



# REJUVENATING RURAL TOURISM FOR THE LIVELIHOOD SECURITY OF RURAL INDIA

**Dr.G.N.Ramakrishna<sup>1</sup>, Dr. M. Satheesh Pandian<sup>2\*</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Acharya Institute of Graduate Studies, Bengaluru, 560107

<sup>\*2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and Centre for Research in Economics, Arumugam Pillai Seethai Ammal College, Tiruppattur, Sivaganga (Dt), Tamil Nadu-630 211.

## ABSTRACT

*Tourism could be a major source of income for the rural mass in several countries and also influences the economy growth and development. Its magnitude was recognized and realized in the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980 as an activity necessary to the lifetime of nations thanks to its direct impacts on the social, cultural, political, educational, and economic sectors of national societies and on their diplomacy. Tourism helps to accumulate a large amount of income to the local economy as well as allied sectors by the by the amount spent by the tourists for the necessities of products and services. It also generates opportunities for employment generation in the tourism sector. Especially in the developing countries with the expansion of tourism sector, there is also a priority for the sustainable environment as people became more and more cautious about exploiting their natural resources. As a result, there's now increasing agreement on the requirement to push sustainable tourism development to reduce its environmental impact and to maximise socio-economic tourism destinations. With this backdrop the present paper made an attempt to disclose the information about the growth and development, opportunities for the society as well as economy, government's move towards rural tourism, growth potential of rural tourism, and the steps need to take to promote the rural tourism.*

**KEY WORDS:** Rural Tourism; Economic Development; Employment; Income Generation

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of rural tourism is acquiring new dimensions with the passage of your time. However, in India, it's always existed in some form as almost every Indian has roots in some village or another and that they often keep returning back to their roots. Now, of course, feeling bottled up by the chaos in urban areas, the growing desire to require an opportunity and relax within the pristine surroundings of the village is growing. People are frequently touring rural areas as they're filled with color, fragrance and vibrant life. Travelers visiting India now not wish to stay confined to the concept of visiting tour the established tourist destinations. The craving to understand India in its totality has caused enormous changes in travel itineraries of the tourists, indigenous or foreign. Stunning landscapes, Madonna great thing about Mother Nature, the colourful and captivating culture of rural areas compel the travelers to move for Indian villages where they find the important essence of India. The rationale why tourism industry is making strong moves to push rural tourism within the country. It's motivated many travel and tourism companies to supply rural tourism packages for enthusiasts to experience a soulful journey to the

'Heart of India'. Rural tourism offers tourists a chance to urge first-hand experience of farmland activities, such as cultivation, sowing and harvesting etc. This provides them a chance to urge introduced to artisans and even purchase locally manufactured handicrafts besides gaining an insight into the different ethnic and indigenous practices in rural areas. Rural tourism provides ample opportunities to tourists to soak within the astounding splendor of nature and adds new perspectives of understanding the ethos of Rural India. It also benefits the agricultural community by way of developing infrastructural facilities, generating employment opportunities for the local inhabitants and opening new vistas of entrepreneurial activities which strengthen rural economy and helps in alleviating poverty to some extent.

Rural tourism activities also promote biodiversity conservation, preservation of regional heritage in terms of art and crafts and so instil a way of pride among the agricultural people. It may also be very effective in putting a check on the migration of individuals to urban areas for seeking job opportunities and help the farmers and artisans to develop direct contact with customers. It is noteworthy that rural tourism is not just farm-based



tourism, but also produces benefits during a single package in non-urban setting with rural flavour. Rural tourism includes farm based holidays, interest nature holidays and ecotourism, fishing, educational travel, arts, and heritage tourism, and in some areas also entails ethnic tourism. The tourists participate within the creation of sales, profits, jobs, returns, and income. The economic impact of tourism is a crucial considers national, regional, public planning and economic development. India being a nation of diversities incorporates a lot to supply to tourists. Rural tourism in India continues to be within the developing stage but once tapped to its full potential, it can open great vistas of mutual benefit for both the tourists additionally because the rural people alike. Every region, state, and also the village of our country has its own language, culture, tradition, customs, costumes and cuisines which may offer a singular nonurban experience of a lifetime. Rural tourism offers unforgettable experiences. In fact, it offers a journey back to our roots encompassing a good range of activities and attractions geared up in an exceedingly natural rural environment. It's also an awfully important activity from the angle of rural development because of its contribution to the economic and social development of rural people. A tourist's paradise, India could be a magnum of diverse geography and cultures, offering 35 World Heritage sites, 30 biogeographically zones and attractive beaches. The country has received arrival of 1300 million local and 25.57 million overseas tourists within the year 2018-19. Tourism in India accounts for six.8% of the GDP, and is that the third largest exchange earner for the country with USD 18.13 Billion. it's been accorded a priority sector status within the 12th Five-year Plan. In recent years, there has been an increased realization that the tourism growth potential may be harnessed as a technique for Rural Development. With 63% population living in rural India and almost 6.2 million village units widen across the nation, India foresees itself as a robust platform for harnessing rural tourism. The geographical diversity of India makes it a singular spot for harnessing rural tourism which might include tourist sites like desert, mountains, plains, plateaus, islands and coasts in different regions. Out of the total biodiversity hotspots, 34 located in India, namely, the Western Ghats and Himalayas, housing an oversized number of flora and fauna. India showcases a range of cultural patterns having different lifestyles, practices, art and craft, and festivals. These may be incorporated and leveraged within the type of rural tourism. The country is additionally rich in heritage and offers 30 World Heritage sites.

Factors like increasing level of awareness, growing interest in heritage and culture, improved accessibility, and environmental consciousness have

shifted trends towards rural tourism. This may not only preserve the culture and heritage of the country, but also will generate employment within the villages since it may be leveraged to produce skill development in tourism related job roles like that of guide, driver, cook, housekeeping and hospitality to the tourists. Ministry of Tourism specifies that any sort of tourism that showcases the agricultural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, benefits the local hamlets financially and socially, and enables communication between the tourists and consequently the locals for a more inspiring tourism experience may be termed as rural tourism. Rural tourism may include multiple facets like farm tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism. The country has seen flourishing rural tourism mock-ups in various states such as Kerala's backwater, Karnataka's forest, and Tamil Nadu's temple.

### OPPORTUNITIES OF RURAL TOURISM

There is an increasing trend of 'experiential tourism' to know new things and experiencing cultures, cuisine, traditions, etc. Today, the discerning traveller is prepared to go great distances and to previously unknown places to get the unique experience. The tourist is also looking at being a responsible traveller and about giving back to the host communities. The slow pace of life in the village, far away from the hustle and bustle of the big city, is an experience that can rejuvenate oneself. The villages and the rural economies also have practitioners of unique arts and crafts in their original forms that are hard to come by in the cities. Rural tourism exhibiting the unique experiences of Indian villages and closely related niche areas of tourism such as ecotourism, farm-tourism, adventure tourism etc. provides a great opportunity to promote sustainable and responsible tourism in the Country. Rural Tourism can revitalize local art and crafts and prevent viable traditional occupations from being displaced. It will help redevelop rural areas and rejuvenate rural life. The interaction with the visitors will expand their knowledge and horizons.

### GOVERNMENT'S INITIATIVES TOWARDS RURAL TOURISM

The Union Ministry of tourism has arranged a draft roadmap to expand the scope of rural tourism in India and has requested implication ideas from different stakeholders; include all local governments and Union Territories. The Draft National Strategy and Roadmap for Development of Rural Tourism in India recognises the huge potential that rural tourism in the country holds. Determined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "vocal for local" idea, the government expects the new roadmap can considerably adds support to its Aatmanirbhar Bharat



mission. The draft strategy has laid emphasis on a few key aspects of tourism such as model policies and best practices, digital technologies and platforms, developing clusters, marketing support, building capacity of stakeholders, governance and institutional framework. In a written reply to Lok Sabha on Monday, Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy said recognising rural tourism's potential; the ministry had identified the rural circuit as a thematic circuit for development under its Swadesh Darshan Scheme. The scheme aims to leverage tourism as a force multiplier to revitalise the rural economy. It also aims to provide tourists both domestic and international a glimpse of the country's rural aspects. The ministry has also come up with several initiatives to boost domestic tourism following the devastation the sector has faced in the aftermath of Covid-19. The Ministry has also approved two projects in Bihar and Kerala with a total expenditure of Rs.130.02 Crores for development of rural route under the swadesh darshan scheme. These projects are under various stages of execution together with development of bhitharwa, Chandrahia Turkaulia" in Bihar amounting to Rs.45.65 crores and development of malanad malabar cruise tourism in Kerala amounting to Rs. 85.37 Crores. The Ministry has also instituted a National Tourism Award in the category of 'Best Rural/Agri/Plantation Tourism Projects' to motivate the stakeholders in the tourism sector for implementing such projects. Ministry of Rural Development has informed that their Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM) follows the vision of "Development of a cluster of villages that preserve and nurture the essence of rural community life with focus on equity and inclusiveness without compromising with the facilities perceived to be essentially urban in nature, thus creating a cluster of "Rurban Villages". Under the Mission, 300 clusters are being developed across 28 States and 8 Union Territories. Tourism is one of the themes of Rurban cluster development. Tourism allied activities are a lot among the 21 module comes under SPMRM. Ministry of Rural Development has further informed that a total 67 rural and urban clusters have proposed tourism related activities in gram panchayats across 26 States/ UTs. The ministry has organised various webinars through which it planned to reconstruct trust of travellers in connection with Covid-19. It will also conduct aerial photography of the country's cultural assets and key cities during lockdown and promote tourism in India through campaigns across digital platforms. The ministry will also hold regular consultations with industry stakeholders on reopening the sector and also handle tourists, the safety and security protocols as well as services standards. The tourism sector was among the worst hit by Covid-19 as lockdowns forced people to stay home. Even after lockdowns have been lifted,

concern over safety and sanitation continue to hold travellers back from hitting the roads.

## **GROWTH POTENTIAL ASPECTS OF RURAL TOURISM**

The development of a robust platform round the concept of Rural Tourism is unquestionably useful for a rustic like India, where almost 74% of the population resides in its 7 million villages. Numerous local traditions like plays, art forms, dances etc. enhance the cultural wealth of rural areas, making these attractive for the tourists. Lush green forests in south Indian villages, sacred groves etc. make them a perfect site to push tourism. Growing trend of short-break holidays, rural areas being on the subject of cities can easily provide for nice tourism destinations. When developed to its fullest potential, it could provide jobs to several young men and girls who otherwise are increasingly migrating to cities. Rural tourism can revive many of the humanities and crafts traditionally being practiced within the rural communities but dying a slow death. Socially, it can open rural mindset to new thoughts and ideas from the skin world. On the opposite hand, for the urban citizen, some days spent amidst traditional rural lifestyle may persuade be a good stress reliever. Rural Tourism is any type of tourism that showcases the agricultural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local people economically and socially additionally as enabling interaction between the tourists and also the locals for a more enriching tourism experience.

## **STEPS NEED TO TAKE DEVELOP RURAL TOURISM**

Improved infrastructure and connectivity of rural India can improve rural tourism. Identification of strength's of villages in numerous states and introduction of customised trips like Cultural and Heritage go into Rajasthan, Tribal tours in North-East India. Promoting Farm and residential stays to supply local and humane touch to tourists. Destinations should be specific and proximate to the traditional tourist spots. There should be an improvement within the accessibility, proper marketing and periodic maintenance of the destinations. Home stays have to follow the normal form of construction and lifestyle. A concerted effort from both the Union Government and State Governments supported a proactive approach is required. Safety of tourists, especially females should be ensured. Adequate finances must be devolved to the gram sabha for maintenance of basic infrastructure. Training of villagers to avoid any quite hostility towards tourists. Adequate healthcare facilities must be provided. Environment impact of increased number of tourists must be assessed. It is important to organize a roadmap for promoting tourism and at the identical time



preserving the cleanliness. Government initiatives of Swadesh Darshan and PRASAD will help develop tourist circuits on principles of high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability in an integrated manner. Rural tourism can generate employment and would help in realising an inclusive growth.

## CONCLUSION

Tourism is an activity that has had a rate of about 25% within the last 10 years. It's now one in all the foremost revenue and employment generating industries. It's forecasted that within the year 2020 the expected growth in tourism sector would be highest among Europe, America, East Asia, and Pacific in terms of volume. With the expansion of tourism, the question arises of maintaining sustainability and creating responsibility. Nowadays the buyer trend is additionally changing. They're not only viewing having fun but also specializing in mitigating the harmful effects that tourism has. They're now demanding a memorable experience that they'll cherish throughout. Consistent with them, this comes from doing something good which ends in an exceedingly feeling of satisfaction. By being responsible they're ensuring that they provide back something to the society and environment which has helped them develop. With the patron activity directed to such varied degree of contentment, the travel and tourism trends are changing. More and more people are engaging themselves in community based tourism, agri-tourism, wellness tourism, pro-poor tourism, adventure tourism and rural tourism on a bigger scale. The strain of urban lifestyle has led to a counter-urbanization syndrome. This has led to growing interest in rural areas. There are other factors like rising levels of awareness, growing interest in heritage and culture and advanced accessibility and environmental consciousness which motivate the tourist to undertake this activity. Rural tourism has started and implemented in many parts of the globe. Together with rural tourism, cultural heritage can even be achieved. Rural tourism concept has been very famous within the west. It really has much to supply to the tourists. it's sparsely populated, more outdoor activities, local involvement and mainly during a natural environment. to start out a project in these areas, many challenges are faced by the committee. the foremost challenge is resource, local participation, language barriers and trained manpower. to overcome these challenges, there are available opportunities which when chosen at the proper time will be beneficial for the merchandise. Rural tourism is emerging together of the simplest options to market India through the Incredible India campaign to both domestic and international travelers. Places which are famous for rich traditions, heritage and values should be marketed well so as to let the people understand the old cultures. The

approximate marketplace for rural tourism is around Rs.4300 Crores once a year. The tourists visiting these areas lend cottages, home stays, like a farm, camping movements, etc. the most aim of promoting the region is to sustain the traditions and values native to that. Through this scheme, tourists are conversant in the lifestyles, authenticity, and customs. With the interactions between them, locals are motivated to safeguard to their culture so as to secure it for future generations. Seeing it from a distinct angle, it's beneficial for the community also. Public areas are maintained, beautification of the realm takes place and steps are taken to preserve the environment. Locals are employed within the scheme as guides; attend seminars conducted by industry professionals to encourage participation of the community members. There's overall prosperity. The locals perceive to be favourable for them which is that the reason they support it. They comprehend the schemes and plans well into the event of their area and livelihoods. Rural India is one among the potential sectors of development and revenue generating scheme. Together with revenue generation, there's prosperity among the members. They're growing with the skin world. They're benefitting from these schemes. They're themselves attentive to the potential benefits from this program and are endorsing it personally. They're now ready to understand the necessity for safeguarding and therefore the essence of reviving the values among their children who will lead it ahead.

## REFERENCES

1. Arunothaipipat , Rosamarin, *Human Resource Management of Small Independent Hotels: A Case Study of Chaam Beach, Phetchaburi, Thailand, Small Business Management, Bangkok: Text and Journal Publication, 2011.*
2. Bordoloi, Anjan. K. , Kalita, Archana, *Rural tourism: an important sector underpinning growth and development of rural Assam, International Journal of Management Research and Review, Vol. 2, Issue 12, Article No-7, 2069-2076 ISSN: 2249-7196, Dec2012.*
3. Dhanabalan, C. T., & Rajamohan, S. (2014). *Impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu. International Journal of Entrepreneurship & Business Environment Perspectives, 3(4), 1422.*
4. Dr Peter Carberry and Dr Arabinda Kumar Padhee. *Containing covid19 impacts on Indian agriculture.* <https://www.icrisat.org/containing-covid19-impacts-on-indian-agriculture/>
5. FAO. (2016). *Minimum dietary diversity for women: A guide for measurement.* Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization.
6. hiferaw, B. & Hailemariam, T. 2007. *Structure and functioning of chickpea markets in Ethiopia: Evidence based on analyses of value chains*



- linking smallholders and markets. IPMS Working Paper 6, ILRI, Nairobi, Kenya.
7. Indian Economic Growth: Can it translate into Rural Prosperity?' *The Analyst, Special Issue on AgriBusiness*, August 2007.
  8. Kalyani, V. (2021). A Study of Effect of Social Networking Sites on the Self-Esteem of Adolescent Girl Students Belonging to Urban Areas of Sivaganga District. Available at SSRN 3879915.
  9. Kalyani, V. (2021). A study on young women's access: livelihood security, human rights and sustainable development.
  10. Kalyani, V. (2021). Perception and Practices of Farmers in Organic Farming in Pudukkottai District. Available at SSRN 3879924.
  11. Kalyani, V. (2021). Perception of Farmers towards Organic Farming: A Glance of Agricultural Perspective. Available at SSRN 3879917.
  12. Kalyani, V. (2017). Empowering Women Farmers Participation in Organic Agricultural Development. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research*, 6(2), 187.
  13. Karanwal, Abhinav and Dabral, Paritosh, *The Scope of Rural Tourism in the Hills of Mussoorie*, Digital Repository, Manipal University Libraries, 2014 7.
  14. Karri, Gopal Naidu, *Scope of Agritourism in India*, PGDMA Dissertation, ICAR- National Academy of Agricultural Research Management, Hyderabad, 2016.
  15. Khairil Wahidin Awang, Wan Melissa Wan Hassan, Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari, *Tourism Development: A Geographical Perspective*, *Asian Social Science*, Vol 5, No.5, 2009.
  16. Kuntashula E., Ajayi, O.C., Phiri, D., Mafongoya, P. & Franzel, S. 2002. Factors influencing farmers' decision to plant improved fallows: A study of four villages in Eastern Province of Zambia. In: Kwesiga F., Ayuk E. and Agumya A. (eds). *Proceedings of the 14th Southern African Regional Review and Planning Workshop*, 3-7 September 2001, Harare, Zimbabwe. ICRAF Regional Office, Harare, Zimbabwe, pp. 104–110.
  17. Meena, Shivraj, *Rural tourism impact, challenges and opportunities in Rajasthan*, *The Journal of Bengal Geographer*, Vol. IV, No. IV, ISSN 2319-619X, Oct, 2015.
  18. Mishra, Bakash Kumar & Biswal, Saroj Kant, *Emergence of Budget Hotels and Metamorphosis of Small sized Commercial Hotels in India*, *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, Vol. 3, Number 2, 2010.
  19. Rajamohan, S., & Dhanabalan, C. T. (2014). Beneficiaries' opinion Towards The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. *International Journal of Retailing & Rural Business Perspectives*, 3(4), 1256.
  20. Rajamohan, S., & Dhanabalan, C. T. (2014). Functional Effectiveness of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Dindigul District of Tamil. *International Journal of Logistics & Supply Chain Management Perspectives*, 3(4), 1288.
  21. Rajamohan, S., & Dhanabalan, T. (2013). Rural development through ICT: opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Retailing & Rural Business Perspectives*, 2(2), 354.
  22. Rajamohan, S., & Dhanabalan, T. (2013). Self help groups and its current status in India. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship & Business Environment Perspectives*, 2(2), 371.
  23. Rajamohan, S., & Dhanabalan, T. (2013). Women empowerment through rural development schemes. *International Journal of Retailing & Rural Business Perspectives*, 2(1), 253.
  24. Saxena Gunjan & Ilbery, Brian, *Integrated rural tourism: A border case study*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 233–254, 2008.
  25. Sharpley, R., Vass, A., *Tourism, farming and diversification: An attitudinal study*. *Tourism Management* 27, p. 1040-1052, 2006
  26. Sharpley, R., Vass, A., *Tourism, farming and diversification: An attitudinal study*. *Tourism Management* 27, p. 1040-1052, 2006
  27. Shin, Y, *Safety, Security and Peace Tourism: The Case of the DMZ Area*. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research* , 10(4), 411-426, 2005
  28. Sillignakis, KE, *Rural Tourism: An opportunity for sustainable development of rural areas*, [http://www.sillignakis.com/other\\_research.html](http://www.sillignakis.com/other_research.html), 2007
  29. *Social Entrepreneurship: The Alicia Polak Way*, the ICFAI Journal of Entrepreneurship Development, Vol IV No. 2, June 2007.
  30. Sofique, Dr. Mir Abdul, *Rural tourism a new mantra for alternative tourism development: A case study of West Bengal with special reference to Ballavpur Danga near Santiniketan*, *Rural tourism a new mantra for alternative tourism development*, [Academia.edu/1882200/](http://Academia.edu/1882200/), n.d.
  31. Wearing S., Neil J., *Ecotourism: impacts, potentials and possibilities*, Butterworth-Heinemann, London, 1999