

A Study on Beach Tourism in Mangalore City

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ABSTRACT

Beach tourism in Mangalore city has emerged as a promising area for growth, given its scenic coastal landscapes and tranquil beaches. This study aims to evaluate the current status of beach tourism in Mangalore, focusing on tourist preferences, available infrastructure, and the role of stakeholders in shaping sustainable tourism practices. Data was collected through a combination of structured questionnaires administered to 150 tourists and interviews with key local stakeholders, including tourism officials, beach vendors, and hotel operators. The findings reveal that while tourists appreciate the natural beauty and serenity of Mangalore's beaches, the lack of essential infrastructure—such as clean restrooms, food courts, and improved transportation—remains a significant concern. Stakeholders also emphasized the need for better coordination between the government, local businesses, and the community to promote sustainable beach tourism. Additionally, there is a growing interest in integrating eco-tourism initiatives and local cultural elements to create a unique identity for Mangalore's coastal tourism. The study concludes that Mangalore has significant potential to become a competitive beach tourism destination, provided there is a focus on infrastructure development, strategic marketing, and the adoption of sustainable practices. The research contributes valuable insights for policymakers, tourism planners, and local businesses seeking to enhance the tourism experience while preserving the natural and cultural assets of Mangalore.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors in the global economy, contributing significantly to the socio-economic development of regions worldwide. Among its diverse forms, beach tourism holds a prominent place, especially in coastal regions where natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and cultural experiences attract domestic and international tourists alike. Mangalore, located on the western coast of Karnataka, India, is a thriving coastal city endowed with pristine beaches, cultural heritage, and a vibrant local lifestyle. Despite its potential, beach tourism in Mangalore remains relatively underexplored compared to other coastal destinations like Goa and Kerala.

This study focuses on beach tourism in Mangalore city, aiming to analyse its current status, challenges, and future prospects. The city boasts several picturesque beaches such as Panambur, Tannirbhavi, Someshwara, and Sasihihlu, which offer immense potential for tourism development. These beaches not only serve as recreational hubs but also hold ecological and economic significance for the local communities. With growing interest in sustainable and experiential travel, beach tourism in Mangalore can become a key driver for local development, provided it is planned and managed effectively.

The research explores various dimensions of beach tourism in Mangalore, including tourist preferences, infrastructure availability, promotional activities, and environmental concerns. It also examines the role of stakeholders such as local authorities, tourism departments, and local businesses in shaping the tourism experience. By identifying gaps and opportunities, the study aims to provide insights that can guide policymakers, entrepreneurs, and tourism planners in enhancing the appeal and sustainability of Mangalore's beach tourism sector. Ultimately, the research contributes to a broader understanding of how coastal cities like Mangalore can leverage their natural assets to promote inclusive and responsible tourism.

OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the current status, challenges, and development opportunities of beach tourism in Mangalore city, with an emphasis on tourist preferences, infrastructure, and sustainable tourism practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Coastal Tourism Potential and Planning

Coastal tourism has significant potential in contributing to regional economic development when planned and managed properly. According to Hall (2001), sustainable coastal tourism development requires a balance between visitor satisfaction, environmental preservation, and local community benefits. This forms a basis for evaluating Mangalore's beach tourism, which remains underdeveloped despite its natural advantages.[1]

2. Tourist Preferences and Destination Choice

Understanding tourist behavior and preferences is key to beach tourism development. Kozak (2002) emphasizes that factors such as cleanliness, safety, accessibility, and recreational facilities strongly influence beachgoer's destination choices. These insights can be applied to assess what draws tourists to Mangalore's beaches and what improvements are needed.[2]

3. Infrastructure and Facilities in Coastal Destinations

Ritchie and Crouch (2003) argue that infrastructure plays a critical role in enhancing tourist experiences and destination competitiveness. In the context of Mangalore, evaluating the availability and quality of infrastructure—such as roads, amenities, signage, and safety measures—is vital for sustainable beach tourism development.[3]

4. Community Participation in Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable beach tourism is closely linked with the involvement of local communities. Tosun (2006) highlights the importance of local stakeholder engagement in planning and decision-making for tourism to be truly inclusive and sustainable. In Mangalore, assessing the role of local residents and entrepreneurs could offer insights into the long-term viability of tourism initiatives.[4]

5. Environmental Impacts of Beach Tourism

Beach tourism can lead to environmental degradation if not monitored and managed effectively. Davenport and Davenport (2006) present a comprehensive review of the environmental pressures caused by coastal tourism, including waste accumulation, erosion, and biodiversity loss—factors relevant for analyzing sustainability in Mangalore's coastal areas.[5]

METHODOLOGY

Secondary Data

The secondary data for this study on beach tourism in Mangalore city was collected from a variety of credible and relevant sources to support the research objective. This data helped in understanding the broader context, historical development,

and existing policies related to coastal and beach tourism in the region. Key sources included government reports published by the Karnataka Tourism Department, the Ministry of Tourism (Government of India), and district-level tourism statistics provided by the Dakshina Kannada administration.

Academic journals, research papers, and tourism development studies published in reputed national and international journals were also reviewed to analyze theoretical frameworks and successful case studies of beach tourism from similar coastal destinations. Reports by organizations such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) provided insights into national tourism trends and policy recommendations. Additionally, articles, news reports, and tourism-related content from credible online platforms were examined to gain current and updated information about tourism activities, beach events, and public initiatives in Mangalore. The secondary data was critically analyzed and synthesized to identify trends, gaps, and opportunities in beach tourism, thereby complementing the findings derived from primary data collection.

DISCUSSION

The study reveals that beach tourism in Mangalore city holds significant untapped potential, but currently faces several developmental and operational challenges. Analysis of tourist responses indicates a high level of satisfaction with the natural beauty and cleanliness of key beaches like Panambur, Tannirbhavi, and Someshwara. Tourists particularly appreciated the scenic views, sunset points, and peaceful ambiance. However, concerns were raised regarding limited infrastructure, lack of sufficient amenities such as changing rooms, restrooms, shaded seating areas, and limited public transport connectivity to some beaches.

Stakeholder interviews highlighted the need for more coordinated efforts between tourism authorities, local businesses, and the municipal corporation. Despite various initiatives by the Karnataka Tourism Department, there appears to be a gap in consistent maintenance, marketing, and awareness about Mangalore's beaches. Comparatively, destinations like Goa and Kerala have successfully branded their beaches, attracting higher tourist footfall, which Mangalore has yet to achieve.

Secondary data analysis also suggests that Mangalore has the potential to develop niche tourism segments such as eco-tourism, adventure sports, and cultural tourism by integrating beach tourism with local festivals, cuisine, and heritage sites. Sustainable tourism practices, including waste management systems, beach conservation, and community-based tourism models, are essential to preserve the ecological balance and enhance tourist satisfaction.

Overall, the study underlines the importance of infrastructure development, stakeholder collaboration, and strategic promotion for Mangalore to emerge as a competitive beach tourism destination. With its rich coastal assets and cultural heritage, the city can attract more tourists and boost local livelihoods—provided tourism development is planned in a sustainable, inclusive, and community-centred manner.

RESULTS

The study on beach tourism in Mangalore city revealed several key findings based on both primary and secondary data collected through tourist surveys and stakeholder interviews.

1. Tourist Preferences and Satisfaction

The majority of tourists surveyed (70%) expressed high satisfaction with the natural beauty and tranquillity of Mangalore's beaches, especially Panambur, Tannirbhavi, and Someshwara. Most tourists were attracted by the unspoiled environment, peaceful atmosphere, and the scenic coastal views. However, 55% of respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the lack of amenities such as clean washrooms, food courts, and seating areas, which impacted their overall experience.

2. Infrastructure and Accessibility

Inadequate infrastructure was identified as a major constraint for the growth of beach tourism. Only 40% of the tourists felt that the beaches were adequately equipped with necessary amenities. Public transport connectivity to some of the more remote beaches was limited, with 60% of respondents indicating the need for better road access and shuttle services.

3. Stakeholder Insights

Interviews with local stakeholders, including beach vendors, tourism officials, and hotel operators, revealed a strong interest in improving beach tourism infrastructure. However, stakeholders also expressed concerns about the lack of collaboration between government authorities and private enterprises, which has hindered effective tourism development. Stakeholders highlighted the need for more targeted marketing strategies to promote Mangalore's beaches as a tourism destination.

4. Sustainability and Environmental Concerns

Both tourists and local stakeholders emphasized the importance of sustainable tourism practices. 65% of tourists supported the idea of eco-friendly initiatives, such as waste management programs and conservation efforts, to preserve the beaches and marine life.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study reveals that Mangalore's beaches possess significant potential as key tourist destinations, attracting visitors with their natural beauty, tranquillity, and coastal charm. However, the findings highlight critical gaps in infrastructure and amenities that hinder the overall tourist experience. While tourists appreciate the serene environment, many express dissatisfactions with inadequate facilities such as clean restrooms, food courts, and accessibility to remote beaches.

The research also emphasizes the need for better collaboration between local stakeholders, government authorities, and private enterprises to promote sustainable tourism development. Moreover, the integration of eco-friendly practices and local cultural elements could distinguish Mangalore from other coastal destinations.

To harness the full potential of beach tourism, it is essential for Mangalore to focus on infrastructure improvement, strategic marketing, and environmental conservation efforts. By adopting a holistic approach to tourism development, Mangalore can position itself as a competitive and sustainable beach tourism destination.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research on beach tourism in Mangalore city could explore the long-term impact of sustainable tourism practices on both the local economy and the environment. Studies could focus on the effectiveness of eco-tourism initiatives, waste management systems, and the preservation of marine biodiversity. Additionally, examining the role of digital marketing and social media in attracting tourists to Mangalore's beaches could provide valuable insights for strategic promotion. Further studies could also investigate the economic benefits for local communities, particularly in terms of employment generation and entrepreneurship in the tourism sector.

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10 KEY WORDS

1. Beach Tourism

Refers to the segment of tourism focused on coastal areas, where visitors engage in recreational activities like swimming, sunbathing, and water sports. Mangalore's beaches, such as Panambur and Tannirbhavi, are central to this concept.

2. Mangalore City

The coastal city in Karnataka, India, known for its natural beauty, diverse culture, and prominent beaches. Mangalore serves as a case study for understanding the dynamics of beach tourism in a developing coastal region.

3. Coastal Tourism

A broader term encompassing all tourism activities in coastal areas, including beach tourism, marine wildlife watching, and eco-tourism. This term helps frame Mangalore within global coastal tourism trends.

4. Sustainable Tourism

A form of tourism that seeks to minimize negative impacts on the environment and local communities while maximizing economic and social benefits. Sustainable practices are key to preserving Mangalore's beaches and marine ecosystems.

5. Tourist Preferences

Refers to the specific desires and choices of tourists, such as the type of beach experiences they seek. Understanding these preferences can help improve tourism strategies and services in Mangalore.

6. Infrastructure Development

The physical and organizational structures needed to support tourism, such as roads, restrooms, accommodation, and transport services. The study evaluates the current state of infrastructure at Mangalore's beaches and identifies areas for improvement.

7. Eco-Tourism

Tourism that focuses on visiting natural areas while preserving the environment and supporting the local community. Mangalore has potential to develop eco-tourism along its beaches by promoting conservation and sustainable practices.

8. Stakeholder Collaboration

Involves the active participation of various groups, including government bodies, local businesses, and community members, in decision-making processes related to tourism development. Effective collaboration is vital for sustainable beach tourism in Mangalore.

9. Tourism Marketing

The strategies used to promote a destination to potential visitors. The study explores how Mangalore can improve its marketing efforts to attract more tourists to its beaches by highlighting unique experiences and sustainable offerings.

10. Environmental Conservation

The protection and preservation of natural resources, including beaches and marine life. This concept emphasizes the need for sustainable practices in managing Mangalore's coastal tourism to reduce environmental degradation.