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Address for correspondence:

Rahul H Rathod
Research Scholar, Department of
Travel and Tourism
Email:
rahulrathod.mta@gmail.com

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Potentiality of Community Based Tourism- A Study of Banjara Community in Kalaburagi District

Rahul H Rathod

Research Scholar, Department of Travel and Tourism

Abstract

This study explores the potential of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) as a sustainable development strategy for the Banjara community in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka. CBT emphasizes community ownership, participation, and management of tourism activities, ensuring that economic and social benefits remain within the local community. The Banjara community, known for its rich cultural heritage, traditional crafts, colorful attire, folk arts, and unique lifestyle, possesses significant tourism potential. The study examines how CBT can contribute to the economic empowerment, social upliftment, cultural preservation, and infrastructure development of the community. Using exploratory and descriptive research methods, including field observations, interviews, and secondary data analysis, the research identifies various tourism attractions and community-based experiences that can be developed in the region. The findings suggest that CBT can generate employment opportunities, increase household income, promote local entrepreneurship, encourage women's participation, and strengthen cultural identity. However, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited tourism management skills, unequal benefit distribution, and environmental concerns must be addressed for successful implementation. The study concludes that with proper planning, community participation, and policy support, Community-Based Tourism can become an effective tool for sustainable development and empowerment of the Banjara community in Kalaburagi district.

Keywords: Community-Based Tourism (CBT), Banjara Community, Kalaburagi District, Sustainable Tourism, Cultural Heritage, Community Empowerment, Economic Development, Rural Tourism, Social Development, Tourism Potential.

Introduction

Community-based tourism is a form of tourism where the money earned directly benefits to the whole community. The community could be a village, cooperative or collective, and the benefits should be financial. Community-based tourism (CBT) ensures that local communities have full ownership and management of the tourism experience, so that the economic benefits of tourism stay within their community. Community-based tourism falls under the umbrella of sustainable tourism. It aims to involve communities in aspects of tourism, ranging from planning to active participation. Community-based tourism seeks to support communities through tourism activities, and aims to offer tourists an authentic local experience. The Lambadi people (also known as Banjara, Gormati, Vanjara and Gor). The Banjara culture is a nomadic culture that is found mostly in the Indian states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. They are known for their vibrant traditional clothing, intricate jewelry, and colorful and artistic handiwork. They are also known for their rich cultural heritage, which includes music, dance, and storytelling. Additionally, the Banjaras have a distinct and unique way of living, which has made them quite famous in India. Geographically Banjaras are spread all over the country, from North to South. The Banjaras constitute about seven percent of the total country population. They are culturally advanced; they have been relatively isolated, living on the edge from the mainstream. The Banjara community generally lives in the inaccessible hilly and forest regions. The community boasts a population of 27.34 lakh in the state Karnataka across 18 districts. The districts of Vijayapura, Koppal, Raichur, Yadgir, Kalaburagi and Bidar in particular have a high population of Banjara. Gulbarga district with a total population of 25, 66,326. According to Mahanthi Dhanvath survey the total population of banjara in India 2020 is 12, 10,00,000.

Origin And History of Banjara Community

The Banjara community is believed to have originated in Rajasthan, India. Their migration patterns have taken them to various parts of India over the centuries. According to author J. J. Roy Burman, Banjaras have settled across Rajasthan and other parts of India.

Together with the Bhopa, Domba, and Kalbelia, they are sometimes called the "gypsies of India D. B. Naik has said that "There are so many cultural similarities in the Roma Gypsies and the Banjara Lambanis". Author B. G. Halbar has stated that most nomadic communities believe that they are descended from Rajput ancestry. They claim that during the Mughal Empire, they retreated to the forests and vowed to return only when the foreign influence had gone. According to Halbar, they appear to be of mixed ethnicity, possibly originating in north-central India. However, Irfan Habib notes that their constituent groups may not in fact share a common origin, with the theories that suggest otherwise reflecting the systemic bias of 19-century British ethnographers who were keen to create simple classifications. Laxman Satya notes that "Their status as Banjaras was circumscribed by the colonial state disregarding the rich diversity that existed among various groups".

Literature Review

Baby U Naik (2013) Banjara community has its unique and different culture which is different from the other community, Banjara community have their own wearing ornamental style, clothing style, dress code style. The gap of the study is that the banjara community also performs the Muslim religious rituals and cultural activities during the time of Muharram which also make them different one.

Dr. Suresh Lal, B. 2016- Banjara community people are found across the country and they usually live in the forest and hilly geographically region, the economically they are unstructured and non specialized, their social aspects are very simple and attractive. The gap of the study is that the banjara community people are too much depends on agriculture related activities, most of the community peoples are unskilled their main economic sources is from agriculture and suffer from basic facilities.

Dr. Irfana Rashid IJEMR -December 2020- In this literature the community-based tourism is described as a tool for sharing the local culture with tourist or visitors for both domestic and international and also helps such kind of tourism to protect and preserved the local environment. The gap of the study is that, the community based tourism is also a great platform and potential to demonstrate the local community culture, tradition and their rituals and which also potential for job opportunity for local community people.

Mahanthi Dhanavath (2020) it is highlighted about the banjara community language and their geography area of livelihood. The research gap of the study is that banjara community people speaks banjara or lambani language which is different from place to place, for example Hyderabad banjara community people language is totally different from Karnataka banjara community people language due to the impact of regional languages with tone and text.

Mr. Laxmana Naik H (06, June 2020) Order generation of the banjara community was suffered to get the good and quality of education, although the women are earn wages as labor and suffering from poverty they are also very low in literacy. The community is dominated by male at home. in modern generation the community getting good and quality of education with hostel and other educational facilities. The gap of the study is that the banjara community people also suffered to get the infrastructure facilities and other basic facilities as well as transportation facilities from their village to city.

Katherine Gallagar May 14, 2021 the community based tourism is a part of sustainable tourism where the local community people invites the tourist or visitor to travel towards their destination to get the experience about their community culture and tradition. The gap of the study is that the community-based tourism is a kind of tourism which involved the different kinds of tourism activities such as adventure activities, agriculture activities and community-based tourism activities.

Journal article Most, Habiba 2023- Community based tourism is highlighted as a good source for generating income for local people and overcome from the poverty. The gap of the study is that the community based tourism also help to develop the infrastructure and other basic facilities at particular destination.

Krishna Prasad Sapkota, Vol. 20 No. 7s (2024) Community based tourism is another form of tourism which promoting the sustainable tourism and which also help to increase the economic benefits the community, also help to the empowering the local community people, such kind of tourism will try to minimize the culture, social and environmental negative impact. The gap of the study is that the community based tourism will protect and preserve the heritage and tourism monuments of the nation which include the Monuments, Buildings, National Parks, and Wildlife Sanctuary.

Unwto

Community based tourism refers to tourism activities and services which usually developed by local community people who involved in community based tourism sometimes a private sector involments can be seen in community based tourism. Community is usually owned and managed at the community level its self for wellbeing of a community by preserving and protecting c their social-culture tradition and heritage tourism aspects. The gap of the study is that the community based tourism which also help to increase the flow of tourist not only from the domestic as well as national and international also, which also force the concern authority to introduce the special schemes for Community based tourism.

Statement of The Problem

Community based tourism is a grass root for the development of banjara community in terms of economic, social and preserving the their cultural and heritage properties, after the review of literature many study had been conducted on the topics related to Community based tourism. Many studies had been conducted on Community based tourism which involved about the economic benefits, social benefits, and government policies from Community based tourism. But only few researchers had study on Community based tourism but no study had been made on Community based tourism at Kalaburagi districtHence to fulfill this research gap the present topic entitled:

“Potentiality of Community Based Tourism- A Study of Banjara Community in Kalaburagi District” had been under taken.

Objectives

1. To analyze the Potential improvement of Economic and social status of Banjara Community through community based tourism.
2. To access the Potential developmental activities of community based tourism.
3. To analyze the Tribal group of Banjara Community.
4. To access the other benefits of community based tourism to the local community.

Research Methodology

It applied on both Exploratory and Descriptive data, the research investigates the Banjara Community (Tribal) Socio-Cultural aspects with the help of Exploratory data such as Field investigation, Personal interview, Observation and Descriptive data Inscriptions, Epigraphy, Gazetteers Unpublished Manuscripts of Banjara Community will be used.

Sampling

It applied on both random sampling and convenience sampling to get the sampling for the study of community based tourism.

Scope of The Study

If such type of tourism developed the local community will get a huge benefits such as employment opportunity, Economic benefit, Social benefit, Cultural benefit and development Infrastructure such as roads, electricity, drainage and other basic facilities going to be improved.

Community Based Tourism Attractions in Kalburagi District

1. Konchavaram Wildlife Sanctuary, Chincholi
2. Chandrampalli Dam, Chincholi.
3. Yeti Pota Waterfall, Chincholi.
4. Malkhed Fort.
5. Sri Nagavi Yallamma Devi temple, Chitapur, Kalaburagi.
6. Chandrala Parameshwari Temple Sannati Chitapur, Kalaburagi
7. Excavation site Sannati, Chitapur, Kalaburagi.
8. Sugur Vengakeshwara temple, Sugur Kalagi.

Examples of Community-Based Tourism Experiences.

Cooking and tasting local food.

Visiting a local market.

Walk through the village.

Working on the field.

Fishing or sailing with locals.

Biking tour around the village.

Handcrafting or painting.

Homestay or farmstay.

Potential Developmental Activities of Community Based Tourism.

Community based tourism provide the platform for developmental activities, through the community-based tourism which help to improving the Transportation network, Health Care facilities, Education institution and other basic facilities such as Drainage, Water etc. This enhances the quality of life for local residents. Additionally the need to provide a positive visitor experience can encourage communities to invest in better facilities and attractions, which ultimately benefit both tourist and locals.

Potential Improvement of Economic and Social Status of Banjara Community Through Community Based Tourism.

The developed tourism based on local potentiality certainly has several benefits for the surrounding community. Previous studies show that tourism activities have an impact on increasing the economic life of local communities, such as business opportunities, income, and living standards and social life, such as culture, social welfare, and quality of life. The development of tourism villages has an impact on the development of the local community's condition. As for the economic side, the cost of living will increase. As for the environment, the decline of the tourism village quality can occur due to tourism activities that pay less attention to the environment. And as the cultural side, local cultural values can be preserved. The step of community empowerment in tourism villages serves to maximize the potentiality and local resources of tourism.

Benefits Of Community Based Tourism

1. By choosing community-based tourism, the benefits of tourism go directly to the local communities. At the same time, travelers have the opportunity to authentically and respectfully experience another place and culture.
2. Deeper connection with people and place: interact with and learn directly from the communities whose land you're a guest on.
3. Empathy and awareness of other cultures: gain a new perspective on culture both your own and others 'and how it shapes our lives.
4. CBT provides employment opportunities, revenue generation, local procurement of goods and service and limits the funds that leave the community.
5. Community-based tourism encourages the participation of women.

Initiatives

In Karnataka, community-based tourism initiatives often focus on experiences like

- Homestays,
- Village walks,
- Traditional craft demonstrations
- Farm visits,
- Guided tours in areas like Hampi, Coorg, and the Western Ghats,
- **Sustainable practices:** Initiatives prioritize minimizing environmental impact and promoting waste management.
- **Eco-tourism integration:** Many initiatives are linked to wildlife conservation and responsible practices in areas like the Western Ghats, promoting nature walks and bird watching.
- **Hampi village:** Recognized as a "Best Tourism Village" with its rich history, allowing visitors to engage with local communities and explore ancient monuments.
- **Coorg homestays:** Experience traditional Kodava culture through homestays, coffee plantation visits, and trekking tours.
- **Kuthlur village in Dakshina Kannada:** Awarded as one of the best adventure tourism villages, promoting activities like trekking and nature exploration.
- **Ramanagara mulberry plantations and weaver villages:** Visitors can learn about the process of silk production through interactions with local weavers.
- **Maddur sugarcane farms:** Explore the sugarcane farming process and enjoy local cuisine in the Mandya district.

Empowering Local Communities Through Tourism

The Tourism phenomenon helps to empower the local communities by following ways:

Developing new forms of Tourism: The new forms of tourism need to develop which help in achieving economic benefits of tourism while minimizing economic costs. To boost tourism in a particular area lot of money is invested to conserve local heritage, to improve infrastructure, to provide better local facilities which in return creates better education, better leisure facilities, organizing frequent social events thus a better lifestyle for locale people.

Benefits to Local Community:

Benefits generated from tourism should be spread widely amongst host community. Empowering Local Communities through Tourism Protecting Local Businesses from Unfair Competition: There has to be policy in place which helps to protect the local businesses from unfair competition from larger, externally owned enterprises.

Providing Employment Opportunities to Local People:

Provisions have to make to provide proper training to the local staff so that they become capable to work in managerial roles as well as manual roles.

Equal Employment Opportunities:

Equal employment opportunities should be given to all the local residents of the destination whether women or men, there will not be any discrimination on the basis of age, sex etc.

Encourage Purchase of Local Goods and Services:

Tourist should be encouraged to purchase the local goods and services so that it can directly contribute to economy of local residents.

Minimize the Economic Leakage: Benefits from many organizations go abroad. It is critical to guarantee however much cash as could reasonably be expected remains inside the host nation. This can be a troublesome exercise in careful control, since you would prefer not to stop Foreign Direct Investment.

Problems and Prospects of Community Based Tourism

Problems Of Community-Based Tourism Development

Problems of community-based tourism include: uneven distribution of benefits within the community, lack of infrastructure, poor management and marketing, potential environmental damage from increased tourism,

inadequate community participation, cultural exploitation, and difficulty in balancing local needs with tourist expectations, all of which can hinder the positive impacts of tourism on the local community if not carefully managed.

Key points about challenges in community-based tourism:

Unequal distribution of income: Not all community members benefit equally from tourism revenue, often leaving marginalized groups behind.

Lack of infrastructure: Poor quality roads, accommodation facilities, communication networks, and sanitation can deter tourists and hinder the development of a successful tourism industry.

Limited capacity building: Communities might lack the skills and knowledge needed to effectively manage tourism operations, including marketing, customer service, and financial management.

Environmental concerns: Uncontrolled tourism can lead to overexploitation of natural resources, pollution, and habitat degradation.

Cultural commodification: Over-emphasizing cultural practices for tourism can lead to the loss of authenticity and potential exploitation of local traditions.

Poor community participation: Not all community members may be actively involved in decision-making processes related to tourism development, leading to dissatisfaction and lack of ownership.

Marketing and promotion challenges: Reaching potential tourists and effectively promoting community-based tourism initiatives can be difficult, especially in remote areas.

Political instability: Unstable political environments can discourage tourism investment and hinder sustainable development.

How To Mitigate These Challenges

Strong community engagement:

Ensure active participation from diverse community members in planning and decision-making processes.

Capacity building programs:

Provide training and education for locals in tourism-related skills like hospitality, guiding, and entrepreneurship.

Sustainable tourism practices:

Implement environmentally responsible tourism operations to minimize negative impacts on the environment.

Cultural sensitivity: Respect local customs and traditions, and involve communities in designing cultural tourism experiences.

Prospects Of Community-Based Tourism Development

Community-based tourism (CBT) has promising prospects for rural development, offering potential benefits like economic empowerment of local communities, job creation, income generation, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation, particularly in regions with unique natural and cultural assets, making it a viable option for sustainable tourism development in many areas; however, successful implementation requires careful planning and community engagement to mitigate potential challenges like over tourism and unequal distribution of benefits.

Key positive prospects of CBT:

- **Economic development:** CBT can generate income directly for local communities through activities like home stays, guided tours, local product sales, and food services, contributing to poverty alleviation and diversifying local economies.
- **Employment opportunities:** By creating tourism-related jobs, CBT can provide employment options for locals, particularly in rural areas where alternative livelihoods may be limited.
- **Cultural preservation:** CBT encourages communities to showcase their traditions, customs, and cultural heritage, promoting pride and safeguarding cultural practices.
- **Environmental stewardship:** When implemented responsibly, CBT can incentivize communities to protect their natural environment, including wildlife habitats, as tourism depends on its preservation.
- **Community empowerment:** Active participation in tourism development can empower local communities, giving them a voice in decision-making and enhancing their sense of ownership.
- **Sustainable tourism:** CBT can promote responsible tourism practices by focusing on low-impact activities and respecting local communities and ecosystems.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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