



A STUDY ON RECENT ISSUES ON HOUSEBOAT TOURISM IN PALLATHURUTHY VILLAGE IN ALAPPUZHA

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Abstract

India has been a centre of tourist attraction for long years. It is due to the elegance and overall history that it holds. Travel from the earliest times was a fascination for the mankind. It also cherishes the culture which is worshipped by many people around the world. Tourism in India has flourished due to scenic places that are enjoyed by people of all ages. There are many places in India that holds to its architecture and history, a great number of secrets and stories have inspired many people. There are some places which are enjoyed by families for the sheer enjoyment and pleasure. God's earth in all its fullness and beauty is for the people, is a truth that has been realized by the people. Prosperity and leisure, coupled with the quest for pleasure recreation are the major motivating factors which sustain the development of mass movement of people the tourism phenomenon has attracted the entire world. In addition to the economic significance, it has also importance in socio-cultural aspects and infrastructure development of a region. In addition to the economic benefits tourism is considered as a cultural ambassador between nations. The mass movement of the people from region to region having different culture and results in cultural exchange. Tourism will hardly exist, if people from different culture do not come face to face, co-exist and interact. Tourism denotes the temporary, short term movement of people to destination outside the place where they normally live and work and their activities during their stay of these destination.

Keywords: Housrboat, tourism, GST, business

INTRODUCTION

India has been a centre of tourist attraction for long years. It is due to the elegance and overall history that it holds. Travel from the earliest times was a fascination for the mankind. It also cherishes the culture which is worshipped by many people around the world. Tourism in India has flourished due to scenic places that are enjoyed by people of all ages. There are many places in India that holds to its architecture and history, a great number of secrets and stories have inspired many people. There are some places which are enjoyed

by families for the sheer enjoyment and pleasure. God's earth in all its fullness and beauty is for the people, is a truth that has been realized by the people. Prosperity and leisure, coupled with the quest for pleasure recreation are the major motivating factors which sustain the development of mass movement of people the tourism phenomenon has attracted the entire world. In addition to the economic significance, it has also importance in socio-cultural aspects and infrastructure development of a region. In addition to the economic benefits tourism is considered as a cultural ambassador between nations. The mass movement of the people from region to region having different culture and results in cultural exchange. Tourism will hardly exist, if people from different culture do not come face to face, co-exist and interact. Tourism denotes the temporary, short term movement of people to destination outside the place where they normally live and work and their activities during their stay of these destination. In other word tourism is primarily summation of movement of people to, and their activities at the place outside their normal beat areas. The destinations may lie within the national boundary of the country of the visitors or outsiders. Accordingly, their movement results in domestic tourism and foreign tourism.

In India, houseboats as accommodation for tourists are common on the backwaters of Kerala, and on the Dal Lake near Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir. Houseboats in Kerala, south India, are huge, slow-moving barges used for leisure trips. They are a reworked model of Kettuvallams (in the Malayalam language, Kettu means "tied with ropes", and vallam means "boat"), which, in earlier times, were used to carry rice and spices from Kuttanad to the Kochi port. Kerala houseboats were considered a convenient means of transportation. The popularity of Kettuvallams has returned in the function as major tourist attractions. Such a houseboat is about 60 to 70 feet (18 to 21 m) long and about 15 feet (4.6 m) wide at the middle. The hull is made of wooden planks that are held together by ropes of coconut fibre. The roof is made of bamboo poles and palm leaves. The exterior of the boat is painted with protective coats of cashew nut oil. More than 900 kettuvallams ply the backwaters and there are various routes which are popular among the tourists. Alappuzha is the citadel of house boats. There are some 120 of them, well maintained and perfected as luxury liners there. The house boats have all the creature comforts of a good hotel: well-furnished bedrooms, modern hygienic toilets, costly living rooms, a beautiful kitchen and in some cases even a balcony for angling. The crew of a kettuvallam comprises two oarsmen and a cook. Fresh food, cooked in inimitable Kuttanadan style is the rage of the international tourists. Tourists can opt for a day cruise or an overnight stay in a houseboat. Most tourists prefer to stay overnight in a houseboat or kettuvallam as it offers a holistic backwater experience.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

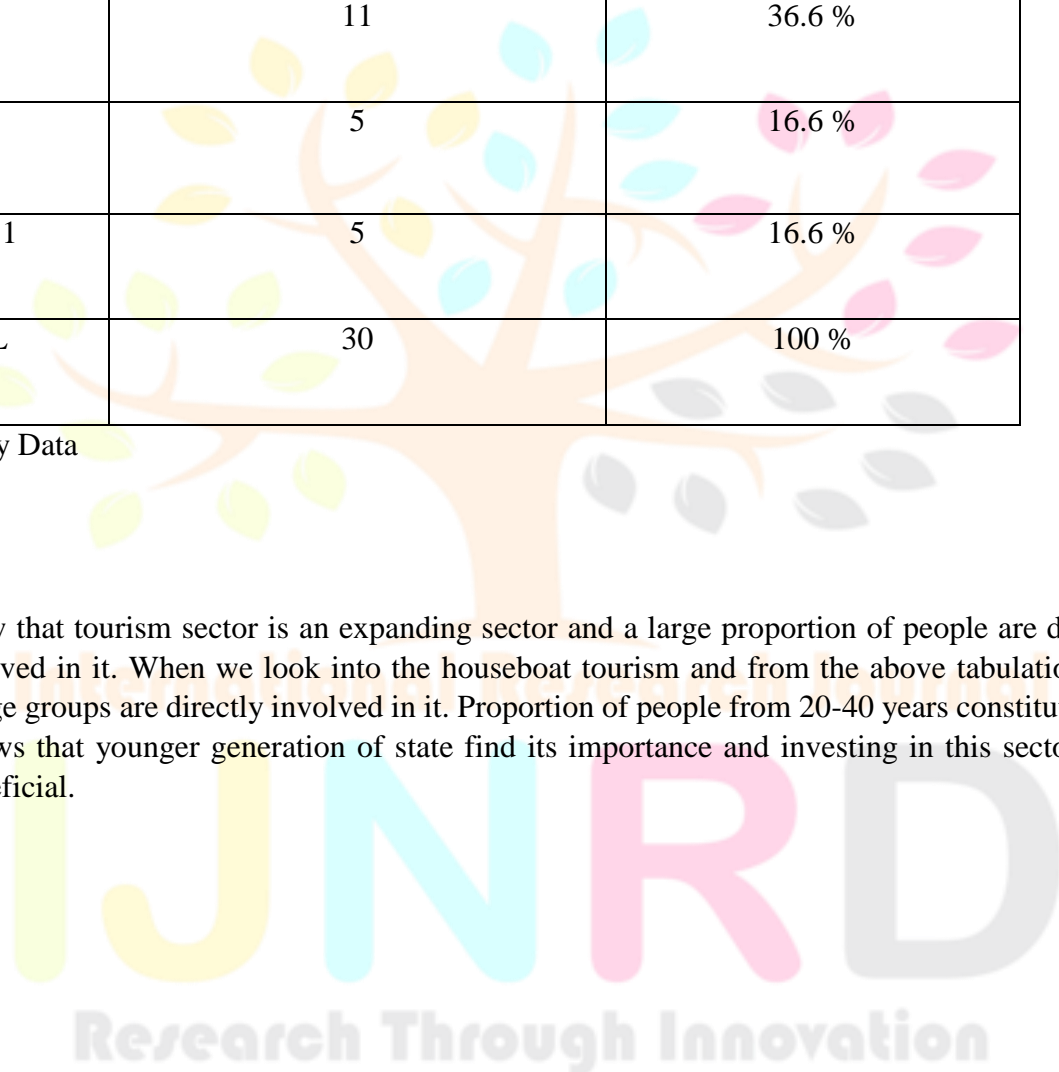
The study is conducted based on primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected through structured questionnaire, direct observation and interview. Secondary data is collected from economic review, journals, internet etc.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION**Age group of respondents**

AGE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
21-30	9	30 %
31-40	11	36.6 %
41-50	5	16.6 %
Above 51	5	16.6 %
TOTAL	30	100 %

Source: Primary Data

As we all know that tourism sector is an expanding sector and a large proportion of people are directly or indirectly involved in it. When we look into the houseboat tourism and from the above tabulation people from various age groups are directly involved in it. Proportion of people from 20-40 years constitute 66% of total. This shows that younger generation of state find its importance and investing in this sector will be useful and beneficial.



Number of houseboats owned by individual

NUMBER OF HOUSEBOATS OWNED BY AN INDIVIDUAL	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	13	43.33 %
2	8	26.66 %
3	5	16.66 %
4	3	10 %
Above 4	1	3.33 %

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the number of houseboats individual have. From the above it is clear that 43% of people have only single houseboat and 27% have two houseboats. And only 3.5% have more than four houseboats. From this we can have a slight information about the financial status of the individual and also helps us to understand whether they are new in business.

Amount of loan

AMOUNT OF LOAN	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	PERCENTAGE
1 Lakh - 5 Lakh	10	33.33 %
Above 5 Lakh	10	33.33 %
No Loan	10	33.33 %
TOTAL	30	100 %

Source: Primary Data

As people need a huge investment in this sector, they find this huge sum of money through loans. From the above it is clear that more than 50% of people have loans. Only 33% of people have no loans. They are those people who are having such a large family support or may have any other source of income. Also some of them may come to the field years ago and they may have cleared the loans by now.

Number of monthly trip

NUMBER OF MONTHLY TRIP	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
LESS THAN 20	6	20 %
20 TO 30	15	50 %
MORE THAN 30	9	30 %
TOTAL	30	100

Source: Primary Data

From the above it is clear that 50% of houseboat operators have a monthly trip ranging from 20 to 30. Number of monthly trip was less than 20 for 20% of operators and more than 30 for 30% of operators. This is the status in season time. There is a comparative reduction in this number in off season time.

GST affect arrival of tourist

GST AFFECT ARRIVAL OF TOURIST	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	21	70 %
NO	9	30 %
TOTAL	30	100 %

Source: Primary Data

When we take into account, whether the new tax policy affect the arrival of tourists; 70% of people have the opinion that GST affect the arrival of tourist. There is a decline in the arrival of domestic tourist because of the luxury tax. There is not much decline in the arrival of foreign tourist.

Business profitable

PROFITABLE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	7	23.33 %
NO	23	76.66 %
TOTAL	30	100 %

Source: Primary Data

When we take into consideration whether the business is profitable or not; 70% of people have the opinion that business is not profitable due to recent issues. 30% of people have the opinion that they can run the business but they too are not getting expected return.

Flood affect arrival of tourist

FLOOD AFFECT ARRIVAL OF TOURIST	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	30	100 %
NO	0	0 %
TOTAL	30	100 %

Source: Primary Data

From the above it is observed that all the people have the opinion that flood have severely affected their business. There was not even a business for months and even after that they have not much better business. Competitors take advantage of it through various ways.

CONCLUSION

There is a great potential for House boat tourism industry in Kerala. Tourism is the third largest net foreign exchange earner for Kerala economy and plays a great role in employment generation. A change in approach as necessary from part of politicians, policy makers and public at large. Punnamada in Alappuzha district has achieved international and national significance as a major tourist destination. Various stake holders of tourism sector such as hotel and resort owner, agents, traders and service providers should provide a customer oriented approach that satisfies consumer needs and ensure tourist welfare.

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