

POTENTIAL OF AGRITOURISM IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT--India has always been conscious of the need for decades to diversify the economic base of the country. While agritourism has been around the world in one form or another, extensive academic research has not been conducted in this area. This research breaks new ground in that it focuses solely on the potential of agritourism in Karnataka, a tourist destination preferred in India. The objectives of this research are to know the potential for agritourism in Karnataka by understanding the basic geographical, economic, political and related data about it, identify factors which inhibit farmers from linking their produce with the tourism industry and the factors inhibiting hospitality industry on relying on local farmers for generating revenue through agritourism so that the true potential for agritourism could be ascertained.

Keywords-- Agritourism, potential, inhibitors, funds, revenue generation, food security

I. INTRODUCTION

In order to address ways of diversification in improve the Indian economic revenue base there has been a need for identifying ways of increasing food security and investment in new industries and ideas. In line with this, the Government of India is today seriously viewing innovative strategies. One way to reduce reliance on foreign imports and increase food security is to promote not only domestic but also international market production of agricultural products in the region. It seems obvious that growth and development in agriculture and tourism cannot continue to be mutually exclusive and this research explores how agritourism could be one way of changing the relationship.

II. NEED FOR THE STUDY

India has always been conscious of the need for decades to diversify the economic base of the country. While agritourism has been around the world in one form or another, extensive academic research has not been conducted in this area. There have been several studies of agritourism in European countries, Canada, Mexico and America, but very few have focussed on the Indian scenario. This research breaks new ground in that it focuses solely on the potential of agritourism in Karnataka, a tourist destination preferred in India.

To understand the potential of agritourism in Karnataka, a deeper understanding of the basic geographical, economic, political and related data about Karnataka would be completely important. In its Tourism Policy 2015 the State of Karnataka introduced "Agri Tourism" as one of its tourism products. It has set guidelines under the

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same, to be followed by any authenticity and govt agritourism centres by granting them permission and bringing orderliness to visiting tourists which it strongly believes could boost the opportunities of agritourism.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"Agri tourism" or farm tourism is a holiday concept for the purpose of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operations for the purpose of infotainment, education or active participation in the farm activities. The Agri Tourism Centres offer agri-training and recreational opportunities at an affordable price to the whole family. Crop processing activities, rural sports, markets, clothing, dress and nature provide the clients with a range of entertainment. Supply of fresh agricultural produce at farm gate and organic food could lure the urban tourists.

According to Koutsouris et al. (2014) although there is an ever increasing need to ensure an higher economic and social benefits of agribusiness., survey of literature has shown gaps in its environmental impact. When the environmental performance is considered, studies focus attention on how farming has both good and bad effects (Koutsouris et al, .2014) even on the socio-economic in the context of the environment. It has been proved that there is a positive correlation between the components of the ecosystem, such as climate, water and energy supplies, biodiversity, and decreased use of fertilizers and pesticides in efficient processes which lead to a substantial increase in food quality and quantity (Giaccio and Mastronardi 2011).

Tourists' appetite for conventional landscape of agriculture is increasingly growing especially when there is a heterogeneous agricultural landscape or when it serves as a source of providing to the visitors emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being. In rural tourism scene, agritourism takes on an exclusively Italian characteristic due to the particular regulatory legislation which plays a key role in agritourism from three points of view: economic, social and environmental.

Theoretically, the agritourism model is consistent with the paradigm of environmental sustainability (Mastronardi and Cipollina 2009) because agritourism leads to an optimal level of external effects (pollution) on a social level, that is to say, Pareto-efficient. This is because agritourism is an activity "connected" to agriculture in Italian legislation and this condition guarantees competition between the benefits of agricultural and tourism activity, at least on a farm level (Belletti 2010).

In India, agritourism is now a developing trend and constitutes the most revolutionary invention of the sector that has ever affected national farming. Overnight stays are among the most important of the services offered, as they are in the rest of the world, followed by food service and product tasting. 10% of the agritourism farmers only offer lodging, while 16% combine overnight stays and food service and 20% of them offer, together with lodging, at least one service such as horseback riding, hiking, naturalistic observation, sports (biking, trekking), moralistic activities.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To know the potential for agritourism in Karnataka by understanding the basic geographical, economic, political and related data about it.
- To identify factors which inhibit farmers from linking their produce with the tourism industry

- To identify factors inhibiting hospitality industry on relying on local farmers for generating revenue through agritourism

V. METHODOLOGY

The research design chosen for this study was descriptive in nature and the research tool used were two questionnaires framed with the objective of eliciting information on one hand from farmers and the other from people associated with tourism industry which mostly included employees of the hospitality industry in Karnataka. On the whole the sample size comprised of 80 farmers and 80 employees from the tourism industry. The sampling technique adopted was convenience sampling.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

Karnaaka as an agritourist spot

Many farmers in Karnataka, especially those who have farmland owned by small families, have understood the need to supplement their insufficient farm income and find new ways and means to generate income. Similarly, some small investors in rural areas in the world are exploring opportunities for investment in areas where they operate have settled permanently. They have extensive expertise in agriculture and related practices unique to their vocation. In the last two years, many agricultural farms have come up in and around the city.

Table 1 : t test for significant difference between size of farm and level of agreement on factors inhibiting farmers from linking their produce with the tourism industry

Factors inhibiting farmers	Size of farm				t value	P value
	<2 acres		>2 acres			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Low production of crops	6.13	3.25	7.87	4.32	2.584	<0.001**
Lack of well spelt out policy	6.91	3.74	5.13	4.82	2.789	<0.001**
Lack of adequate funding	7.08	4.51	3.67	4.16	2.914	<0.001**
Lag in communication	8.47	4.44	5.78	5.55	2.205	<0.001**
Limited technical knowledge	9.48	5.48	8.16	5.27	2.173	<0.001**
Lack of manpower	9.75	3.38	7.71	4.77	1.553	0.002**
Issues related toselling rates	9.95	3.82	9.91	4.99	1.126	0.003**

Note : ** denotes significant at 1% level.

P value being < 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to all the factors inhibiting farmers from linking their produce with the tourism industry. Hence there is significant difference in level of agreement of farmers based on the size of their farms and factors inhibiting farmers from linking their produce with the tourism industry. Further analysis shows that level of agreement is higher in case of those who have a large sized farm as compared to those farmers who own farms of smaller sizes.

Table 2 :ANOVA for significant difference between age of farmers and level of agreement on factors inhibiting farmers from linking their produce with tourism industry

Factors inhibiting farmers	Age Group in years				F	Sig.
	Below 25	25 – 35	35 – 45	Above 45		
Low production of crops	5.72 (3.53)	6.46 (2.05)	7.28 (3.57)	9.30 (5.52)	6.174	<0.001**
Lack of well spelt out policy	5.22 (3.34)	6.14 (3.07)	8.24 (3.90)	10.58 (4.28)	6.389	<0.001**
Lack of adequate funding	3.27 (4.40)	3.59 (2.53)	9.39 (5.48)	11.65 (5.14)	6.645	<0.001**
Lag in communication	5.21 (2.70)	4.91 (2.15)	9.18 (4.79)	1.68 (5.65)	6.741	<0.001**
Limited technical knowledge	7.31 (2.34)	2.69 (3.09)	10.51 (5.99)	13.48 (6.36)	5.289	<0.001**
Lack of manpower	5.29 (3.02)	5.88 (3.13)	10.59 (6.42)	13.40 (5.65)	3.855	<0.001**
Issues related to selling rates	20.39 (7.96)	22.82 (5.86)	12.49 (5.94)	14.33 (4.93)	4.597	0.004**

Note : 1. The value within bracket refers to SD

2. ** denotes significant at 1% level.

P value being < 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to all the ten factors. Hence there is significant difference in level of agreement of farmers based on their age and factors inhibiting farmers from linking their produce with the tourism industry. It is however to be noted that with age advancement there is higher level of agreement as indicated by farmers when compared to farmers who are younger.

Table 3 : ANOVA for significant difference between category of Stay and inhibiting hospitality industry on relying on local farmers for generating revenue through agritourism

Factors inhibiting Tourism industry	Category of Stay			F	Sig.
	<3 Star	3 Star	>3Star		
Lack of adequate government policy	20.83 (4.40)	20.24 (4.24)	22.02 (5.42)	4.218	<0.001**
Lack of government interest	18.63 (4.92)	18.21 (5.21)	19.09 (5.12)	2.044	<0.001**
Low reliability of farmers	38.57 (7.32)	37.94 (6.96)	39.80 (7.44)	2.340	<0.001**
Lag in communication	19.30 (5.33)	18.35 (5.41)	20.60 (6.32)	3.612	<0.001**
Limited technical knowledge of farmers	21.95 (5.96)	21.35 (6.42)	23.66 (7.69)	2.188	<0.001**

Resistance to change by farmers	30.34 (7.05)	29.86 (7.62)	31.84 (7.88)	2.356	<0.001**
Lack of funding	22.88 (5.71)	22.20 (6.41)	23.88 (5.60)	2.650	0.002**
Limited number of farmers	172.49 (33.01)	168.16 (33.45)	180.89 (38.36)	2.690	<0.001**
Lack of education among farmers	19.59 (6.01)	19.20 (6.21)	21.44 (6.75)	3.420	<0.001**
Issues related to fixing purchasing rates	26.86 (8.23)	25.50 (7.79)	28.00 (7.49)	2.769	0.004**

Note : 1. The value within bracket refers to SD

2. ** denotes significant at 1% level.

P value being < 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to all the factors inhibiting tourism industry from relying on local farmers for generating revenue through agritourism. Hence it is proved that there is significant difference in the level of agreement between category of Stay and inhibiting hospitality industry on relying on local farmers for generating revenue through agritourism. Further analysis shows that higher the category of stay, higher is the level of agreement.

VII. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that there is strong level of agreement among farmers and tourism industry personnel about lacuna in the operation of the system. By doing away with the difficulties faced by the both parties, the government of Karnataka can easily expect to see a big change taking place with respect to agritourism in the State. Right and timely steps taken in this direction would probably bring about a vast change in the way both the industries would perform. It is sure to ensure that both the industries are turned around thereby encouraging more participants and providing food security to all at large.

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