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Development of rural tourism through entrepreneurship – A study on Sadeibereni in Odisha

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has been identified as an essential factor for creating job opportunities, generating income, increasing the standard of living and generally growing the economy. Rural development is increasingly associated with entrepreneurship, which is considered as a central force of economic one and can help to sustain and improve the quality of life in a rural area. Tourism involves mostly small enterprises, so the role of tourism entrepreneurs can be important for the development of rural tourism. Of all economic sectors, tourism is perhaps the one in which the greatest degree of involvement is needed by the entrepreneurial sector in formulating sustainable strategies. Especially in rural tourism, entrepreneurship has gained increasing importance as it is seen as a major driving force behind rural tourism. However, entrepreneurship demands an enabling environment in order to flourish. Entrepreneurial culture, climate, infrastructure, and support are important elements for such an environment. The creation of such an environment starts by the development of appropriate institutional support at the country level to address the supply of entrepreneurship, focusing on the number of people who have the motivation, financial means, and the skills to start a new business. The present paper emphasis on entrepreneurship opportunities available in Sadeibereni village of Dhenkanal district in orrisa, addressing the issue of entrepreneurship in rural tourism development. Tourism in general and rural tourism, in particular, is dominated by a small business where the spirit of initiative, desire to achieve and the ability to identify market opportunities and to fructify effectively are essential.

Keywords— Rural tourism, Entrepreneurship, Local community, Development

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has become one of the most important economic sections in the past few years and plays an important role in business development. Entrepreneurship concept was used for the first time in the 17th century. Many define entrepreneurship as starting a new business but many economists believed this concept is more than that. Tourism, hospitality and leisure industries originally are in the first place based on entrepreneurship became one of the simple ways to provide the strategic support for the stabilization of business development especially in rural areas in the past year. Tourism strategies are looking for enabling urban, especially rural producers to reduce reliance on agriculture and engage in new economic opportunities that are competitive in the more globalized markets, which now reach their doorsteps.

2. RURAL TOURISM – A DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

Rural tourism is often seen as a significant means of developing livelihoods particularly in areas with negative population growth. It is believed that rural tourism creates new jobs, decreases migration and helps to maintain the local level of services. According to international research, rural tourism also seems to particularly improve the position of women, as the majority of the tourism businesses in farms are family businesses. Equally, tourism has also increased local demand for primary – production businesses, particularly farm products, in rural areas. Rural – development strategy objectives generally aim towards the creation and maintenance of new jobs, the expansion of business activities, the support of public services and the creation of new free – time opportunities for travellers.

The development of rural tourism often especially involves the economic and social development of the rural area. Rural tourism is a relatively small sector of the tourism industry from a global perspective, yet it still has great significance for local economies at many destinations. When the benefits yielded by tourism are generally examined in an area as gross income and person work years, many economic, social and environmental benefits with wider significance receive less attention. Tourism increases awareness of, for example, a need for the preservation and development of local culture and can strengthen the local cultural identity. Many services, which also benefits the local population, stay alive with the help of tourism. The success of rural tourism is dependent on

an attractive environment, which is why tourism often enhances the protection of nature and culture. Rural tourism is most successful when it is based on national strategies and co-ordination and strategies with local commitment and local actors. The success of tourism development plans is dependent on both the administration's ability to support development projects and the entrepreneur's desires and ability to commit themselves to the development plans.

3. ENTREPRENEURSHIP – AN OVERVIEW

Entrepreneurship essentially represents the process of identifying, putting in practice, developing a vision that may be an innovative idea, an opportunity or simply a better way to do something. The result of this process is the creation of a new venture under risk conditions and uncertainty. This is an active, creative and inventive process and its success depends on the ability "to read" and to answer to the market challenges that implies taking calculated risks using efficiently the material, financial and human resource. The specialities consider that the entrepreneurs are born and not found through education. It is true that many of the most efficient entrepreneurs in tourism and other fields are born business persons, without much formal education. However, many essential entrepreneurial skills can be learnt and the entrepreneurs can appear after a personal development at the job. A characteristic for many entrepreneurs is that they and their enterprises have evolved, changed and grown in time as an answer to the increase in confidence and to the opportunities or difficulties existing in the market. The entrepreneurship offers various advantages to local, regional and national economics, especially through its development. The field in which the individuals can initiate their own business is various: construction, trade, light industry, agriculture, food industry, IT tourism and so on. In most countries, small and medium enterprises dominate the tourism industry where the entrepreneurial spirit is easier to identify and to research. The SME has a real potential of growth offering to their initiator's various advantages, not only economic but also social ones, through recognition and appreciation, motivation, self – confidence and so on. Tourism represents not only a solution for the rural population to become the artisans of their own social and economic progress but also a real chance for them to be involved in other activities bringing income and social recognition. In most countries around the world, communities and businesses leaders are focusing their attention on entrepreneurship development as a part of a sound economic plan.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

"Rural tourism is a term used when rural culture is a key component of the product "(UNWTO, 2004)". This concept assumes personalized contact with the tourists and the specific rural experience. Besides, the opportunity to actively participate in certain agricultural activities and other activities, tradition and lifestyle of other residents should be offered, as far as possible. This approach could provide a completely new experience which is almost impossible to achieve in the destination of so-called mass tourism. According to an extensive literature review and an international survey of rural tourism destinations worldwide, it is possible to pick out a few specifics for the tourist offer is extremely fragmented and represented by a large number of micro and small regionally dispersed bidders (Hall, Mitchell and Roberts, 2005)

According to Drucker's (1989) definition, Entrepreneur is a person who seeks for change, shows a proper reaction, and uses it as an opportunity. Besides, tourism includes all activities and interplay that happens in the period of a tourist's journey. It can contain tour planning reaching to destination, staying, returning and many such activities (Mansourifar, 2010). Entrepreneurship and tourism literature both have mainly been informed by business research. Entrepreneurship and innovation are critical factors in tourism and are both central to the continued success and development of the industry, both globally and regionally (Para Lopez, Buhalis and Fyall, (2009).

Das and Sharma (2009) observe that tourism destination have two primary roles; firstly, it must seek to enhance the social and economic well - being of the residents who live within its boundaries. Secondly, it must provide this enhancement of resident well-being. Entrepreneurship in tourism encompasses both roles as it contributes to the economic prosperity of locals which ultimately enhances the well-being of residents. This sentiment is echoed in the words of Swanso and Devereaux (2012): "tourism has a potential solution for increased economic prosperity".

According to Butler (1980), when there is a growth in tourist demand, entrepreneurial development occurs in specific sectors of the tourism sector. However, Din (1992) noted that the receiving community may not possess the cultural and economic capacity to appreciate the opportunities particularly when the community is poor. Underdeveloped societies are held back by illiteracy, ignorance and superstition (Holden, 2013). Kirsten and Rogers on (2002) noted the same situation in their research on tourism MSEs in South Africa where there is a limited involvement of local ethnic entrepreneurs due to their limited resources and difficulties to secure credit from financial institutions, in addition to limited and inadequate training and education. Most of the entrepreneurs only have a primary level of education. Akama and Kietie (2007) emphasize that skills and knowledge are important factors in influencing entrepreneurship and Echtner (1955) highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship training in these situations.

5. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study is to detect the factors that suppress developing tourism entrepreneurship in Sadeibereni and to find opportunities for improving it. According to the aims, the tasks were to gathering information about tourism entrepreneurship in Sadeibereni, to study about the factors that suppress the increasing tourism entrepreneurship activities in Sadeibereni, to study about factors that suppress the increasing tourism entrepreneurship activity in Sadeibereni, to estimate undertaken activities and to recommend general and effective plan for developing tourism entrepreneurship in Sadeibereni. The research follows a case study design, literature analysis and also in-depth interviews with local residents and the artists involved in making Dhokra art in Sadeibereni village.

6. DHOKRA CASTING IN ODISHA

Odisha is a place of art and culture and is well-known for its handicraft which shows the skill and creativity of the skilled artists. Odisha's brass work, silver work and terra cotta art objects, and applique work are exclusive examples of artistic quality. Dhokra art is one of the famous handicraft items of Odisha. There are some places of Dhenkanal, where Dhokra casting is done. Those

places are Sadeibereni of Sadar Block, Badamuktapasi of Bhuban Block and Khajuriakata of Hindol Block. The people doing this art work are very skilled and hardworking artists. They design many things by using the alloy of brass and bell metal. These designs are popular not only in India but globally.

Dhokra is an alloy of brass, nickel and zinc which emanates an antique look. The wide product range of Dhokra with their antique look goes well with interior décor. The process of Dhokra casting can be divided into two categories: (i) the hollow method (lost wax, cire-Purdue) and (ii) the dense method. The hollow method, a clay replica is prepared slightly smaller than the object to be cast. This is the clay core. Once this is burnt dry, hand-rolled threads of bee's wax (now substituted by petroleum wax) are applied on the clay core, till the clay is totally covered by wax, and the upper surface is uniform. The wax layering is generally very thin to reduce the consumption of metal (up to 1.5mm). Wax is occasionally smoothed out with fingers or warm metal strip. Further modelling is done in the wax seat covered with clay paste (made out of clay, dung, paddy husk, jute pieces and vegetable paste). The pouring channel has to be left in this second seath. The design of the pouring channel varies from place to place, but everywhere it is to be designed in such a way that molten metal flows smoothly and uniformly. The clay is allowed to dry, and a few coatings are repeated. Then molten metal in clay pot is poured into the passage, which flows quickly, cuts into the wax (which is drained off through another channel), filling the empty space left between the clay layers. The whole thing is allowed to cool. Then the outer clay layer is removed with the knife and metal image is taken out. The inside core of earthenware may or may not be removed. The 'solid' form is to be seen in the metal crafts of Khoduras. Here, the object to be cast is made from wax and extreme fineness is achieved at this stage itself. This is sheathed with clay-paste and allow to dry. A passage is of course left in the sheath. After a thick clay sheath is completed, the whole thing is exposed to slow fire, when the wax melts out and is collected. After the wax is drained out, molten metal is poured in and the structure is allowed to cool itself. Finally, the sheath is cut out and the object at the core is produced. Finishing and polishing were previously done with (i) alternate treatment with lime juice (containing organic acids) and vegetable alkalis, (ii) brushing vigorously with vegetable fibres. At present, very dilute sulphuric acid and sodium carbonate solutions are invariably used and buffing is done by machine.

6.1 Study area: Dhokra art as a tourism product in Sadeibereni

Sadeibereni village is situated around 65kms from Bhubneshwar and 5kms from Bhubneshwar and, 5kms from Saptasajya in Dhenkanal and is world famous for its Dhokra craft. The village is home to 45 families with 130- old artisans, all belonging to SC and ST categories. Collecting metal scraps from nearby towns and villages and converting those into decorative masterpieces are now an integral part of the livelihood of the part of people living in the village. This projected rural tourism site in the Dhenkanal district, known for its Dhokra craftsmanship, has been attracting domestic and international tourists for the last few years. Dhokra art which is believed to be 5000-years-old is a folk craft form based on lost-wax metal casting technique. The Dhokra craftsman combines their understanding of metal with their sense of artistry. The artists here use clay cast and bee wax threads that would go on to create minute intricate designs on metal, usually brass, and pour the liquid metal into the hollow clay casts to make attractive figures, which vary in designs, shapes and sizes. Dhokra designs are in great demand in the domestic and the international market. The Dhokra brass figures depict the life of all its glorious variety. These are human and animal figurines, idols of Lord Ganesh and one even depict a group of tribal nursing a sick child. This small village of Sadeibereni Dhenkanal district, Odisha, is synonymous with the ancient craft of Dhokra. Located close to the tourist spot of Saptasajya, Sadeibereni is home to 130 artisan families who are enlisted as Situla tribal.

The artist has never had any formal training in Dhokra casting. They learnt the craft by just watching their forefathers work with the wax casting technique. Every piece of Dhokra that they create has a distinct identity. Some of their talent at various state and national-level exhibitions. They also train others in the village. The villagers say, originally they used to make brass utensils with a specific pattern of designs for household use. Over a period of time, they started making more decorative handicraft pieces. First, they mould for the artefact is made with fine clay and cow dung, which is then covered with a layer of paste prepared from leaves of broad beans that act like glue. The mould is then layered decoratively with thin strips of wax prepared with bee wax, refined oil and white resin. It is again covered with another layer of clay and cooked over a furnace. There are two drain ducts in each of the moulds from where the wax drains out after being heated. Molten brass is then poured into the mould which takes the shape of the final metal structure. The moulds are taken out of the furnace and cooled in water. The cast figures are then polished mechanically for 15 minutes for the glaze. Some of the villagers state that the unpolished pieces of Dhokra are in high demand among international travellers. The unpolished metal craft is actually authentic Dhokra. In India, people mostly want the shiny ones that have a golden lool, while buyers from abroad prefer black Dhokra artefacts which have an antique look. Some of the artists have loyal customers from abroad.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The development of rural tourism brings many benefits in rural areas, expressed by job creation and reduced migration of the local population with the possibility of re-stocking in rural areas, improving living standards of the population, vocational training, and alleviation of gender discrimination and among other social categories, improving the social and cultural co-existence, increased opportunities for social interaction, residents' participation in decision making, encouraging arts and crafts practiced by residents. In particular, tourism helps two types of small businesses in rural areas, which otherwise would not have occurred in rural communities, namely those directly involved in tourism (e.g. accommodation and food units representing small hotels, motels, small restaurants, transport operators) and those involved indirectly in tourism (e.g. food stores, provision stores etc.). It also develops a sense of entrepreneurship that has not existed in the area. Entrepreneurs play an important role in sustaining rural tourism and the formulation of sustainable strategies being the initiators of the tourism business and the engine of the local development. Therefore, it is necessary to simulate the development of entrepreneurial activities for the recovery of rural tourism potential and regional traditions, maintaining local employment growth and increase the standards of living in line with identified needs and priorities of regional human resources development.

On average around three persons from each household are directly involved in the work and almost every house in the village is engaged in this traditional work. Known globally or keeping alive the ancient art form, the village, however, has been struggling with many problems, which are eating into the vitality of the villagers and hampering their growth prospectus. Although several foreign and domestic tourists often flock to the site, many villagers feel a lack of basic infrastructure in the village is preventing them from obtaining optimum success. Many tourists come to Sadeibereni village and feel disappointed due to non-availability of some basic amenities such as public toilets, seating arrangements, roads, signboards, a common selling point, etc. Further, there is no regular and adequate electricity supply to this village. All these are basic to any tourist destination; without these, it will be difficult to operate tourism in Sadeibereni properly. The government must come up with a proper tourism development plan emphasizing on the development of basic facilities at the earliest. Local people must be encouraged as entrepreneurs to provide accommodation facilities such as lodging and guest houses, home stays to accommodate the tourists. To provide food and beverage services, restaurant business must be established. Tourists have the courtesy to taste the cuisines of the host destination. Local families should come forward to provide such traditional cuisines to visitors. The artists further say that there is no selling point for displaying and selling their handicrafts. Hence, there should be one exhibition cum sale center where the tourists can see the crafts, buy or order the crafts. Rural entrepreneurs also can arrange the different modes of transportation such as bullock cart rides, horse car rides, and tractor rides for local attraction in and around the village. Entertainment in rural areas also can be a major attraction for tourists. Rural folklore, music, cultural activities provide unique entertainment for urban tourists. Such entertainment activities need to be provided by a cultural organization owned and operated by the local people and that can generate revenue for them. Farms and rural areas are increasingly becoming the favourite destination of tourists. This is due to the fact that people living in urban areas yearn for a quiet, calm, clean environment where they have a chance for rest and recreation. The government must provide opportunities for farmers and rural people of the village to develop small-scale enterprises catering the needs of tourists to generate additional income while optimizing the benefits from the use of natural resources endowments and other local resources of the community. Such tourism efforts could also simulate the development of farms not only for the production of food and various agro-products but also for adjunct enterprises that could generate employment opportunities and added income for farming households. Rural sports such as jungle safari, fishing, boating, etc. should be provided by the village adventure sports operators. Apart from these, there can be many small vendors to cater to the additional needs of tourists such as tea stall, juice and cool drinks shop, stationery shops, pan shops etc. The local people of the village lack the necessary skills and don't have sufficient financial resources to start such tourism enterprises. The government should provide them the necessary training and financial assistance to start such business. Stronger support is also needed from the government in respect of preferential tax policy, simplified licensing produce and marketing the enterprises along with the crafts of the artists.

8. CONCLUSION

Rural tourism is an important segment of tourism and economic development in rural areas. However, despite steadily growing interest in rural tourism, this form of tourism is faced with certain developmental, managerial as well as economic issues. Entrepreneurship has been identified as a crucial factor for the development of tourism industry in Sadeibereni. It can be summarized that tourism is also a competitive industry like any other sector. Through the creation of attraction and provision of supporting in fracture and involvement of more people as entrepreneurs, the village can effectively create its own demand of tourists. The major development issue in this village in this village is the basic facilities for the tourists which could be provided by the local entrepreneurs. Although the village community of the village will be able to start tourism enterprises to provide the tourists and the day visitors, the best possible combination of experiences, they often lack a sufficiently high level of knowledge and competencies to perform successfully. Obstacles to entrepreneurial development in rural tourism, however, need to be viewed from a broader perspective.

One of the first steps in this regard would be to provide education for current and potential entrepreneurs in the field of information, technology, accounting, finance and marketing, thus determining the desired focus of educational workshops for entrepreneurs. The acquisition of specific new knowledge and skills through workshops will enable entrepreneurs to create appropriate business policies that will help entrepreneurial businesses to generate more revenue and expand their activities in Sadeibereni village.

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