KoodiBagh, Kurumgad or Koormagad,

Hill stations as Tourist attraction spots:

Verdant hills, vast tea estates, curvy roads and an endless sense of tranquility – hill stations in Karnataka are meant to be soothing places from the humdrum affairs of life. Inviting vacationers from all across the country with their tempting landscapes and pleasant climatic conditions, these hill settlements in Karnataka are suitable for family getaways as well bachelor trips. Set in the magical realm of the Western Ghats, there are numerous hill stations near Karnataka adding grace to the exquisiteness of the region. Karnataka and its surrounding regions also feature some incredible options for photography, adventure and wildlife exploration, such as Sakleshpur, Nandi Hills, and Kodachadri among many others. A brief profile of the magnificent hill stations of Karnataka, which attracts tourists across the globe is as follows.

Mighty and magnificent, at an elevation of 1200 metres, Biligirirangana Hills (BR hills) stand tall at the confluence of the Eastern and Western Ghats in South Karnataka and are frequented for their diverse flora and fauna. BR Hills offers plenty of sights to visit, thrilling sports to experience, and some wonderful homely places to stay at during the course of visit.

Lush green trees set against the backdrop of majestic Mullayangiri ranges, Chikmagalur is one of the most popular spots for trekkers, nature enthusiasts, thrill-seekers, and explorers. Chikmagalur stands at an elevation of 3,400 feet, covered with eye-catching tea and coffee plantations, making it a major commercial hub of the state, and also bringing in tourists from all over the world to entice the unique experience of walking through the plantations.

Popularly known as the Scotland of India, Coorg lives up to its name with luring amalgamation of history, luxury, adventure, mouth-watering cuisine. Located along the western ghats, this famous coffee-producing hill station is well-known for its jaw-dropping ravishing scenery and opulence.

Agumbe, popularly known as the ‘Cherrapunji of South’, is a tiny village nestled in the thick rainforests of Western Ghats in Karnataka. It is one of the last surviving rainforests in India which receives an average of around 7,000mm of rainfall annually. Agumbe is registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is famous for its rich biodiversity, waterfalls and red-hazy sun-set over the Arabian Sea. The village is also known as the ‘Cobra Capital’ of India because of the number of Cobras that are found here and could be encountered while driving along the Ghats. It is also a home to more than 70 other species of snakes.

Nandi hills is at a height of 4,851 feet above sea level and offers the unmistakable scenic beauty away from the chaos of the city. Apart from stargazing and watching the first rays of sun spread its crimson color in the sky, there are tons of other activities to be done here like Paragliding, cycling, trekking, camping and more.

Male Mahadeshwara Hills is situated on the southern edge of Bangalore at Hanur Taluk district of Chamarajanagara district. The temple does not only draws lakhs of pilgrims from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and devotees each year but the incredible location of the Shiva Temple amid lush green forest belt attracts hordes of nature enthusiasts as well making it one of the best things to see.

A hill station in the heights of Western Ghats of India, Sakleshpur is famous for being surrounded by a surprising number of plantations of coffee, tea and spices. Apart from that, with the recent development in the tourism happening around the town, places to visit in Sakleshpur have recently gathered a lot of fame for themselves because of their beauty and the kind of experiences that they harbour, both of which are unparalleled.

A hidden gem of Agumbe, Kundadri Hill is a stunning hillock, which has a beautiful Jain Temple as its main attraction other than the awe-inspiring beauty. The 2 small ponds enveloping the temple, enhances the beauty to a next level. The dense forests, paddy fields and the enormous mountain chain makes Kundadri Hill a must visit destination.

Kodachadri is a heaven for all the nature and adventure lovers as this tiny hill station is blessed with stunning views, attractions and activities to give a perfect kind of holiday experience. Situated at a height of 1343 metres, this place is a natural heritage site with eminent cultural and religious significance, making it one of the best hill stations in Karnataka.

Situated at an altitude of 1,712 metres above the sea level, Anthargange is an ideal location for adventure lovers. The name of the place means “Ganges from the deep” in the local language. The origin of the stream is a mystery and thus, given the name. Anthargange is blessed with sights of cave exploration, rock climbing and trekking, making it a perfect location for all adventure freaks.

One of the most popular hill stations in Karnataka, Gangamoola is a beautiful place to spend some quality time amidst nature. It is famously known as the source of three important rivers in Karnataka State- Tunga, Bhadra and Netravathi. The beautiful scenery, landscapes and abundant attractions make it an idyllic location for all holiday seekers.

Yelagiri is counted amongst the alluring hill stations in Karnataka. Situated at a height of around 1,410 m above the sea level, it is such a retreat where you can indulge in several activities, relax amidst the pristine nature. Be it the enchanting beauty of this hill station or its winding roads, its rugged terrains or the salubrious climate, this hill station proves to be an ideal destination for all the classes of travellers.

Heritage Tourism in Karnataka

Heritage tourism plays a significant role to attract tourists in destinations. Heritage Tourism is considered as one sector that shall propel growth, contribute foreign exchange, enhance employability and result in community development. The most important dimension of heritage tourism is the cultural exchange among various nationalities that visit the country and the cross cultural interface that shall pave way for universal peace and harmony. In spite of its high potential in heritage tourism product development and tourist infrastructure, Karnataka state has not attracted the maximum number tourists as expected.

Karnataka has rich treasure of relic's ancient remains, vestiges, ancient monuments of archaeological and also historical importance. Karnataka has many megalithic and Neolithic heritage sites. The ancient heritage monuments of noted ruling dynasties have stood the test of time even after thousands of years. Their style, inbuilt sculpture and architecture have attracted number tourists from all over the world. Heritage tourism is one of the most promising tourism industries in Karnataka. Karnataka is blessed with rich heritage monuments which constitute the state's core cultural tourism products. Karnataka ranks 4th popular tourist destination among all the states in India.

Karnataka has the second highest number of nationally protected monuments in India, second only to Uttar Pradesh. Most significantly, Hampi group of monuments and Pattadakal group of monuments are recognised as world heritage centres by UNESCO. These world heritages centers attract large number both domestic and foreign tourists all over the world. The Karnataka tourism dept is planning to promote heritage tourism. Hampi, Pattadakal, Aihole and Badami heritage monuments will be given preference for heritage tourism. In Hampi, a 232 - acre patch located in close proximity to the heritage site is readily available for a heritage village. Karnataka is having highest number of heritage monuments, at present there are 752 state protected, 608 centrally protected monuments are recognised by the ASI in Karnataka. Some of the important heritage monuments of Karnataka are as follows.

- Hampi group of Monuments (recognised as a world heritage centre by UNESCO).
- Daria Daulat Bagh, Srirangapatnam Keshava Temple
- Pattadakal group of monuments (recognised as a world heritage centre by UNESCO)
- Aihole Temples and Archaeological Museum.
- Amba Vilas Palace, Mysore.
- Halebidu Hoysaleshwara Temple.
- Tipu sulthan Palace, Bangalore.

- Badami Rock Cut Temples (recognised as a world heritage centre by UNESCO).
- Gol-Gumbas, Bijapur
- Chitradurga fort
- Somanatahapura Chennakeshava Temple etc

Review of Literature

Rich Harrill (2014) has focused on initiating citizen participation processes related to tourism issues and identifying groups of people concerned about, or opposed to, tourism planning and development in their communities.

Mr. Lalit Mohan Bhatt (2013) explains the need and importance of planning in tourism. According to him, tourism is a multi-disciplinary approach which requires proper utilization of man, material and the resources. Since India is a country of geographical and social diversity planning has greater importance.

Clare A. Gunn (2004) discusses the drawbacks of tourism planning for the development. According to his study, the existing plans of tourism are not capable of meeting the expectations of tourist stakeholders. So the planners must consider the multi-dimensional approaches of tourism.

Haitam Bizan (2012) while focusing on tourism marketing in Libya concludes that the government should develop comprehensive plans to assure the basic objectives of the organization shall be achieved. The problem is associated with the development of tourism stakeholders whose plans and the strategies do not cope and cater the needs of present requirements in the tourism industry.

Robert Jan Baken, et al (2014) attempt to reflect the issues of Indian tourism industry. The study accounts that, the tourism plans and the policies are framed and implemented with no scientific study and approach. Hence implementation of the policy becomes more important than the planning.

Ashish Ankush Naik et, al (2013) analyze the tourism industry from the perspective of Liberalization, Privatization and the Globalization. Tourism today is the way of life than an economic activity. The paper tries to identify the potentials of tourism industry in Indian atmosphere.

B Chandrashekhara. et, al (2014) brings out various problems associated with the promotion of tourism in Coastal Karnataka. The paper also suggests various measures to promote the sustainable tourism in Coastal Karnataka.

Research Objectives:

1. To understand the prospects of tourism in Karnataka state.
2. To find out various heritage sites, hill stations and beaches in Karnataka attracting tourists from across the globe.
3. To find out the various growth opportunities with respect to tourism in Karnataka.

4. To offer suggestions for tourism development in Karnataka.

Suggestions

- Development and promotion of local transportation system has not given greater attention. Local transportation has major impact on multiple tourist visit hence inducing investment on development of local infrastructure could be drawn the attention.
- The policy didn't draw much attention on development of ancillary industry. Sustainable community development requires development of ancillary industry. Special packages can be introduced for the development of ancillary industry.
- Too much attention given on investment subsidies and exemption of various taxes. It would negatively effect on the revenue from tourism.
- Unfortunately the present tourism policy also didn't consider higher education in tourism is the key element of tourism development. Future policies need to concentrate on encouraging and funding higher education in tourism.
- Travel agencies and tour operator's expectations are not fulfilled. The policy must concentrate on encouragement of domestic travel agents and tour operators who also play a key role in development of inbound tourism.
- Introduction of special packages to promote wine tourism and cuisine tourism. Karnataka is famous for variety of delicious cuisine hence various experiments could be made in terms of promoting cuisine tourism.
- Cruise tourism and House boats are the other areas which need to be concentrated. Future policies need to develop cruise tourism and house-boat tourism in Goa and Kerala model respectively.

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