RURAL TOURISM IN ODISHA- A PANACEA FOR ALTERNATIVE TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF ODISHA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PIPLI VILLAGE IN PURI

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Abstract: Odisha is a multi-destination state with a variety of tourist attractions and facilities. As Odisha’s culture resides in villages and hence by the development of rural tourism, Odisha’s life style, tradition, art, craft and natural heritage can be promoted. tourism growth potential can be harnessed as a strategy for rural development. The development of a strong platform around the concept of rural tourism should be used for Odisha, where almost 74% of the population resides in its seven lakh villages. Odisha is a multi-destination state with a variety of tourism resources, its rich cultural heritage has created magnificent architectural buildings & monuments. The snow-capped mountains, the beautiful beaches of coastal districts offer the world tourist community some of the best & unique tourist destinations, which rejuvenate the mind, body & soul. tourism is the third largest foreign exchange earner after gem, jewellery & ready-made garments. Tourism generate more jobs than any other sector for every rupee invested. if the economic revolution comes to india then its base is in the plans which are made for rural areas. Rural industry, handicrafts, traditional art and fairs and festivals of our villages may become the base for development. this may lead towards self-sufficiency in our villages. This tourism could be sustainable revenue generation project for the government and can prevent migration of rural people to urban areas. This research paper discusses the concept and development of rural tourism in odisha, summarizes the impact, describe the challenges and difficulties and focuses on the development of a strategic marketing plan for rural tourism. the paper shall throw light on the government project and polices for development of rural tourism. Rural tourism is a multidimensional destination because it has eco, ethnic, farm, cultural, historical tourism with itself. The major challenge in developing rural tourism is to consider environmental and natural conservation of resources and a proper understanding between the tourist and local people to participate in tourism development.

Keywords: Multi-destination, rural, challenges, conservation, development.

I. INTRODUCTION

India lies in her villages; nearly 98% of the total geographical area of India constitutes rural areas, in which 74% of the total population lives. Since independence most of the national policies have been focusing upon rural development. But issues like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, regional imbalances, and environmental degradation through deforestation; health and sanitary factors in rural areas remain unsolved. Many of the planners blame commercial viability for this matter. At the same time these rural areas posses natural and socio-cultural resources, which are fantastic sources for tourism and recreation, systematic tourism development in rural areas through public participation can contribute towards the socio-economic development of these areas, and on the other hand it can increase the attraction base for the modern tourists, which ultimately brings in foreign currencies and contributes to the GDP of the country.

In spite of all types of tourism resources & potentialities in India we are unable to fully explore the tourism products & services to attract a size able number of International tourist. Now it is the right time to identify the right market & right consumer in this era of fierce competition among the tourism generating countries. So that India can be real Incredible India as a destination in the map of World tourism. As the perceptions, attitude, is changing very fast of the present tourist communities & today’s tourists are also very keen to enrich & experience about the unique features of a country. In view of the above changing pattern of the tourists steps are, therefore being taken to develop the alternative strategy to promote Rural tourism in domestic & as well as International market.

After independence government was focusing on development of the key areas like agriculture, industry, infrastructure, etc in rural India. Tourism was never seen as a potential business, it was growing at its own space. Although tourism has started receiving some attention from last decade, but rural tourism was never
given any priority. Worldwide tourism is ranked second highest revenue-generating industry next to the oil industry. It is necessary to differentiate between different type of tourists to understand and analyze their purpose of visit. There are different ways to attract domestic and foreign tourists, we need to understand what types of services are required to attract and retain the customers. There is a large potential market for rural tourism for especially for foreign tourists, which has not yet developed because government has not taken up any systematic approach to attract foreign tourists. Rural tourism will bring people of different cultures, faiths, languages and life-styles close to one another and it will provide a broader outlook of life. It will not only generate employment for the people but it can also develop social, cultural and educational values.

II. ODISHA AT A GLANCE

Odisha, a maritime State, on the east coast of India, is bounded by West Bengal and Jharkhand on the North, Andhra Pradesh on the South, the Bay of Bengal on the East and Chattisgarh on the West. Its location is between 17°49’N to 22°34’N latitudes and 81°27’E to 87°29’E longitudes. The State ranks eleventh in terms of total population and ninth in terms of total area. It has a total coastal length and perpetually washed by the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal. The state is endowed with a vast reserve of mineral and other natural resources like : river, forest, hills, forest, abhayaranya, pilgrims, historical places etc. The state has worldwide unique recognition for its works of Appliqué, Metal Crafts, Silver Filigree, Patta Chitra, Pipili Chandua, Sambalpuri Bastralaya as well as high attraction both in domestic and international markets for its exquisite Art and Crafts. The state like Odisha offers immense tourism delight and pleasure to the visitors owing to its rich and varied topography, vibrant culture and captivating festivities. There are 321 Identified Tourists Centre in Odisha as on May 2012. Out of it 20 tourists centre in four districts are selected as study areas for the present study.

III. OBJECTIVES

*To make clear the concept of rural Tourism and its significance in the current scenario.
* Identify the impacts of rural tourism.
* Strategies for marketing plan in rural tourism.
* To study Govt. projects of rural tourism.
* To identify the challenges in rural tourism.
* To understand the potential of Rural Tourism
* To find out the impact of Rural Tourism to our society
* To analyze the perceptions & satisfactions of tourists
* To develop some strategies to develop rural Tourism
* To identify the essential elements expected by the tourists
* To offer suggestion and make recommendation

IV. DEFINITION & DIMENSION OF RURAL TOURISM

Rural Tourism has emerged as a new mantra for alternative tourism development. This concept has been already tested in the developed country & proved the best results. Our country & its villages have so many things to cater the needs of the tourists. The rural people, its culture, tradition, arts, handicrafts, scenery, landscape can attract the tourists irrespective of its taste, perceptions & attitudes. Rural tourism has been defined as ‘a variety of visits away from home to locations out side main towns and seaside resorts, be they holidays, day trips, business trips or to visit friends & relatives’

As per Gannon, „Rural Tourism” covers “a range of activities provided by farmers and rural people to attract tourists to their area in order t generate extra income for their business.” Any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience can be termed as rural tourism. Rural tourism is essentially an activity which takes place in the countryside. It is multi-faceted and may entail farm/agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism. As against conventional tourism, rural tourism has certain typical characteristics like: it is experience oriented, the locations are sparsely populated, it is predominantly in natural environment, it meshes with seasonality and local events and is based on preservation of culture, heritage and traditions.

That means rural tourism takes place in the countryside and creates value from rural opportunities. Typical characteristics of Rural tourism are:
* Sparsely populated locations
* Predominant natural environment
* Focus on outdoor activities
* Small establishments with mainly part time involvement in tourism by the local community
* Locally owned enterprises
* Meshing with seasonal and local events
Developed in rural tourism is now its nascent stage. The complexity of attractions makes it difficult to draw an exact definition. However, Lane B (1994) gives a framework. In his view rural tourism should be, Located in rural areas. Functionally rural i.e., small scale enterprises, open space, natural contact, heritage, traditional and societal practices etc.

*Rural in scale.
*Traditional in character.
*Take different forms representing the complex pattern of rural environment, economy, history and location.

According to Getz, D. and Page S.J. (1997) rural tourism can be described as

The spectrum i.e. rural and wild.
*The rural appeal i.e. peace, solitude, lifestyle, nature, scenery, traditional people, recreation and adventure.
*The rural product and services.
*Involvement of rural entrepreneurs and operators.
*Further Negi J.M. (1990) enumerated the attractions in rural areas. Which are enjoyment of rural scenery.
*The desire for open space, quiet and peace of mind.
*Rural sports like hunting, fishing etc.
*Ethnic attractions like folk life, custom, food, drinks and festivals.
*Educational and historical attractions like castles, churches, temples, monasteries etc.

VI. SIGNIFICANCE OF ‘RURAL TOURISM’ IN ODISHA

Rural tourism’s greatest potential benefit is its ability to generate money which can translate in to numerous positive economic opportunities for locals and their communities. For local the first benefit of tourism development is jobs both within the tourism sector and outside of it. Tourism development means more income and profits for tourist related business. The economic multiplier model suggests that if local income from tourist expenditures is spent within local area, an increase in local income and jobs will follow. The following points will highlight the significance of rural tourism in Indian context. The concept of rural Tourism is definitely helpful & effective for a state like odisha where a sizeable population lives in villages. Different villages have different types of tourism resources, which is scattered, in the entire state. (The Zamindars houses, Handicrafts, folk-lore & Folk music etc.) Rural tourism can check & can stop the flow of people to migrate in Cities. The gradual expansions of cities & urbanizations some time allures the people to migrate from rural to urban areas. Rural tourism can be one of the important aspects, which can provide a solution to this problem. Tourism growth can be harnessed as a strategy for Rural Development. The concept of rural tourism is definitely useful for a state like Odisha where majority of population resides in villages. The trend of “Urbanization” has led to falling income levels, lesser job opportunities in the rural areas. Rural tourism is one of the few activities which can provide a solution to this problem. In many parts of Odisha the rural economy is in doldrums due to the increase in input costs and decrease in income. Many debt ridden farmers are committing suicides. Efforts to promote rural tourism as a subsidiary occupation can arrest this trend with balanced regional development. This concept has the potentiality to attract investment from big industrial houses in rural areas including valuable Foreign Direct Investment and ultimately increase in GDP of the country by creating value from rural opportunities. Small-scale enterprise development aided by micro- finance schemes has a significant potential for enhancements of rural livelihood opportunities. This concept has the tremendous potentiality to attract the investors in rural areas(Farm house, Agro based Industry, Organic fertilizer & rural development schemes.

VII. RURAL TOURISM PROJECTS IN ODISHA

Viewed against the backdrop of the above definition, Odisha with its vast geography, rich traditions, culture and heritage, a vast and beautiful rural landscape, is naturally suited for this. the growing prosperity in urban areas, so visible in the vehicles, malls, multiplexes, restaurants and designer brand outlets is still to be seen in the rural areas. here time stands still, the pace of life gentle, working conditions hard and each day of life brings new challenges. amidst these hardships, the people exude warmth and welcome visitors with open arms. The Ministry of Tourism had started the projects in 2007 not only to promote rural tourism but also provide opportunities to rural populace to improve their socio-economic condition. In Odisha, the ministry had identified eight villages where rural tourism projects were to be developed by the respective district administrations. These are Raghurajpur and Pipili in Puri, Khiching in Mayurbhanj, Barpali in Bargarh, Hirapur in Khurda, Padmanavpur in Ganjam, Deulaajhari in Angul and Konark Natya Mandap. The projects have two components, infrastructure and training and skill development of artisans. The project envisaged construction of open air auditoriums, tourist amenities, craft demonstration and sale centers on the infrastructure front apart from training and skill development of artisans. However, after the recent evaluation by the ministry, it was found that except Raghurajpur, works in other villages are moving at a snail’s pace. It was also pointed out that lack of sightseeing options does not draw tourists to Raghurajpur even though all the components have been properly implemented. In the absence of tourist traffic, socio-economic condition of the villagers is not improving. (source: By Express News Service - BHUBANESWAR Published: 18th September 2012 10:56 AM

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While construction of any kind is yet to start in Hirapur, Pipili and Barpali, the project has not been successful in Deulajhari and Padmanavpur and moderately successful at Khiching. At Deulajhari, the infrastructure components are partially completed, but absence of maintenance has resulted in the project being accorded average rating. At Khiching, construction works are in progress. Another drawback is that some of the projects are still inaccessible with communication facilities yet to be developed. Hirapur is a case in point.

VIII. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the predominantly agrarian economy plagued by rising unemployment and a greatly reduced availability of land, weaving silk and handicraft production once provided the main opportunity for the generation of additional income to a large section of the rural folk. Thus, these village industries, the most prominent and widespread of which is weaving, seemed to be the only scope for self-employment for many in rural folk in Odisha. Indeed, handloom weaving has played a very vital role in the rural economy of Odisha. But in the past ten years, with changes brought in by globalization, liberalization and economic reforms, handloom sector has been facing adverse government policies and discriminatory competition. As a result, the family economy has been in turmoil. The resultant burden is the most on the weavers. In these circumstances, it becomes important to address the problems and needs of this ‘vulnerable section’ of handloom sector. Globalization and the opening of global markets may require their skills and knowledge to be upgraded to face this competition. This needs capacity building in the form of network building, site marketing etc. so that this small village of Odisha, Pipili, can carve out a niche of its own in the international market. Hence, the present paper attempts to argue in favor of village Based Tourism or rural tourism as an alternative for growth and development of Rural India in the present day competitive world. Based on the benefits derived from the alternative-based tourism initiatives generally, one therefore wonders if any such benefits come the way of the local people of Pipili by way of livelihood enhancement, hence the need for this research. And the present globalized and financial liberalized market, owing to the popularization of machine based low cost and superior quality consumer goods, the handicraft industry in general and Orissan craft industry in particular is facing enormous problems. As there has been the evolution of the modern market system economy, the artisans have lost their holds over the old patron-client market network and jajmani relationship. In the globalization times, though with their products going global land increasing demand for it, there is a rise in the handicraft sector economy, still ‘the artisans have become increasingly dependent on middle men like petty merchant capitalists who pay the artisans in wage on piece rate bases.’ The government’s initiative to create cooperatives has not become much successful. A report says there are over 25 lakh crafts persons in India, based mostly in the villages who are not used to interaction with buyers and don’t have the necessary skills to safeguard their own interests. Illiteracy often makes them more vulnerable.

IX. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AREA

Under the 10th Five Year Plan, thrust has been given to promote village tourism as the primary tourism product to spread tourism and its socio-economic benefits to rural and its new geographic regions. For creation or improvement of infrastructure at the selected site, various activities have been undertaken, viz, improvement of surroundings of the village which include landscaping, development of parks, fencing, compound wall etc; improvements of roads within the Panchayat limits; illumination in the village, provision for improvement in solid waste management and sewerage management; procurement of equipments directly related to tourism, like eco-friendly modes of transport for moving within the tourism zone refurbishment of the monuments, signage, reception centres, tourist accommodation and other work/activities directly related to tourism. Pipili, a village, located 11 kilometres from the capital is known for the indigenous creation called appliqué craft. Appliqué is an intricate creations made out of cloth decorated with colorful patchworks. The uniqueness of appliqué creations lies in the carefully created motifs of birds, animals, flowers, leaves and other geometric patterns that are stitched onto a base cloth used to make artistic products like umbrella, wall hanging, garden or beach umbrella, lampshade and other utility items. Appliqué creations stand out in their vibrancy and the amazing dexterity of the artisans in putting together small pieces of cloth to make designs that are so joyously colorful and impeccably symmetric. It has recently received intellectual property protection through Geographical Indication Act. Some of the products of appliqué are Chandua, Chatti, Alata, Tresa, Batua, Jhalar etc.

Fig. 1: location of the pipili (Source:(map data 2014 Google))
X. PIPLI: A KALEIDOSCOPE OF RURAL TOURISM

Pipili, the heart of the colorful art work called appliqué, is located at a distance of 20 km from Bhubaneswar on the NH 203 connecting Bhubaneswar with Puri. Pipili is located at 20.12° N 85.83° E. It is at Pipili that one takes a turn and moves eastward to proceed to Konark, the site of the Sun Temple. At an average elevation of 25 metres (82 feet), Pipili is a Notified Area Council (NAC) and has 16 wards under jurisdiction of Puri district. It is famous for designing beautiful appliqué handicrafts. As of 2001 India Census, Pipili had a population of 14,263. Males constitute 51% of the population and females 49%. Pipili has an average literacy rate of 70%, higher than the national average of 59.5%; male literacy is 77%, and female literacy is 63%. In Pipili, 12% of the population is under 6 years of age. As a legend would have it, the Pipili derived its name from Pirs (holy Muslim saints), many of whom lived in this area. Appliqué, which is a French term, is a technique by which the decorative effect is obtained by superposing patches of colored fabrics on a basic fabric, the edges of the patches being sewn in some form of stitchery. It is distinct from what is known as patch work in which small pieces of cut fabrics are usually joined side by side to make a large piece of fabric or for repairing a damaged fabric. Though the form is not unknown in other parts of India, it is in Orissa and especially in Pipili that the craft has a living and vibrant tradition continuing over centuries. While most appliqué craftsmen are concentrated in Pipili, there are quite a few in Puri and Khallikote, Parlakhemundi, and Boudh.

Source: (Applique handicraft of pipili, odisha tourism)

Appliqué works of Pipili is also known as patching cloth design. The local name of this handicraft is Chandua. As with many other handicrafts of Orissa, the roots of the appliqué art/craft form is interwined with the rituals and traditions of Lord Jagannath, the presiding deity of the Puri temple. The appliqué items are mainly used during processions of the deities in their various ritual outings. Items like Chhati, Tarasa and Chandua are used for the purpose. However, the appliqué work in its colorful best is most prominent in the cloth cover of the three chariots of the presiding deities in which they travel every year during the Ratha Yatra or Car Festival.

Source (odisha tourism)

As per tradition, the colour scheme of the three covers is predetermined. The chariot of Balabhadra known as Taladhwaja has a cloth covering of bright green and red, while that of Subhadra known as Padmadhwaja or Darpadalana has a cover of bright red and black. The chariot of Lord Jagannath called Nadighosha has a cover of bright red and yellow. The basic design of all three is similar being a combination of narrow and wide stripes while on the four sides above the openings, seats and pillows in appliqué are also made for ceremonial use by the deities during the annual ritual of bathing festival (Snana Jatra) and is locally known as 'Chakada Kama' with motifs of 27 stars and geometrical forms in appliqué work with motifs of fish, frog etc. on black cloth is used in the ritual dress of the Deities of Puri temple, locally known as the 'Gaja Uddharana Vesha', incarnation of Rescuer of Elephant. Applique cover is also made for caparisoning the dummy horses in the 'Horse Dance' or
Ghoda Nacha during Chaitra Festival in Puri and other places. The craft is traditionally practised by a caste of professional tailors, known as 'Darjis'. As with others services of the Lord, Darji Seva or the supply of appliqué items is rendered by the caste members in return for which they receive certain portion of the daily offering, 'bhog' from the temple.

Fig. 5
Source(odisha tourism,darjee stiching chandua or canopies)

Fig. 6
Source(odisha tourism,A shop selling appliques)

The craft is a part of the village industries and is well integrated into the rural economy. The craft has been a part and parcel of the socio-cultural fabric of the society. The handicraft used for the rituals of Lord Jagannath has now found a new market for them on the strength of its reputation which is unparalleled. The artisans of the craft have a good concentration of women and have been significantly contributing to the women empowerment. However the globalization has put these artisans in a tight spot in terms of their infringement of the product and taking away the already created market for their benefiting on the reputation of the product. Globalised economy has contributed to the ever-increasing competition among the developing nations. In the wake of the paradigm shift of global trade rules and the emerging challenges of economic liberalization, a holistic and integrated strategy is a pre-requisite to support the textile and clothing sector, especially the poorer segments of the manufacturing and trading community. In this context, the Government of India has initiated several measures to address the critical needs of the textiles and clothing industry in the recent past. Besides, the government is in the process of creating synergy between the three sets of stakeholders of the industry namely, the government, the enterprise and the civil society organizations to foster and ensure sustainability of such developmental programmes. NISDAR with the support of the textiles committee and the UNCTAD India programme has been in the forefront in supporting the craftsmen for a better deal for their craft creations and are being supported for increasing the export of the craft besides the expansion of the domestic market.

XI. CHALLENGES IN RURAL TOURISM:

1) Traditional belief that agriculture can help the rural people
2) Off let realization of the fact that tourism can also play an important role in developmental process
3) Absence of supporting industry
4) Legislation problems
5) Shortage of trained manpower
6) Insufficient financial support
7) Lack of proper physical communications
8) Lack of basic business planning skills

XII. MARKETING RURAL TOURISM:

Marketing becomes a major problem for the promotion of Rural Tourism in India as well as Odisha. This is because the local bodies are either not aware about the developmental role of tourism or are constrained by their own politics or lack of funds. Most rural tourism businesses of all kinds invest relatively little in marketing and related training (Lane, 1994). But to be sustainable as businesses, and in turn to sustain their communities and cultural landscapes, rural tourism operators have much to gain from improving marketing practice (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1994). While marketing a rural tourism destination (region, village or leisure spots) there is need of strategic approach on following aspects.
(A) Attractions - like promotion of rural tourism around a heritage site
(b) Infrastructure (accommodation, cuisine, hygiene, clean water basic amenities) etc.
(c) Accessibility (roads, means of transportation) - should not be too far from railhead or airport: 2-21/2 hr.
(d) Carrying capacity of the destination
(e) Environmental issues (Pollution, Eco-fragility, etc.
(f) Safety, law and order situation etc.
(g) Continuous Maintenance

There is a need of comprehensive research in finding out the suitable locations, ascertain market size, tourist profile, perceptions and expectations, to demarcate roles and responsibilities among various stakeholders, complete package to tourists, product development, provision and management of infrastructure, accommodation and food facilities, promotional plans and more importantly about the role of NGO and local government and community for the strategic implementations of project. Product development and management ensure long term viability of project.

XIII. CONCLUSION

If the proper marketing plan is done rural tourism, it could bring lots of benefit to our society. It could be a sustainable revenue generating project for rural development for government as well as destination. It can help inflow to resources from urban to the rural economy. It can prevent migration of rural people to urban. Both short-term and long-term planning, implementing and monitoring are vital in avoiding damage to rural areas. Environmental management, local involvement, sound legislation, sustainable marketing, and realistic planning are crucial for development of rural tourism. Rural tourism will emerged as an important instrument for sustainable human development including poverty alleviation, employment generation, environmental regeneration and development of remote areas and advancement of women and other disadvantaged groups in the country apart from promoting social integration and international understanding. The government should promote rural tourism to ensure sustainable economic development and positive social change.

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