

A Feasibility Study of Tourism Development in Kallady Beach Area, Batticaloa District

Soundaralingam A.¹, and Gayana K.²

¹Department of Economics, Eastern University, Sri Lanka

²Faculty of Arts and Culture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka
soundy_econ@yahoo.com

Introduction

There are many destinations in the Batticaloa district for the foreign and local tourism. Kallady area is located in the Manmunai North Divisional Secretariat (D.S) division. Kallady area has a long and beautiful sandy beach. Kallady beach is a nice place for good swimmers but depending on the conditions of the sea. It is famous to enjoy a nice and long walk. Kallady is surrounded by many other tourist areas, e.g Old Dutch fort. Some other special features are also available for tourists in this area, e.g Batticaloa Lagoon, beautiful paddy fields, variety of animals and birds, local handicraft. After the ending of civil war, normalcy returned. Business environment has been developed. More foreign and local tourists arrive at Batticaloa. Transportation and infrastructure facilities also have been developed in Batticaloa. The strategy behind this study of tourism development in the Kallady area is to transform tourism sector as a key source of its economic growth and success. That is the rationalization of this research.

Although the Kallady region currently has a moderate level of tourism industry, studies show the area to be performing below its potential. Most of the people seem to be local people and the availability of recreation is very poor. As Kallady being a beautiful coastal area and located very close to the Batticaloa town and other famous tourist places, creating tourism development in that area is expected to provide socio-economic benefits not only to the people of this area, but also to the whole country. So, the research problem is finding the feasibility of making this area to be performing up to its potential, that is, by utilizing the existing resources of Kallady area how far tourism could be developed?

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Objectives of this study as follows: Assessing market potential for tourism in this area, determining what resources exist or can be developed to support tourism activities in this area, evaluating existing tourism facilities and infrastructure relative to their ability to meet market needs, identifying tourism products most suited for the resource base and with the market potentials, making an estimation of the potential economic impact of tourism activities in this area, providing an implementation plan for the development of tourism in the Kallady region and identifying the potential sources of project funding.

Literature Review

A sufficient number of studies were reviewed. 'Tourism in the Batticaloa district and the strategies for its development', (1996), a research done by Gajenthirarajah . This study shows the economic importance of tourism in this area and, the role of the government in the development of tourism. 'Tourism development in Pasikkudah' by Ponnaiah and Thavappiraba also reviewed. It stressed the importance of the tourism development in the Eastern region. Another study was made by Subramaniam, on the title of 'feasibility study of tourism development in Pasikkudah'(2003). It shows the potential and scope of the future development of tourism in the Pasikkudah area. Sri Sankarasarmaxz. made a study on 'the tourism development in the Ulle region after the year of 2000' (2003).The study expressed the economic impact of tourism development in the Ulle region. Further the researcher reviewed some international studies in the literature. Mohamed Abbas and Mohamed Ali Ibrahim studied on the title of 'The determinants of internal tourism demand for Egypt' (2010). According to their studies, the demand for tourism is determined by Income, relative prices, transport, and some other factors. 'Tourism feasibility study of Monroe, Lee, Arkansas, and Phillips counties of eastern Arkansas' (four counties in USA) (2002) is another international study reviewed. It assessed the market potential, existing resources, facilities, infrastructures, tourism products, economic impacts of tourism.

Methodology

A market survey was conducted. 100 structured questionnaires were prepared and issued among the tourists who visited to the Kallady area. Descriptive statistical method was used. Collected data were analyzed through the SPSS package and obtained the mean values and found the results. Interviews were held with the owners of the tourist hotel and lodges and tour operators. People who are living in Kallady area were also interviewed. A site survey was also conducted. Through this site survey, the physical characteristics of the Kallady region were assessed. Based upon the site visit observations, a SWOT analysis has been

prepared on the study area to assist in the planning and development of the study recommendations. As a final step, an implementation plan has been prepared.

Results and Discussion

The results of the market survey showed that the majority of the tourists visit the Kallady area aged between 21-30 years. 58% are males and 42% are females. 60% of them visit here for the sightseeing, 40% visit for leisure. 65% say no any threat for their security, 35% say they find some disturbances from the activities of fishermen. 80% of them accept that Kallady is a nice place for the tourism. The people of Kallady agreed that a positive economic impact of tourism development is experienced by the people of that area. Following results obtained through the analysis of data.

| Variables | Mean | Level of satisfaction |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|
| Transport | 3.6 | Moderate |
| Accommodation and food | 2.63 | Moderate |
| Leisure, Historical places, Other tourist destinations | 2.85 | Moderate |
| Sports, festivals and cultural performances | 3.00 | Moderate |
| Health facilities | 2.81 | Moderate |
| Services of tour operators, electricity, communication and banking | 2.84 | Moderate |

Based on the evaluation criteria ($2.5 < X_i < 3.5$), the moderate satisfaction level was reflected regarding all the variables. Interviews with hotel and lodges reveals that they are providing meals and accommodation, most of them have more than five-year service experience, present occupation rate is averagely about 50 percent, 500-1000 visitors currently get in a year, February-march and August- September are the peak periods in a year, requirements to become more active in this market and the challenges faced in this business.

Interviews with tour operators shows, most of the tourists prefer nature travel, they arrange trips to Batticaloa from various part of Sri Lanka. When selecting trip, customers consider natural beauty, safety, comfort level and overall quality of the trip. When tour operators select a destination, they look safety, infrastructure, transportation, comfortable accommodations and quality of trips. As a recent change, after the ending of the civil war, booking has been increased and more and more tourists are willing to visit Batticalo.

Results of the SWOT analysis as follows: Natural and peaceful location of Kallady area, qualitative hotel, lodges and restaurants, historical and cultural places and other tourist places have been located very closely, services from tourism information centre, delicious

sea foods, better transport facilities, seeing beautiful sunrise, swimming, sunbath facilities, festivals of historical temples and cultural programs, friendly people of this area, very close by markets, are identified as strengths. Heavy rain and flood in rainy season, too much hot in dry season, weak administration of this tourist area, irregular power supply, restriction for swimming in certain periods, unavailability of modern toilets and wash room facilities, unavailability of sufficient street lighting, unavailability of sufficient vehicle parking, no availability of trained tourist guides are identified as weaknesses. Easy access to the location, peace full situation, lower transport cost, lower level of food prices, developing facilities of infrastructures, is identified as opportunities. Insufficient capital for the maintenance of the tourist places, sub-standard management in lodges and restaurants, weaker security services, abnormal weather conditions, lack of personnel with the knowledge of foreign language, road accidents, weaker solid waste management are identified as the threats.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Strengths and opportunities are relatively more than the weaknesses and threats which could be managed through the activities mentioned in the implementation plan, prepared for the development of tourism in the Kallady area. So there is feasibility. Recommendations indicated in the Implementation plan as follows: Modernizing the road facilities, creating boat services, increasing air lines services, extending the services of tourist information centre, making awareness about tourism for the people of this region, establishment of swimming pools, children parks, restaurants, modern types of toilets and bathrooms, vehicle parks, resting huts, modern playgrounds, modernizing telecommunication services, banking services, water supply, establishing modern drainage system, enhancing solid waste management and organizing cultural programs have been recommended. The time frame for each projects has been indicated. Institutions which are responsible for the implementation of these projects also mentioned. .Rs.100 million has been recommended for the implementation of this plan.

References

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