ABSTRACT

According to WTTC research, the Travel & Tourism Economy in India generates employment for 17.7 million people. WTTC forecasts that, by the year 2010, global Travel & Tourism will generate 24.8 million jobs, accounting for 6.5% of total employment world-wide. If, by the year 2010, Indian Travel & Tourism were to generate the same level of employment as the world average, then a further 25 million jobs would be created in India over the next decade. Given India’s outstanding wealth of natural reserves and rich cultural heritage, thriving business community and high levels of entrepreneurship, the country can seize this opportunity. However, the opportunity can be grabbed only if a fundamentally new approach to tourism development is adopted. A number of steps have already been taken, calling for forward-thinking and practical application.

The tourism industry in India is mostly controlled by the respective state governments, covering all aspects of tourism such as local infrastructure, transport systems, taxation, sanitation, law and order, preservation of local monuments, and general well-being of tourists.

Karnataka state is trying to woo private investors to develop infrastructure for promotion of tourism. However, to attract tourists and private investors to the state, the government has to understand the real problems faced by the tourists and their opinions about the Public-Private Partnership (PPP). This has motivated the researcher to make an attempt to identify the problems and to find possible solutions that may strengthen the efforts of the government in uplifting and promoting travel and tourism industry. Thus the Malnad region of Karnataka is selected for study.

This study is both descriptive and exploratory in nature. The researcher used survey method to collect the data with the help of questionnaires from a sample size of 400 Tourists, 67 Hotels and 40 Travel Agents in Malnad region. Data Analysis has been carried out using descriptive statistics and Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) test. The results of these analyses are meaningfully interpreted and suggestions are given to the government and private sector.
The major findings of the study indicate that though the government has done excellent plan and policies, the execution lag behind. The Tourists, Hotel Managements and the Travel agents are not satisfied with the available infrastructure in the region. The study reveals that Karnataka state and particularly Malnad region has having a lot of untapped potential to transform as a popular tourist destination.

The study stresses the need for co-operation between the public and private sectors to develop and promote tourism in the region. It is in the interest of the government authorities to create interest in local public to take part in the promotion and development of tourism in the region, and to implement cost recovery mechanisms to provide the necessary capital to build expand and maintain infrastructure. The study attempts to create a consensus within government to ensure that Travel & Tourism industry can be developed through the creation of basic infrastructure. The success of the industry will depend on investments to protect Indian heritage, development of roads, transport links and telecommunications and initiating private sector participation in Travel & Tourism related infrastructure developments, to generate required hotel capacity and other related service provisions. Increased private sector involvement will improve quality, expand coverage and increase operating efficiencies in line with internationally accepted standards.

The Initiative, with Public Private Participation, will foster an economically successful and sustainable industry which will benefit not only the region but Karnataka as a whole. The study also indicates that, this research can be extended to reach every sector of Travel and Tourism industry and can be applicable to the whole state of Karnataka.