CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION
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FINDINGS SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter is devoted to a presentation of findings and conclusions from the research work. This chapter consists of three sections.

The first section presents the findings of the study. The second section provides suggestions for the improvement of travel and tourism industry in Malnad region, based on the findings of the study. The third section deals with the scope for further research in the area followed by the conclusion.

6.1 Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are demarcated in to three parts for better presentation and comprehension. They are:

I. Findings relating to Tourists and their opinions
II. Findings relating to Hotel owners/Managers and their opinions
III. Findings relating to Travel agents/Tour operators and their opinions

Tourism plays a vital role in the economy of any region which has a potential to attract tourist flow. The travel and tourism industry can be viewed as being comprised of four component sectors:

- Accommodation sector
- Transport sector
- Travel organizers’ sector
- Destination organization sector.

There is probably no other industry which transects so many sectors, levels and interests as tourism. Each of these sectors can be further sub-divided in to several subdivisions as shown in the table below. The most important point to note in this context is that the sectors are interlinked and there is a significant interdependence between them. The accommodation sector, for example, relies upon the transport sector to transport the tourists to and from the accommodation. Similarly, the transport and accommodation sectors both rely up on the travel organizers/ tour
operators to provide them with customers. If one sector fails to deliver a service effectively, it has a ‘knock on’ effect on other sectors.

The following table shows the four main sectors of Travel and Tourism Industry.

**TABLE 6.1**

**THE FOUR MAIN SECTORS OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCOMMODATION SECTOR</th>
<th>TRANSPORT SECTOR</th>
<th>DESTINATION ORGANIZATION SECTOR</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>National Tourism Offices (NTOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest houses/bed &amp; breakfast</td>
<td>Bus operators</td>
<td>State Tourism Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartments/villas/flats/cottages/</td>
<td>coach operators</td>
<td>Local Tourism offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condominiums/time share resorts</td>
<td>Car rental operators</td>
<td>Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmhouses /Holiday centre</td>
<td>Airlines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference/exhibition centre</td>
<td>Shipping lines/ferries</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>camping sites</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAVEL ORGANIZERS’ SECTOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tour operators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference organizers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booking agencies</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: Adapted and modified from *Marketing in Travel and Tourism* by Middleton V. ¹

The relationship between tourism development, socio-economic development and the environment is circular and cumulative. The prime interests of the tourists will centre around their needs in terms of better infrastructure and basic facilities at tourist sites. In order to provide better infrastructure, there is greater requirements of capital. Developing infrastructure for tourism pressurizes the government to provide the necessary facilities to the tourists on its own with limited capital and funds. Without adequate capital, Prospects for development will be undermined. There is a great need to build a partnership between the government and the local businesses to develop and promote tourism in any region. It is not so easy, owing to the conflicts of interest that occur.

Despite the recent progress in the tourism industry, the government’s recognition to tourism industry and its importance on social and economic development of regions is far from satisfactory. Tourism is still viewed as a marginal industry, in many regions of this country.

In order to fulfill the needs of the tourists, it is necessary to attract investments in tourism industry. It is, therefore, essential to carefully match the demands of a growing number of tourists with the characteristics of a destination in order to ensure visitor satisfaction.

The successful operation of tourism organizations, public and private, will result in increased foreign exchange earnings, employment generation, tax revenues and augmented revenues and profits. They depend on each other, however, on successful mediation of two different sets of interests. The positive side may be described as win-win situations, benefiting government as well as private businesses.

The current study is based on the views and opinions of 400 Tourists, 67 Hotel owners/managers, and 40 Travel agents/Tour operators. The collection of sample from the different sectors of tourism industry helps to arrive at a holistic way of looking into the performance of the industry in Malnad region. It also highlights the problems faced by the service providers as well as the users. The current research is an attempt to see a broad picture of Travel and tourism industry in Malnad region.

The research has significant implications both for the government and for the private sector. It gives a clear picture for the service providers like Transport, Accommodation, Food and Entertainment to understand the tourists and their needs. The study also attempts to do an in depth analysis about the perceptions and opinions of tourists, Hotel owners/managers and Travel agents. This research explores the possible ways to develop Travel and Tourism industry in Malnad region.

The findings of the study are as follows:
I. Findings relating to Tourists and their opinions about Malnad region

a. Type of Travelers

Majority of the travelers visiting the region are ordinary tourists who come for spending leisure time. Business travelers who also visit tourist sites of Malnad region in their spare time of business trips are very few.

The study reveals that 94.25 percent of travelers visiting Malnad region are pure tourists and their purpose of traveling is leisurely travel.

b. Purpose of visit and their Companions

The researcher found that, majority of the travelers is pure tourists who visit the region for relaxation, pilgrimage, adventure and study tours. The intention of most of the tourists is relaxation. It is also understood that a good number of visitors come with family while an equal number of tourists visit along with friends.

c. Knowledge about the Places and Tour arrangements

Majority of the tourists received information about the tourist spots of the region through their friends, relatives and other family members. The role of mass media and tour operator/travel agents in propagating the tourist prospects of the region is very limited and negligible. It can also be seen that most of the tourists planned and arranged their trips on their own or through their friends and relatives while the involvement of tour operators in providing information is non-existent.

About the tour arrangements, 62.25 percent of the tourists arranged their trip on their own, where as 33 percent of the tourists got the help of their friends and relatives in organizing their tour. Surprisingly the tour operators/ travel agents share in organizing tours is negligible in the whole region.
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**d. Mode of Transport**

The most preferred modes of transport are, contract bus services, private buses, state-run buses, tourist taxis and own cars; in that order. The region is not connected by rail road.

It is evident from the study, that 35 percent of the tourists are using bus services to reach tourist sites, out of which 65 percent of them are taking private buses as their frequency is more and service is also better, compared to 35 percent of them are using K.S.R.T.C. services. Train facilities are nil in Malnad region.

**e. Tourists stay and Duration**

In the study the researcher found that majority of tourists are not staying in the region.

Most of the tourists are one-day visitors who complete their sight-seeing in the day and return before night. The reasons, there are no attractions except the place to stay for longer periods. Even if the tourists want to stay at any interesting place there are no accommodation facilities available. Some of them stay in hotels or relatives' houses for a period of 1-2 days. The number of tourists who stay for more than 2 days is very limited.

The study also reveals that 44.25 percent of the tourists visiting the region are staying in hotels.

**f. Frequency of Visit and Best Season**

The study finds that most of the visitors are first-timers, while a few of them come once a year. Frequent visitors are very less, though most of them agree that the region is suitable for visiting any time of the year.

**g. Most Attractive Part of the Region**

Since 54.25 percent of the respondents rated the culture of the region is the most attractive, followed by religious sites such as temples 38 percent, water falls 34 percent and natural beauty 32.25 percent. Even Heritage sites of the region got a good
rating of 23.25 percent from the respondents and they rated it as the most attractive part of the region.

The research reveals that Malnad region is rich spot for the tourists as the tourists can enjoy a variety of natural beauty, waterfalls, jungles, mountains, temples, culture, and art. The visitors are attracted most by the cultural heritage of the region followed by religious sites and natural beauty.

h. Top Five Tourist Spots

Though the region is dotted with many tourist attractions the visitors rank these places in the following order- Jog falls, Shringeri, Belur, Halebid and Agumbe. Jog falls attracts the maximum number of tourists as it is the tallest waterfall in the country. Shringeri is a religious worship place while Belur and Halebid are famous for the cultural heritage and architectural beauty.

The study reveals that 50.25 percent of the tourists like to visit Jog falls repeatedly, thus they ranked Jog falls as number one tourist site of the region. At number 2 Shringeri stands as a religious place and for its serenity, Belur and Halebid ranked at 3rd and 4th for its heritage and architectural position. Agumbe stands at number 5 in the tourist ranking list.

i. Infrastructural Facilities

The region is neglected by the government and its potential as a viable tourist destination is under-exploited. The infrastructural facilities necessary for attracting tourists must be provided by the government and the research has thrown up ample proof that the government contribution is grossly insufficient. However, many private tour facilitators are providing facilities to the tourists at economical rates.

The researcher found that the ratings of the tourists on the available infrastructure in the region are between good, average and poor. This is already proved by the researcher in the hypothesis test that infrastructural facilities in the region provided by the government are not sufficient.
It is also found that private operators are providing basic facilities to the tourists at economical prices in Malnad region. The same is proved by the researcher in the hypothesis test.

j. Tourist Guide Services

The tourist guide services in the region are poor and many tourist spots do not have guides and where they are available they charge exorbitant rates. Some tourist guides charge the tourists a huge amount and exploit the foreign tourists.

The available guides are not professional and they need training on how to service tourists.

k. Tourist Information Centre

Most of the tourist destinations do not have information centers to help the visitors, though some popular places have them. These centers are badly equipped to serve the customers.

It is surprising to know that in Malnad region, 82.5 percent of the tourist couldn’t found any Tourist information centers near tourist places to guide them. Only 17.5 percent of the tourists found information centers at some popular tourist places.

It is also clear in the study that, out of the 70 respondents, who found information centers at some tourist places, received information orally, where as only small percent of them received some printed materials and brochures.

I. Beggars Problem and Safety

The tourists do not find the presence of beggars a major menace and safety problem. The presence of beggars is not a universal problem in the tourist centers of Malnad region.

The researcher also found that, Out of 400 tourists interviewed, 93 percent of the tourists feel safe in Malnad region.
m. Public–Private Partnership

The tourists have a general feeling that private participation is necessary for the development of tourism and many are optimistic about public-private cooperative participation. However a good number of tourists feel that the cooperation between private and government sectors will do well for the tourism in the region.

n. Comparative Study of Karnataka and Neighboring States

In the study the researcher found that, Karnataka state has the maximum number of tourist attractions in comparison with the neighboring states. Also Karnataka receives the best ratings compared to other state in the areas of cultural heritage, natural beauty, religious sites and sea shores.

Thus Karnataka got the maximum places and areas of tourist interest compared to its neighboring states. The same is tested and proved in the hypothesis test by the researcher.

o. K.S.T.D.C. Role

The role and performance of the state-run, Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) in the Malnad region is inferior and substandard. Majority of the tourists are neither aware of this organization nor used any services offered by them.

II. Findings relating to Hotel Owners/Managers and their opinions about Malnad region

a. Annual Occupancy Rate

The researcher found that Most of the hotels in Malnad region receive good business round the year with an average occupancy rate of 65%. Even in off seasons the occupancy rate is approximately 50%. Offer of promotion packages is not very common with a small number of hotels offering some packages irregularly, as 50 percent of the hotels are not offering any packages to the tourists to attract them.
b. Hotel Bookings and Type of Customers

Most of the hotels in the region receive customers directly without the involvement of middle men, though a few arrange customers through travel agents and tour operators. A major chunk of customers is family groups followed by business travelers and honeymooners.

It is found in the study that, 69 percent of the customers coming to the hotels are families with children. A small percent of the customers are business people and honeymoon couples.

c. Tourists' Profile

In the study the researcher found that, Three fourths of the visiting tourists are from Karnataka followed by tourists from Kerala, Tamilnadu. Only a limited number of tourists come from other states like Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

d. Opinions on Infrastructure

The hotel owners and managers are not pleased with the existing infrastructure available in the tourist spots.

In the study it is found that, 85 percent of the hotel owners/managers feel that they need more improvements in the infrastructure of the tourist places.

e. Public –Private Partnership

Most of the hotel managers and owners think that private participation is necessary to develop infrastructure required for tourism. They also believe that cooperation between private and government sectors will be useful for uplifting the tourism industry in the region.

The study reveals that, out of 67 hotels managements, 79 percent of the hotel owners/managers feel that private participation is necessary in the development of tourism infrastructure.
f. K.S.T.D.C. Role

In the study it is found that, the role of state-run K.S.T.D.C. in the development of tourism in the region is negligible. Thus the position of the KSTDC is insignificant and their presence is seen only in some specific pockets and therefore the private hotel owners do not experience any competition with KSTDC.

III. Findings relating to Travel Agents/ Tour operators and their opinions about Malnad region

a. Profile of Travel agents/Tour operators

In the study it is found that, Out of 40 Travel Agents/ Tour operators interviewed, majority of them are offering a mixed service to the tourists in the region. Most of the travel agents and tour operators in the region offer a mix of services such as transport services, booking agency, hotel booking, organizing sightseeing trips, conducting package tours and offering tourist guidance services. These agents/operators are not organized as full-fledged business houses and they offer services as and when demanded by the tourists.

The researcher also found that, though the travel agents / tour operators are single individual persons, offering a list of services whenever the tourists demand from them. They lack a professional attitude and approach and therefore fail to provide professional services to the tourists.

b. Type of services offered

The study reveals that, the travel agent /tour operators are playing a significant role in the development and promotion of tourism industry in the region. Though not professionally organized, they serve and provide all basic transport facilities to the tourists. They offer transportation, guidance and supply tourist guides if needed. Some of the operators offer special discounts to the tourists especially during off season.
Apart from Transport services, they provide place guidance and if the tourist demands for a tour Guide they can arrange it from out side.

The researcher also found that, 90 percent of the tourists take guidance about the tourist place from the travel agents.

c. Tour operations

In the study it is found that, that 65 percent of Travel agents organize tours to other south Indian states. Majority of the agents organize tours to other states such as Goa, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh.

d. Opinions on Infrastructure

All the travel agents believe that they need more improvements in the infrastructure in the region.

e. Opinion on Public –Private Partnership

In the study it is found that, Most of the travel agents agree that private participation is necessary for the development of tourism infrastructure in the region, though a partnership between private and government sectors will be better. However, some of them are pessimistic about private participation.

f. K.S.T.D.C. Role

The role of K.S.T.D.C. is insignificant or deficient in the promotion of tourism in Malnad region.
6.2. Suggestions for Improvement of Travel and Tourism Industry in Malnad region

Based on the above findings, following suggestions are put forward for the development and promotion of tourism in Malnad region.

The World Travel & Tourism Council says globally, India is emerging as the second-fastest growing tourism economy between 2005 and 2014, followed by China. Successful promotions such as the Tourism Ministry’s "Incredible India" multimedia campaign and the budget air travel boom have contributed to the tourist flow.

For decades, Travel and Tourism industry in India was lagging behind, mainly because of its poor travel and hospitality infrastructure, lethargic approach of the government to woo visitors, delays in issuing visas or getting past formalities at airports, shabby airports and hotels, poorly maintained historical monuments, and harassment by touts and taxi drivers-to name a few.

Off late, the government is trying to improve the infrastructure and address tourist woes. Steps have been taken to boost expansion of the hotel industry and training, and assistance is being extended to those who would like to provide home-stay accommodations for tourists. The ‘Atithi devo bhavah’ initiative was launched to sensitize and train key stakeholders in the tourism industry on issues such as cleanliness, courtesy and Indian culture.

However, the country has to go a long way to match the facilities and services in tourist destinations to the international standards. Touts continue to hang out at railway stations and monuments, pestering tourists to buy carpets and curios at places where they get a commission. They direct them to hotels that are often sordid. It is almost impossible for a tourist to enjoy her or his time at a monument or a heritage site without facing a tout.

India will have to do more, than presenting attractive visuals of its spas and serene lifestyle. It has to provide the basic infrastructural facilities to tourists, like better roads, better transport system, good accommodation facilities, and clean streets.
Suggestions

1. Urgent need to establish Malnad Tourism Development Board

The tourism industry in Malnad region cannot grow unless there is a separate agency or board which can exclusively plan, organize, co-ordinate and monitor the infrastructure and develop the tourist places in the region. Due to lack of basic facilities, there is a decline in tourist inflow over the years.

The board may set up its offices in every district of Malnad region which can closely monitor and control the planning and implementation of the government’s developmental projects. The Ministry of Tourism or Department of Tourism in Karnataka cannot effectively monitor every region’s developmental activities. Therefore, a decentralized tourism management system is called for. The government must solve the problems of tourists; first by identifying the problems by undertaking a thorough research through the District Tourism offices. There must be a monthly or quarterly reporting system whereby the ministry is informed about the activities and progress in development of tourism.

2. Improvement of Transport system

An efficient transport system is a pre-requisite for development of Tourism industry. It is not only the key infrastructural input for the growth process but also plays a significant role in promoting national integration, which is particularly important in a large country like India. The transport system also plays an important role in connecting the backward regions and integrating them with the mainstream economy by opening them to trade and investment. In a liberalized set-up, an efficient transport network becomes important in order to increase mobility and enhancing the competitive efficiency of the economy. Of the various modes of transport that connect the cities and villages of the country, road transport constitutes the crucial link. Road infrastructure facilitates movement of people from one place to other, helps trade and commerce, and opens up backward regions of India. In addition, the road system also provides last-mile connection for other modes of
transport such as railways, airports, ports and inland waterway transport and complements the efforts of these modes in meeting the needs of transportation.

Thus the government must improve the road and rail network from every corner of the state to connect all the tourist places of the region.

3. Development of Accommodation Services in the region

To fall in line with internationally benchmarked tourism models, India needs at least 90,000 more rooms (in the five star segment) and therefore an investment of Rs. 80,000 Crore may be needed.

Short stays are another new travel trend. Executives employed in high pressure jobs, which do not allow them to take long vacations, are more likely to take short holidays, closer to their place of work. Thus they are searching for a home away from their home.

The popularity of Atithi home stays is catching up in Mysore region. The same can be adopted and popularized in Malnad region, for which the local residents need to be motivated to come forward and offer their housing to the tourists coming to the region. Also it is in the interest of the government to train and educate the local residents to provide better accommodation facilities to the tourists visiting the region.

The residents can also offer local home made food to the tourists so that they can enjoy the local food of the region. This will help the tourists of different origin to understand the culture of Malnad region.

4. Development of Basic facilities at Tourist sites

When the tourists visit any tourist place, he needs at least the basic infrastructural facilities such as Drinking water, Clean toilets, Sitting benches, cleanliness and Safety instructions to avoid accidents at the tourist sites. To provide these facilities, the government is spending Lakhs of rupees, but with questionable results. Either the work contractor will finish the work with poor quality, or after completion of the work it is left untouched for years without proper maintenance.
Thus the government can give the operation and maintenance work of the basic facilities to local residents to maintain them cleanly on pay and use mode. Also it will generate employment opportunities to the local people of the region.

5. **Provision of Information centers**

Tourists coming from distant places may seek a lot of information on arrival like where to stay, the choice of hotels, food, details about the nearby tourist sites etc. The information centers catering to such needs can be established at bus stands and railway stations or any such place of arrival. The tourists may hesitate to ask these questions to the strangers who may not give the right information. Thus the government can establish information centers at tourist places preferably at the points of arrival. These centers can provide road maps of that region highlighting the tourist spots and economical accommodation facilities. These measures can solve the problems of majority of tourists who are visiting the region for the first time.

6. **Provision of Guide facilities**

There is shortage of tourist guides in the region. At some of the places, there are no guides available at all. Those who are acting as guides need a lot of training to improve their knowledge and professional skills, to offer better service to the tourists. At the same time some of the guides charge unrealistic sums for the services offered. The government may provide training courses to the guides and issue them license, so that only authorized guides can offer the services. The government must also fix the fees for the services offered by the guides which should be economical to the tourists.

7. **Entertainment Facilities**

Now a days there is a trend of more families traveling together. This is because family get-togethers are getting rarer as family members find it difficult to take time off to visit parents and siblings. Majority of the tourists in the region feel there is lack of other entertainment options for the families apart from the blank tourist sites. The government can encourage the private businesses to establish some entertainment facilities like, Giant wheels on top of a hill which can give the tourist a bird's eye
view of the area, a toy train, some games for children, and maintain parks with
beautiful flowers and musical fountains etc.

- This will create a lot of job opportunities to the local people and can play a
  significant role in socio economic development of the region.

8. Encouraging Public-Private Partnership

Due to lack of basic facilities, there has been a decrease in tourist inflow over the
years, despite UNESCO identifying Hampi and Pattadakal as heritage centres. The
government is neglecting some of the best tourist sites in the state due to either lack
of awareness or lack of funds.

It is not possible for the government to provide everything the tourists demand
and even if it tries to provide many things, the monitoring and control will become
difficult.

Thus the government can attract private investors to invest in infrastructural
facilities to promote and develop tourism industry. The partnership may be in Built
Operate Transfer (BOT) basis, or Built Own Operate Transfer (BOOT) basis, or Built
Operate Lease & Transfer (BOLT) basis. This will attract many private businesses to
take part in the development of Tourism industry.

9. Coordination between the other Government departments

There is lack of coordination between Tourism department with other related
departments such as forest department, archeological department because every
organization is focused on its area of operation and there is a lack of collective
thinking with a common agenda of developing tourism in Karnataka.

10. Application of Information Technology

Increasingly, people are looking at the Net to plan their leisure travel in both
international and domestic sectors. This trend is on the rise with growing Internet
penetration (about 5 million) in the country. In India, most of the booking is still done
through travel agents though the airlines are now ready with e-ticketing platforms.
The travel industry in India has understood the importance of the Internet and now provides comprehensive information on fares, packages and other travel related matters on their Web sites. The information on the Web helps anyone with access to Internet to see and compare what is available in the market.

However, in Malnad region, the Hotels and Travel agents/Tour operators are not using Internet for the promotion of their businesses. Thus the government must encourage the Hotel managements and Travel agents/Tour operators to use the Information Technology effectively to promote their businesses. If they are able to advertise the attractions in the region and their services on internet, it will reach the masses thereby attracting even foreign nationals to the region and add good prospects to their business.

11. Rescheduling of Tourist Circuits (reconsider)

The Karnataka Tourism segmented the state tourist places homogeneously. The segments are named as Northern circuit, Coastal circuit, Wild life circuit, Hill Resort circuit, and Southern circuit.

This grouping system has an inherent weakness that it concentrates on only one aspect or one area of interest in a region and ignores other areas of interest. For example if a tourist wants to visit from Goa or any other state, he is forced to see only Hills or jungles or beaches or say temples. There should be a heterogeneous mixture of attractions to the tourists to visit the state.

*Malnad* region has everything from water falls to jungles, from religious sites to architectural structures, and hence can be promoted as one of the best regions to visit. The government should promote the tourist sites of the state as a mixed bag of tourist sites rather than grouping as rigid brands to suit tourists of different types and different tastes.

12. Travel and Tourism Directory

The government can publish a Travel and Tourism Directory highlighting all the important tourist sites of the state mentioning the details of transport and accommodation facilities available to the tourists. The Directory can be published in
many languages to reach the masses. Also the directory can be sold at economical prices, so that common man can afford to buy it and can think of traveling to all the places.

13. **Usage of Television and Films**

The government can invite a few best film makers to craft documentaries on Travel and Tourism, highlighting different tourist places of the state. This can be broadcast on different channels across the country. This will attract more tourists from different parts of the country.

Also the government can encourage the film industry to shoot their movies in the state at subsidized rates. This will reach the masses and the tourist places may become more popular.

For example Jog falls became very popular with the Kannada movie *(Mungaru Maley)*.

14. **Tourism education and training**

Tourism is an important human activity with considerable economic significance. It has wide areas of interest extending to the social, political, cultural and environmental spheres. It involves activities and interests not only of the central and local governments but also to private sector. The requirements of tourists need to be reconciled with those of the resident population and it must be ensured that the economic benefits which tourists bring trickle down to the grass root level of a society. The study of tourism is, therefore, important not only for its own sake as an interesting trend but also for a better understanding of the economy and society. Its study is also of practical value to those who are engaged in it and serves many vocational and other purposes.

Thus the government should encourage the universities and other educational institutions to initiate courses on Travel and Tourism industry. Some of the institutes can offer training courses in teaching languages and to work as tourists Guides.
15. Exploring other sectors of Tourism

The government of Karnataka can explore other sectors of tourism apart from concentrating on only a few sectors such as Rural tourism, Medical tourism, Adventure Tourism, Eco-tourism, etc. Eco-tourism is growing globally at 5%, and ranked by the World Tourism Organization as the fastest-growing segment in the global tourism industry.

For example, Thomas Cook, offering 13 holiday packages to India costing from $560 to $1560, sells an eco-tourism tour of tribes in the Eastern Indian state of Orissa starting at $1,300. But surprisingly, India does not yet have an eco-tourism society unlike other Asian countries such as Thailand and Sri Lanka.

Medical tourism is another sector enjoying a boom, and it is expected to be worth $2.3 billion by 2012. According to a McKinsey consulting report India is getting people in thousands from various parts of the world with most of them coming for bypass surgeries, dental and orthopedic treatment, and even for plastic surgeries.

Apart from this, Natural cure like Yoga or treating with Ayurveda (Herbal medicine) can be made more popular in Malnad region as the Western Ghats region is rich in Flora and Fauna of rare species. Already Kerala has promoted nature care tourism successfully.

16. Promoting local Handicrafts of the region

Malnad region is rich and famous for its arts and handicrafts, like Sandal oil, Wood craft, pottery, handmade ornaments and spices, etc. The government can provide a platform by organizing Handicrafts festivals and encourage the craftsmen to demonstrate their skills. It is also necessary to provide sales outlets for these craftsmen to setup shops and sell their work to the tourists. This will help the local community to generate more income and a better standard of living.

17. Organizing Cultural Festivals

Karnataka is a land of festivals for different seasons with different reasons. In fact, every region, every town and every village has its own calendar of events to be celebrated.
But except Dussehra of Mysore (in October) and Maha Mastabhisheka of Shravanabelagola (once in 12 years) no other festivals are made popular and known to the visitors of other states.

Thus the government can take initiative to organize cultural festivals like Hampi festival (Vijaya Utsav in November), Vasantha Habba (Spring Festival in February), Kambala (Buffalo Race, from November to March), Karaga in April, and the list may go on. Hence, if the government popularizes these events with mass attraction and organizes at the same level of Dussehra, there can be tremendous potential of attracting tourists (Domestic and International) and can make the state more popular. Also they can highlight the culture of Malnad region by organizing cultural festivals like coorgs speciality in kodava utsava.

18. Improving K.S.T.D.C.'S Role

KSTDC, Established in 1971 is the largest Travel Corporation of the State which is a professionally run State Government Organization. This organization is operating with a team of professionals who are trained to offer better tourist services. However, even after 26 years of its existence, majority of the tourists in the region have not heard of the organization or its services. The reason is, it is concentrating on only a few popular tourist places in Karnataka.

It is in the interest of the organization to organize tours to the interior regions of the state, and reach the common man. To expand their business they can offer franchises to private travel operators and can give them training and development in managing their businesses professionally.

KSTDC Hotels - Mayura Group of Hotels which are premium Lodging and Restaurants setup are maintained by KSTDC and known for their high standard of service and excellent hospitality. However their presence is insignificant in Malnad region. Either they have to expand their operations or they can follow the franchisee system to expand their businesses and promote the travel and tourism industry in the region.
6.3. **Suggested areas for further research**

With India's attractions to tourists increasing by the day - medical tourism, graveyard tourism and slum tourism are among the new draws - the sector seems poised to grow further. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the Indian tourism industry will grow annually at 10% over the next decade, the highest rate of growth in the world. The Tourism Ministry estimates that by the end of 2012, foreign-exchange earnings from tourists will cross $12 billion. The current research is an attempt to see a broad picture of Travel and tourism industry of Karnataka and particularly of Malnad region.

The current research study has significant implications both for the government and for the private sector. It gives a broad view and clear picture of the opinions of tourists, and service providers like Hotel owners/managers and Travel agents. However there is ample scope for further research to study each and every sector of every district in detail and can make an in depth analysis about the perceptions and opinions of tourists, Hotel owners and Travel agents of each district separately. The set objectives and tested hypotheses give a clear picture of the current status of tourism industry in the region. It also provides a base for future studies on Travel and Tourism industry in Karnataka in general and for each and every district of **Malnad** region in particular.

6.4. **CONCLUSION**

Tourism in India has come a long way from the days when an epidemic outbreak in one corner of Gujarat created such paranoia that tourist arrivals across the country took a nosedive. Having battled such perceptions, 'Incredible India' is shining once again, climbing up the most favored destinations list. The department of tourism is buzzing with plans and activities on how to boost the process and get more and more tourists to come to India and spend more and more of their greenbacks here in the years to come. What is more significant is that we have crossed the barrier of three million incoming tourists after so long and created five million additional jobs. The critical point here is that tourism should be seen among the major drivers of
economic growth and employment generator, and Tourism India has started doing that in a big way.

But India needs to have a 40-50 per cent growth for at least next four to five years to be able to catch up with its neighboring countries. It is possible if we are able to achieve consistent levels of growth. We need to set a target to obtain about 1 per cent of total global revenue from tourism by 2010. We are currently getting 3.3 million tourists which is 0.40 per cent of the global tourist traffic.

To achieve at least 1 percent of the global share in tourism. The government should first concentrate on the core sectors of tourism industry, i.e. Accommodation and Transport sector. We need to add at least 1.5 lakh hotel rooms. Secondly, we need to open up several new regions and areas for tourism growth. So we need to boost tourism in different places/ regions of India. The more new areas we open, more growth will translate into superior figures. The third is effective promotion and marketing such as greater use of Internet and information technology to drive tourism into the country. Fourth, we want to boost domestic tourism in a big way as it can be a very big driver of augmenting tourism earnings. Besides, we are augmenting our overseas promotions and continue with the 'Incredible India' campaign and diversify it to include newer areas, newer attractions and use all mass media platforms. We have to build a series of sub-brands and distinct images for every state, regions, circuits and the like.

Tourism India will make its presence felt in a much more organized fashion as a destination in the newer markets with potential such as China, Russia and the Middle-East and penetrate the existing markets like France, Italy and Germany in a much bigger way. To do this we have to promote more aggressively introducing new packages like adventure tourism, golf, spirituality, Buddhism trail, rural tourism and the like. We have to make the foreign tourist feel that unlike most other destinations; India is a place with myriad experiences and can offer so many things to so many people. A journey of mind and soul. After all, India is bigger than 26 countries of Europe put together.