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DEVELOPMENT OF ECO-TOURISM IN KARNATAKA STATE: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF JUNGLE LODGES AND RESORTS

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ABSTRACT

The Karnataka is one of the top ten national tourism destinations in India and was ranked 4th in 2011. The state has various tourism assets such as beaches, hill stations, heritage monuments, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries etc. Given the variety of tourism assets, the state is promoted under the tagline “One state, many worlds”.

Tourism is one of the important emerging sectors in the world. It is the second largest industry in the world in terms of generating employment and income. Tourism in India is the largest amenity industry, with a contribution of 7.23% to the national GDP and 9.78% of the total employment in India. For many countries, it is a major source of foreign exchange earnings. In several of the countries, it is mainly dependent on international tourists. Tourism contributes to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) through its contribution to employment and income.

Karnataka rich with attractive beauty is located at the southern part of India. Resourceful with all kind of verities including temples, wildlife sanctuaries, waterfalls, cosmopolitan cities, valleys, hill resorts, beaches etc., Karnataka is a must visit the state in India for all tourist enthusiasts and will not get disappointed. The weather is very moderate at southern districts. The temperature remains ideal throughout the year. Most parts of the Karnataka state are agriculture lands as the state is rich in rivers. The western part has Arabian sea and then the range of Western Ghats follows. This is the eighth largest state in a country equally in area and population. Karnataka is famed for its natural beauty, rich culture and pleasurable climate. In this article researcher discussed about the development of ecotourism in Karnataka.

KEY WORDS: *Eco Tourism, Jungle, Resort, Forest, Sanctuaries,*

INTRODUCTION

The term ecotourism covers all travel to a natural area that conserves the environment, while at the same time contributing to the welfare of the local community. Accountability and ecotourism activities should minimize negative impression and construct environmental and cultural attentiveness. It should directly contribute to the environmental conservation and empowerment of local people. Diverse names like green tourism, alternative tourism, responsible tourism, nature tourism, etc, are used. The International Ecotourism Society has defined ecotourism as “Responsible

travel to natural areas that conserve the environment and improves the wellbeing of local people” Ecotourism involves more than conservation. It is a form of travel that responds to a regions ecological, social and economic need. It also provides an alternative to mass tourism. It encompasses all aspects of travel-like airlines, hotel, tour operator etc. The eco-tourism should have the following features.

- Minimum negative impact on nature.
- Construct environmental and traditional knowledge among the local communal.

- Provide direct financial benefit for conservation.
- Provide financial benefit to local people and empower them.

Raise sensitivity to host countries political environmental and socio-cultural climate. Enough awareness is being created in the last 50 years about the concept of ecotourism. The United Nation declaring 2002 as the international year of ecotourism, a large number of countries for environmental conservation, cultural heritage preservation and sustainable economic development. In the year 2002 declared as the international year of economic, three main developments have taken place.

Eco-tourism is established as a politically valuable concept. Over fifty countries have developed special policies and strategies which focused ecotourism at the national level, This concept proved its relevance as it positions natural and cultural diversity as the tourism asset. It also stresses the participation of the local community in the tourism activities, In many countries, ecotourism has been managed in a sustainable manner. It conserves bio-diversity an all deviates poverty in rural areas.

Tourism is now acknowledged as a global economic driver. The main challenge for the future is to apply the principle of ecotourism and sustainable tourism to all forms of tourism development.

Ecotourism brings economic and socio-cultural benefits to the host community. Through increased recognition of the importance of protecting biological diversity, ecotourism may raise appreciation for biological resources and reduce environmental pollution.

Ecotourism is the heartbeat of Karnataka. Pulsating with lifetime experiences, where you can inhale the silence of the moment that brings peace to your soul-twinkling rivers, sweeping landscapes, majestic wildlife. Ivory beaches and rich diversity of flora and fauna. Karnataka is home to some of the world heritage sites. Its geography has formed some of the amazing eco-tourism places like Madikeri, Shimoga, Agumbe, Coorg, and many more. The gateway to paradise on earth where nature best-kept secrets have been ecologically preserved and natured for your family. A dramatic pause in time when Jungle and Resorts let you enjoy a breath of spring protected and preserved all its natural way.

Karnataka tourism has selected Jungle and Resorts to preserve ecology and wildlife because of its accountability and commitment to preserve wildlife and keep our environment from deforestation air and water pollution and more. To make it easier for you to take a break from urban living, Jungle and Resorts provide creature comforts at all its eco-tourism destinations in Karnataka. An element of Karnataka tourism Jungle Lodges and resorts was established and recognized almost two decades before. Set amidst natural landscapes of babbling brooks and beckoning hills, each resort is an oasis of peace with an enchanting atmosphere.

Ecotourism in Karnataka is expected to receive a big boost with the state cabinet on 15 August 2013 approving the proposal to set up Eco-tourism Development Board. It might support the government massively in protecting the wildlife, creating awareness about it, promoting eco-tourism, forest safaris and also avoid harm to eco-system in the name of tourism.

Karnataka Ecotourism will promote responsible travel to natural areas and provide opportunities for visitors to experience firsthand, understand and quietly enjoy states natural and cultural heritage. This will lead to the conservation of nature sustaining of ecological processes increased respect for local culture and tradition and tangible improvement in the local economy. To provide recreation and promote understanding about nature and wildlife conservation priority to biodiversity conservation, ecosystem functioning and socio-economic development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have been conducted on different aspects of the tourism world over focusing on different aspects of tourism. While some studies have looked into the economic aspects of the tourism industry.

A study by **Mishra (2011)** on Causality between tourism and Economic Growth; Empirical Evidence from India. Analyze the growth of tourism in India and observed that it is one of the efficient tools for promoting the economic growth of the host country. According to the study last few decades, the tourism industry in India has been growing at a rapid pace for the last few decades and it has vast potential for generating employment and earning a large amount of foreign exchange besides giving a fillip to the country's overall economic and socio-cultural development. The results provide evidence of long-run unidirectional causality from tourism activities to the economic growth of the country. Based on this the study recommended for active partnership among all wings of the central and state governments, private bodies and voluntary organizations in the Endeavour to attain sustainable growth in tourism and the overall economy as well.

Dritsakis (2010) empirically studied the effect of tourism on the long-run economic progress of Greece by using the interconnection study among real gross local product, real effective interchange rate and international tourism earnings. A multivariate autoregressive VAR model is applied for the period 1960 – 2000. Granger interconnection checks based on Error Correction Models (ECM) have specified that there is a “strong Granger causal” relation between intercontinental tourism incomes and economic development “strong causal” relation between real exchange rate and economic growth, and simple “causal relation” and between real exchange rate and international tourism earnings.

Khalil (2007) Studied the role of tourism in the short – run economic progress in case of Pakistan through ECM and the casual association between tourism receipts and economic expansion. The result points out that there is a strong relationship between tourism, receipts and economic expansion.

SELECTION OF THE STUDY AREA



The state of Karnataka is one of the top ten domestic tourism destinations in India. The state has numerous tourism assets such as beaches, hill stations, heritage monuments, national parks, wild life sanctuaries etc. Given the diversity of the tourism assets, the state is endorsed under the tagline “One state, many worlds”.

Dubare is known for its elephant camp, a forest camp on the banks of the river Kaveri in the district of Kodagu, Karnataka. It is an important base for the Karnataka Forest Department’s elephants.

The weather is very moderate at southern districts. The temperature remains ideal throughout the year. Most part of the Karnataka state are agriculture lands as the state is rich in rivers. The western part has Arabian sea and then the range of Western Ghats follows. This is the eighth largest state in India both in area and population.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine and analyse the size, growth and trends in Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd., in Karnataka state.
- To analyse the working limitations of Dubare Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd.

DATA BASED METHODOLOGY

The paper is mainly based on the primary data collected through the actual field work and secondary data collected from various published sources.

PATERN OF JUNGLE LODGES AND RESORTS

Karnataka is one of the important tourist destinations for many Indian and foreign tourists. Several innovative schemes were operating in the state introduced by both the Karnataka Government (Karnataka State Tourism Department) and by the central government. Apart from this department is encouraged to promote tourism through innovative programmes. Introduction of Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd. is one of the innovative concepts introduced to take advantage of the wildlife in the state. Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd (JLR), was established in 1980 as an exertion to encouraging wildlife destination in Karnataka. It is one of the important innovative Destination management. India’s first

eco-tourism destination opened its doors to a waiting public and then came the challenges. In 1987, Tiger tops drew out of the partnership and sold their concern to the Government of Karnataka. Looking past, Jungle Lodges & Resorts becoming 100% maintained by the Karnataka Government was possibly the crisis in the history of the venture. Today was an eco-tourism brand with properties across Karnataka and countless fans all over the globe. The journey so far has been long winding sometimes a little rocky, but above all, it’s been adventurous

Objective: The company promotes Eco-tourism, wildlife tourism, adventure tourism and various outdoor activities like trekking, camping, white water rafting, fishing etc., that are non-consumptive components of eco-tourism and in general help in environment conservation.

Activities: Jungle Lodges & Resorts Ltd., had so many activities like Wildlife Safari, Coracle ride, Mountain Biking, Water Rafting, Joy Fishing, Trekking, Day visit, Nature Walk, Elephant Rides, Kayaking, Bird Watching, Angling, Snorkeling.

Establishments: Spread over Karnataka, Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd. operates 15 resorts. Accommodations here vary from tent to room to independent cottages. Besides, there is 4 resort operated on a management contract.

- Kabini River Lodge, Karapur, H.D.kote Taluk, Mysore District-Est.1982
- Bheemeshwari Adventure and Nature Camp, Mandya-Est-1982
- B.R.hills Wildlife Adventure Resort, K.Gudi, Chamarajnagar-Est-1994
- Kali River Lodge, Dandeli Uttara Kannada District-Est-1995
- Doddmakali Fishing Camp, Malavalli, Taluk Mandya –Est-1997

Resorts operated on Management contact

- OM Beach Resort, Gokarna, Kumuta, Uttara Kannada District from many 2011 M/s Kairali Ayurvedic Health Health Resort Pvt Ltd.,
- Estuary view Resort, Sadashivghad, Karwar from many 2004 M/s Kairali Ayurvedic Health Health Resort Pvt Ltd.,

- Hotel Metropole, Mysore from May 2004 by M/s. Royal Orchid Hotel Ltd.
- Hotel Krishnaraja Sagara, Brindavan Gardens, Mysore from 2006 By M/s. Royal Orchid Hotel Ltd.,

continuous increase in the number of units, occupancy and turnover. While there were only three units, in the beginning, the number increased to 15 by 2017-18. Along with this the occupancy also increased from 8699 to 108614 during the same period. Trends in the occupancy are presented in table 1.

TRENDS IN THE STRENGTH OF JLR

Though JLR started functioning from 1980, the real growth of the resorts started from 1994 onwards. There is a

Table: 1 Strength in Jungle Lodge Resorts in Karnataka

Year	No. of units	Occupancy Achieved	Per unit occupancy
2007-08	6	22838	3806.33
2008-09	7	30718	4388.29
2009-10	9	43348	4816.44
2010-11	12	50301	4191.75
2011-12	12	63555	5296.25
2012-13	12	76263	6355.25
2013-14	12	75285	6273.75
2014-15	12	79931	6660.92
2015-16	12	74856	6238.00
2016-17	15	82455	5497.00
2017-18	15	108614	6788.38

Source: Dubare Elephant Camp, Kodagu District

There is a considerable increase in the per unit occupancy also. Per unit occupancy doubled between 2007-08 and 2017-18. It increased from 2,900 to 6,800 during this period.

Performance of Jungle Lodge Resorts in Karnataka

Turnover is generated at Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd., through the entry fee from various activities and facility tariff. Special rates are fixed for Indian and foreign tourists. The following table gives trends in the revenue generated at different Jungle Lodge Resorts tourists from 2009-10 to 2017-18.

Table: 2 Trends in the performance of Jungle Lodge Resorts in Karnataka

Year	Total Turnover (In Millions)	Turnover Growth in %
2009-10	77.59	34
2010-11	112.06	59
2011-12	143.67	28
2012-13	192.74	34
2013-14	214.33	11
2014-15	259.76	21
2015-16	278.54	07
2016-17	329.87	18
2017-18	426.82	30

Source: Jungle Lodges & Resorts Limited, Bangalore.

The table: 2 indicate that Jungle Lodge Resorts is an innovative intervention in tourism. There is a continuous increase in the turnover of these lodge resorts are earning profit increasing the contribution of tourism to state revenue. Out of all the destinations, Jungle Lodges & Resorts Ltd., received maximum revenue from tourism. The turnover increased from Rs. 11.96 million in 1994-95, to Rs.426.82 millions by 2017-18. Though turnover in absolute value is increasing, the rate of growth is fluctuating. Though the growth rate was positive till 2000 – 2001, the later years registered negative growth for two years and the growth rate picked up from 2002-03.

Dubare Elephant Camp and Jungle lodges Resorts SWOT analysis

Jungle Lodges and Resort is acutely aware of its role of spreading awareness about conservation and takes its responsibility seriously about converting its visitors into 'ambassadors of conservation'. Dubare Elephant camp would be a unique project not only for JLR but in the whole of India. JLR seeks to be a trend-setter in this niche area and create an

eco-tourism product which would be an invaluable contribution to the cause of understanding and conserving these amazing creatures, the Elephants.

In order to know the concept as an advanced model for the promotion of tourism, a study of Dubare Elephant Camp, which is one of the Jungle Lodge Resorts, is undertaken and it is presented below

Dubare Elephant camp and Jungle lodges Resorts was established in 2006 as an effort to endorse wildlife destination in Coorg. The camp is located in the Coorg District and enjoys idyllic weather condition. The Dubare Elephant Camp is sandwiched between the south bank of the Cauvery and Dubare Reserve Forest. This was where the Maharaja of Mysore used to train elephant for the famous Mysore Dasara. The camp is a settlement of 30 tribal families, was once engaged in the capture and training of wild elephants. The Camp is open throughout the year. Monsoons (July to mid-September) are heavy. The camp employs 34 staff members.

Activities: The camp offers a glimpse into the life of the pachyderms. Apart from watching the elephant being looked after, visitors can participate in bathing and feeding

elephants. An expert provides the guests with an insight into the life of these fascinating creatures through a lecture and contributing in numerous activities involving Coracle ride Wildlife Safari, River rafting, Bird Watching, Day Visit, Nature Walk, Mountain Biking, Joy Fishing, Trekking.

Tourist arrivals in Dubare

Dubare Elephant Camp is a one of the best ecotourism destination in Karnataka Jungle Lodges Resorts Ltd. The data relating to the number of visitors, both foreign and Indian is presented in table 3.

Table: 3 Tourist Statistics of Dubare Elephant Camp 2008-2009 to 2012-2013

Year	Indian	Foreigner	Total
2008-2009	6316	271	6587
2009-2010	2938	123	3061
2010-2011	3767	208	3975
2011-2012	5163	136	5299
2012-2013	4623	249	4872

Source: Dubare Elephant Camp, Kodagu District

The data shows that the tourists to Dubare Elephant Camp have been increasing from 2008-09 to 2011-2012. During the year 2008-09 6,316 Indian tourists visited the camp. It increased to 5,163 by 2017-18. There a decline in the number of visitors during 2017-18. There were 4,623 Indian visitors during 2017-18. According to the manager of the camp, the reduction in the number of visitors is due to the failure of monsoon. The main attraction in the camp is rafting and boating which are water-based activities. Due to lack of rainfall during 2017-18, these events were not offered for an extended

period. This is one of the reasons for a lower number of visitors. In the case of foreign visitors, there is a greater variation in the arrivals. The arrivals declined during 2009-10, though it increased in the next year. However, due to the terrorist activities, there is a reduction in foreign tourists 2017-18 but picked up next year.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF DUBARE ELEPHANT CAMP

Financial performance of Dubare Elephant Camp is presented in table 5. Financial performance is calculated in terms of income of the camp between 2013-14 and 2017-18.

Table: 4 Total Turnover of Dubare Elephant Camp

Year	Total Turnover (In Millions of Rupees)
2013-2014	0.73
2014-2015	9.03
2015-2016	13.30
2016-2017	17.64
2017-2018	20.05

Source: Dubare Elephant Camp Kodagu District.

The table: 4 specifies increasing income at Dubare Elephant Camp. It increased from Rs. 0.73 Million rupees in 2013-14 to Rs. 20.05 million in 2017-2018. The revenue earned is directly proportional to the number of visitors. During 2017-18 also the turn over increased, though there is a decrease in Indian tourists. It is due to the increase in foreign tourists. Between 2013-14 and 2017-18, the turnover increased by approximate rupees three million.

CONCLUSION

Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd. is one of the innovative tourism interventions by the department of tourism in Karnataka. Karnataka tourism has chosen Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd., to preserve ecology and wildlife because of its accountability and promise to preserve wildlife and defend our environment from destination air, water pollution and more. The Jungle Lodge concept is very successful in Karnataka. Over a period of time, the concept has evolved into an eco-tourism which not only promotes inflow of tourists but also conserves the environment. It introduces nature to the tourists and helps in sensitizing people about the need for protecting the environment to preserve it for the future generation. Being a labour intensive industry, jungle lodges offer employment and livelihood openings to the relations living around the lodges in the interior forest zones through the advancing and backward connections.

The case study revealed the lack of investment in providing more facilities. It is important to invest to improve the connectivity and facilities on the camp site. Promotion of jungle lodges as innovative tourism has double benefits. It

earns income to the state government at the same time it helps in preserving the environment. N.D Tiwari, Managing Director of Jungle Lodges and Resorts, observed that the concept has become very popular and forest departments from several other states are interested in promoting this under ecotourism. According to him "The Jungle Lodges has been catering to the niche clientele by offering packages suitable to the respective area,"

The success of the Jungle Lodges as promoters of ecotourism is a success story of innovative tourism efforts.

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