

Rain Tourism: A Progressive Opportunity and Challenges for Konkan Tourism

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Abstract

Konkan region is located in Maharashtra state surrounded by Sahyadri hills ranges in the west, metro city Mumbai and suburbs in the north, Goa in the south and mighty Arabian Sea in the east. It enjoys 720 km long coastline, it is one of the unexploited tourism destination in India which has a huge potential to attract and provide a mesmerising service to the tourists. Konkan is blessed with surprisingly natural waterfalls amid green canopy mountains and beautiful popping out Wadis welcoming the tourists with a wonderful gesture of delicious mouth-watering signature delicacies, rich culture and down to earth ethnic hospitality. The waving coconut trees directing the visitors towards the gorgeous emerald virgin beaches, historical forts, ancient temples, mango and beetle nut grooves. It bears all the pre-requisites that perfectly fit into various types of tourism formats like religious tourism, cultural tourism, ethnic tourism, rural tourism, agro tourism, Senior citizen tourism, Adventure tourism, Food tourism, etc. But unfortunately due to heavy rainfall during rainy season it experiences a rock bottom low in terms of tourist flow. Rainy season in Konkan persists from the month of June to the month of September. It has measured more than 4000 mm rainfall at an average last year that is almost 57% above normal rainfall in Maharashtra. Many of the time it observes flood situations. The rainfall trends experienced usually by Konkan region states that June and July are aggressive month with heavy rainfall followed by reduced intensity of rain from August to October. Thus June and July can be focused on adventurous and risk taker topological tourists while August, September and October can be focused on senior citizen and family oriented tourists.

The researcher tries to identify a niche kind of tourism opportunity that is rain tourism which will focus on attracting tourists' inflow during the slack period from various locations of Maharashtra, India and across the globe that have below average or low rainfall at their place. A detailed SWOC analysis of Konkan is done to highlight the challenges and opportunities so it can arise as sustainable and a notable contender in achieving \$ 5 trillion economy of India. Konkan can possibly generate lot of opportunities during rainy season to attract domestic and international tourist around the World at a large who have below average or low rainfall during rainy season. Konkan can provide them with a memory to cherish for a lifetime with beautiful jade scenic beauty, aroma of freshness, crabs and frogs moving around with mouth-watering hot snacks and local delicacies. In addition to this it can have value added infrastructure for rain based activities like Mud pies for rain dance, Rain gears loaded

heritage walk, Monsoon camping, Rain gauge workshop, Rice farms plantation activity, Ayurveda spa, Rain trek, Horse safari, natural waterfall showers, Open discotheque, Wine and beer appreciation and testing sessions, Government or NGO initiated Food tourism events like Rain food festivals or cookery shows etc., Rain sports like football, volley ball etc., adventure sports like river rafting, Waterfall rappelling and many more. If this opportunity will be converted in to reality will help, the temporary hospitality workforce that is laid-off due to off-season to have hopes of being financially benefitted with job security, locals will have direct and indirect source of income. Due to revenue generation by the government through taxes it will concentrate on developing a safe infrastructure for Konkan region with respect to rainy season. If the above stated opportunities be converted in to reality it will gradually add on to the nations GDP for sure.

Konkan has to firstly be optimistic about the concept of rain tourism as history has revealed that rain has always come up with disaster and loss. With the government intervention by developing proper roadways, railway network and proper weather forecast and alerts the situation is getting better. Konkan faces many challenges in many aspects to get this niche tourism concept into reality starting from changing the mind-set of locals favouring this innovative enterprise and gaining their support along with skill development and expertise. Accessibility infrastructure which will be safe and secured like good quality and big roads, specially trained drivers etc. Medical infrastructure including good medical assistance and quick response team. Digital infrastructure like Wi-Fi, mobile network, high speed internet has become the basic necessity presently hence it is required to be developed at least at the tourist destinations. Power failure especially during rainy seasons is a normal, the government needs to find out solution to curb this issue and ensure 24hrs electricity or backups by the hoteliers. Aggressive marketing using digital marketing tools and travel agents networking is very essential to make this seed idea to flourish in a success story. Advertisement will help to create awareness, develop confidence and motivate the potential tourists to opt for it. Government or NGO should initiate with an emergency rescue task support team who can rush in case of any unforeseen calamities. The safety and security concerns need to be properly dealt by the Police department with more check post to control immoral and illegal practices that might occur during rainy season.

The researcher has not only explored the potential opportunities and possible challenges during rainy season in Konkan but also has tried to analyse the perception, willingness and acceptance by the probable tourists with the help of well-developed questionnaire through digital survey tools like Google forms etc. The hypothesis made by the researcher has been statistically tested to prove the significance of the concept.

Rain tourism concept is an innovative niche avenue that can be applied to all other tourism destinations with heavy rainfall and slack business during that period. With lot of opportunities in the concept, if the challenges faced are dealt in a professional and planned way will give rise to a new transformation. Rain tourism has a great prospective to streamline the economic graph of the destination which goes down during the rainy season and raise it upwards.

Keywords: Rain tourism, opportunity, challenges, tourists, Konkan.

1. Introduction

Konkan region is a 720 km long coastal west border of Maharashtra state which shares its boundary with Sahyadri hill ranges in Pune district on the east, metro city Mumbai and its suburbs in the north, Goa State in the south and colossal Arabian Sea in the east. Konkan is an unexploited tourism destination which has a huge potential to attract and provide a memorable service to the tourists. Konkan is crowned with green canopy mountains garnished with natural waterfalls, narrow quiet roads astonishing beautiful popping out Wadis welcoming the tourists with a homely gesture offering delicious mouth-watering signature delicacies, rich culture and down to earth folkloric hospitality. The waving coconut trees directs the visitors towards the gorgeous emerald virgin beaches, historical forts, ancient temples, mango and beetle nut grooves. Konkan has all the potentials to cater various types of tourism formats like Religious Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Ethnic Tourism, Rural Tourism, Agro Tourism, Senior citizen Tourism, Adventure tourism, Food tourism, etc. It experiences a huge amount of domestic tourist inflow during summer and winter season especially during weekends or long weekends outings. But unfortunately due to heavy rainfall during monsoon it experiences a rock bottom low in terms of tourist inflow.

Monsoon is a terms which itself gives a blissful feeling. Rainy season bridges between scorching summer and chilly winters. It is a blessing by the nature which follows a long hot tiresome summer providing an aroma from drenching soil that intoxicates the mankind. The mesmerizing beauty of green blanket worn mountains, adorable eyes refreshing waterfalls popping out frequently, roadside local venders serving hot cup of tea with fried snacks or coal-lit roasted corn, farmers cheering the rain which ensures them an abundant crop and prosperity. Children sailing boat in bunged water and splashing water walking down the lane. Sun popping through the rain canvassing a magical rainbow.

Rain refreshes the whole earth where it falls and rejuvenate everyone's mind and soul. Human Psychology says that humans are very curious and get attracted towards things which they are not able to experience in their natural habitat. It is quite natural that the people residing in a dry region with below average rainfall will always dream to experience rainfall at it full extent.

Significance of study:

India is a developing country which has understood the potential of tourism to the economy. Government has initiated many schemes and policies to promote tourism in the country like E-Visa, Incredible India, Athiti Devo Bhava, Global Tourism Mart, etc. Overseas marketing is done through the delegates appointed in Tourism Offices abroad who actively participate in travel fairs and exhibitions; Road Shows, etc. They organize various workshops and seminars like "Know India" that creates awareness and entice tourist towards India.

India has been blessed with a long coastline around 7516.6 km. with various popular coastal tourist destinations. These destination experience heavy rainfall during rainy season due to which it has an absolute slack season as far as tourism is concerned. On the contrary, there are many districts in India and abroad who have very less rain or almost no rain at all.

The development in road and transport infrastructure has now made it safer to travel during rainy season also which had been a major setback during rainy season. Hence this has seeded the niche concept of tourism, that is, Rain Tourism that will provide a lifetime cherishing opportunity to many tourists who wish to have a first-hand experience of real rain. The unique concept of Rain Tourism will not only make the slack period fruitful but also provide socio-economic benefits to the locals and the Government at a large.

Review of Literature:

Britannica Encyclopaedia states that Konkan which is also named as Aparanta, is a western coastal plain region that falls between mighty Arabia Sea on the west and gigantic Western Ghats on the east. Konkan bears an uneven terrain which is made up of eroded residue ranges of the Ghats formed by low lateritic plateaus proceeding to a coastline of alternate bays and peninsula.

Shajimon K John (2018) stated that *Rain is a mesmerising phenomenon of the nature that endures the healthy living. Rain can be defined as the water in liquid state in form of droplets that is a resultant of condensation of atmospheric water vapour that becomes heavy enough and falls down under the gravity.*

G.S.L.H.V. Prasada, V.U.M. Rao, G.G.S.N. Rao (2010) in their book mentioned that Ratnagiri and Sindhadurg district in Konkan bears a lateritic soil and receive at an average more rainfall than Raigad district which bears a non-lateritic soil.

V. P. Mandale, D. M. Mahale , S. B. Nandgude, K. D. Gharde and R. T. Thokal (2017) mentioned that the average annual rainfall distribution over the Konkan region is 3482 mm. It experiences more than 400 mm rainfall in June month, 1251mm rainfall in the month of July, 952 mm rainfall in the month of August, 300 mm rainfall in the month of September ,185mm in the month of October. The trends of rainfall follows a pattern of beginning and gradually rising from the month of June, highest amount of rainfall is seen in the month of July and August with a decline from month of September to a recession stage in the month of October resulting in lowest rainfall.

SANDRP (Oct 2019) South Asian Network on Dam, Rivers and People in its report specified that 154 districts from India have below average or very low rainfall like Leh, Ladhak, Jammu, Kinnaur, Lahul, Spiti, Chamba, Tehri-Garhwal, Haridwar, Firozpur, Sangrur, Amritsar, Jalandhar, Mansa, Moga, Barnala, Firozpur, Mansa, Moga, Sangrur, Barnala, Faridkot, Rohtak, Fatehabad and Panipat, Fatehabad, Rohtak, Hisar, Jhajjar, Kaithal, Bhiwani, Sirsa, Panipa, Jind, Hanumangarh Ganganagar, Alwar, Solapur, Beed, Washim, Yawatmal, Latur , Krishnagiri, Jogulamba Gadwal, Sangareddy , Vikarabad , Kanpur Dehat, Ghaziabad, Shamli , Pilibhit, Arwal , Sheikhpura and Begusaria .

Badree Chaterjee (March 2020) mentioned in his article in Hindustan Times that Indian Metrological Department (IMD) in its variability study done for Maharashtra State found out that over a period of past 30 years (1989-2018)very less or almost no rainfall was experienced by Northern part of Maharashtra. 15 Districts in Marathwada and north-central Maharashtra like Akola, Aurangabad, Buldhana, Wardha ,Washim, Jalna etc. has noticed 71-79 dry days out of 122 days during the monsoon period.

Nikki Agarwal (2017) in her article in Topistan magazine listed top popular countries that experiences very low rainfall. Bahrain, Egypt, Qatar, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Libya,

Mauritania, Algeria and UAE are the countries that experience as low as 55mm rainfall along with violent storms, extreme temperature variations, incredibly rough weather and scorching summer.

Butler R. W. (2001) wrote that since beginning Seasonality has always been a critical problem experienced by the tourism industry worldwide and has created many complications for the industry. It creates constraints to the accumulated funds in procuring and sustaining full time staff. Off season results reduces the return on investment, underutilization of resources and facilities. This affects the acceptability of tourism as a worthwhile economic activity in most of the destinations. Thus it is very important that a substantial effort has to be exercised by all components like Government, private sector to reduce seasonality at the tourist destinations.

Sussane Becken (Feb 2010) in her thesis mentioned that climatic conditions and weather at the tourist destination are important aspects which influences tourists' decision making about the destination selection and also affects the successful operation of tourism industry. Climate can be precisely defined as the condition that exists for a long term regularly at the destination. In difference, weather can be simply stated as a countenance of climate at a particular point of time and destination. Thus the tourists when book packages for a destination expect certain climatic conditions and when they travel to a place they experience the actual weather, there can be instances when the weather might deviate substantially from the regular conditions.

Sadia Afrin Chowdhury, Nafisa Kasem (Jan 2014) suggested that Rain tourism can be promoted by proper planning of the activities to be done, reformat tourist destinations, develop facilities and amenities for the tourists. A marketing initiative needs to be triggered with few promotional events augmented with information and virtual demonstration about the elegance of rain and nature. Rain tourism bears high potential for social integration and contribute to economy and brand image of a country.

Thomas cook website cautions the tourist that Konkan during the rainy season experiences heavy rainfall and bears a humid and warm climate. It strongly suggests that tourists who are not adoptable to this kind of climate and weather should avoid booking tours, they also highlighted that a drive along the beach during this period is truly mesmerising and memorable with a different charm.

Rebecca Strong (10th April 2017) in her article in Elite magazine wrote that according to George Loewenstein theory of "Information- Gap theory" human beings exhibit a strange behaviour of curiosity that develops an unattainable urge to always wish and experience the things that they can't have.

A.M. Ismail and T.P. Tuong (2009) stated that the Coastal tourism destinations always face a threat of varied range of natural menaces occurring due to heavy rains like floods, cyclones, tsunami, shoreline erosion, landslides and subsidence. These menaces creates threats not only to the property and natural resources but also to the residents in that regions in an imperative way. The existing knowledge about the actual challenges confronted by coastal tourism destination is manifestly insufficient which leads to chalk out plans, policies and management of the crisis arising during the period of monsoon. A more professional research approach is a must to reach to a solution.

Koetse & Rietveld (2009) in his empirical research mentioned Weather conditions has significant relation with delays in modes of transportation, cancellations and mishaps. For example during rain storms visibility are critically important for aviation and road driving which leads to delays, cancellations, skidding and accidents. Statistical records states that weather was prime cause for 70% of delays in aviation and 23% of accidents.

Fauzi Sungip , Mohd Kamarudin (2018) in their research recommended that the government has to develop a contingency plan to confront the risk of floods and disaster by it to the infrastructure and destination. It needs to take good measures that will prevent the tourism industry from declining. As a matter of fact, the public and volunteer organizations with their services and assistances should together rebuild all damages that will arise in flood-prone zones.

Panchali Dey (Jul 23, 2018) in her article in Times Travel magazine reported that Monsoons at a contrary to floods and disaster has been a boon to some places. The rain drenched mountains canvassing mesmerising waterfalls has attracted huge number of visitors footfall. Karnataka State Tourism Development Managing Director mentioned that earlier June, July August were considered to be off season, but there is a sudden change in the trend and tourist behaviour as they are liking to travel during monsoon. The resorts at Jog falls, Malnad belt, Madikeri and Kodagu has shown 95% occupancy. Similarly Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation also remarked that the nature trails have been a big hit among young exploring visitors especially at Raneh Falls (Chhatarpur), Mandu, Patalpani, Omkareshwar etc.

SWOC analysis of Konkan during rainy season:

Strength:

- The Sahyadri hill ranges in Konkan is treasured with a rich biodiversity and is beneficial for bio-tourism and eco-tourism in the region.
- Natural artistic canvased waterfalls are self-created in the region due to physiographic phenomenon, which becomes one of the prime magnetisms to the tourists during rainy season.
- Konkan is being blessed with religious, cultural, mythical and historical background. Here temples of vigilant deities and most popular Ganesh festival attracts spiritual tourists.
- The unique Konkani lifestyle, costumes, houses and Konkani delicacy is the biggest strength, which is not seen anywhere in India.
- The sulphur hot springs located in the Konkan near Chiplun, Pali, Sangmeshwar, Rajapur, etc. are known for its medicinal influences.
- New International Airport at Panvel which will commence its operation in the year 2023 adjoining Konkan will be a biggest accessible infrastructure for foreign tourists.
- Continual development in National highways like Mumbai-Goa highway, coastal highways, state highways etc. is making travelling more secured and accessible.
- An engineering wonder Konkan Railways which can safely and in bulk transport tourist in all the seasons. The route has made it a mesmerising wonder above just a mode of journey.

- Well developing road network precisely connecting all tourist important destinations is making travel safe during rainy season. Example: Coastal highway, etc.
- Apart from standard accommodation local homestay are always ready to welcome and serve tourists with a smile and courtesy.
- Road infrastructure is upgrading day by day by Government initiative.
- Ropeway on Raigad fort making it accessible during rainy season with a picturesque view.

Weakness:

- Narrow mind-set of the local people is the weakness that hinders sustainable development of tourism at the destination.
- Movement or migration of capable and skilled manpower towards metro cities like, Mumbai and Pune from Konkan is a major constraint for the development of niche tourism.
- Lack of quality entrepreneurship among the local people, lack of innovations, co-operation from the natives of the region and quality work force.
- Floods, roads clogging, land sliding, tree falling on the roads is common during rainy season.
- Myths and old stories of mishaps and disasters in the past still traumatise the visitors from outside during rainy season.
- Lack of quality medical aids, security and safety measures at the destinations.
- No proper mobile network and internet facilities throughout Konkan.
- Frequent Electricity failures.
- Lack of protective railings in Ghats for protections.
- Lack of Food variety and availability of contemporary food at the destination.

Opportunity:

- Identifying rain tourism relevant destination in Konkan which are safe and developing tourism infrastructure at that place.
- To develop the confidence in the mind of tourists about safety at the destination during rainy season.
- It has enormous scope to introduce health tourism, wine and beer appreciation, food festivals, family tourism and geo-tourism during rainy season.
- Residents from the districts and countries who experience low rainfall with carvings to enjoy rain at fullest can be attracted and converted in to potential tourists during slack season.
- Konkan can introduce value added infrastructure for rain based activities like Mud pies for rain dance, Rain gears loaded heritage walk, Monsoon camping, Rain gauge workshop, Rice farms plantation activity, Ayurveda spa, Rain trek, Horse safari, natural waterfall showers, Open discotheque etc.
- They can introduce Rain sports championships like football, volley ball, Buffalo race etc., adventure sports like river rafting, Waterfall rappelling and many more.

Challenges:

- Konkan has been associated with many cases during rainy season of mishaps and fatal accidents like bridges swiped away due to floods causing human and property loss.
- To change the mind-set of the potential Rain tourists about safety and security, creating demand in the market for the niche concept.
- Spread of Water borne illness or diseases like dengue, cholera, chikungunya and malaria etc. that can create health hazards.
- Under developed Hospitality Industry with only one five Star hotels and one four star hotel and many unregistered and unprofessional homestays is one of the biggest setback to attract international and higher income class tourists.
- Frequent power failures, no mobile network connectivity in many places.
- Less Road Signage at tourist destinations and on the roads.
- Safety and security of the tourists.
- Creation of provisions for Special Emergency Rescue Task force in the region during rainy season.
- Government support in terms of marketing, facilities, infrastructure, etc.

Research Methodology:**Primary Data:**

A quantitative research approach is aimed with a well-designed close ended questionnaire made of a combination of dichotomous, MCQ (one response and multiple responses), rating likert scale and an open ended question which seeks suggestions from the potential domestic tourists willing to visit destinations in Raigad district. The questionnaire is circulated by simple random sampling method among sample size of 160 residents in below average or low rainfall areas like Sholapur, Barshi, Jath, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad , Gulf countries etc. through Google forms- digital survey app medium.

Secondary Data:

The secondary data is collected from referring magazines, internet websites, research journal etc.

Research Objectives:

- 1) To study the possibility of rain tourism as a progressive opportunity in Konkan.
- 2) To identify the challenges that needs to meet to convert the concept of Rain Tourism into reality.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

The below sample demography states the sample consists of major chunk of respondent up to 25 years to 45yrs, hence research findings can be considered as a contemporary trends of new generation who are adventurous and exploratory in their approach towards tourism.

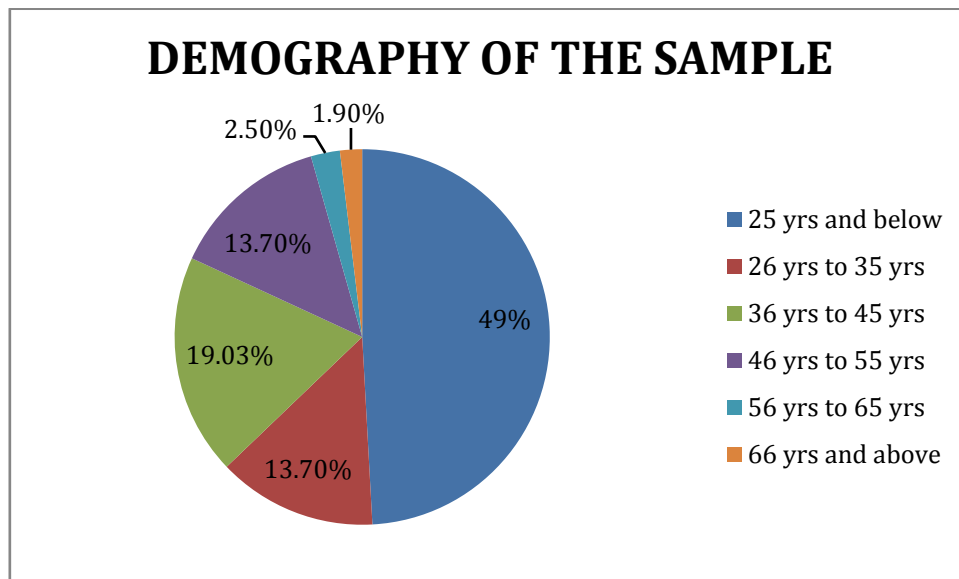


Fig. No. 1 Demography of the respondent sample

The researcher intends to analyse the approach of the tourists towards the offer of a fun packed monsoon package in Konkan.

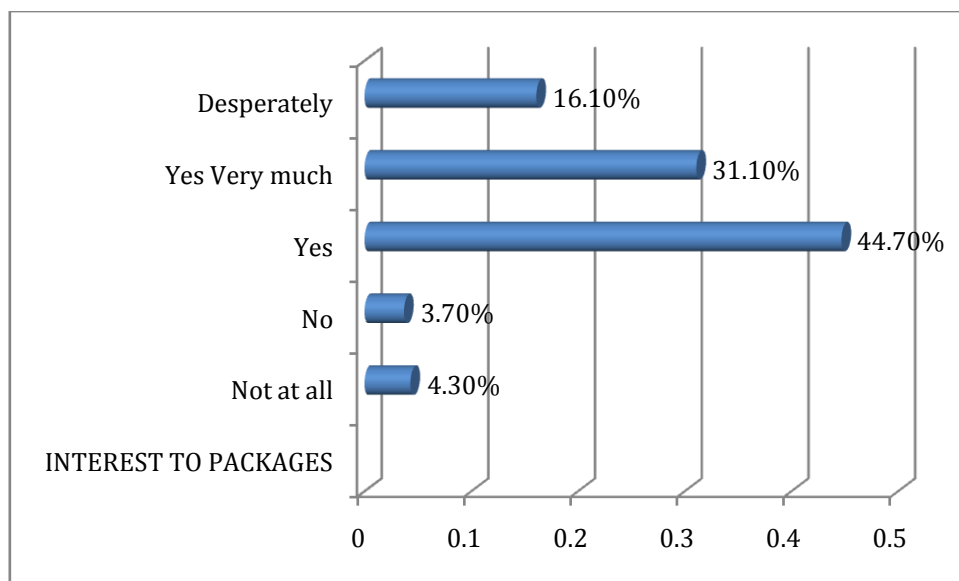


Fig.no.2 Interest of tourists towards a fun pack monsoon package in Konkan.

Majority of respondents showed their keen interest in the fun activities packages in Konkan during rainy season, the above graphic presentation clearly indicates that with a proper planning of attractive packages and marketing Rain tourism can be a successful phenomenon.

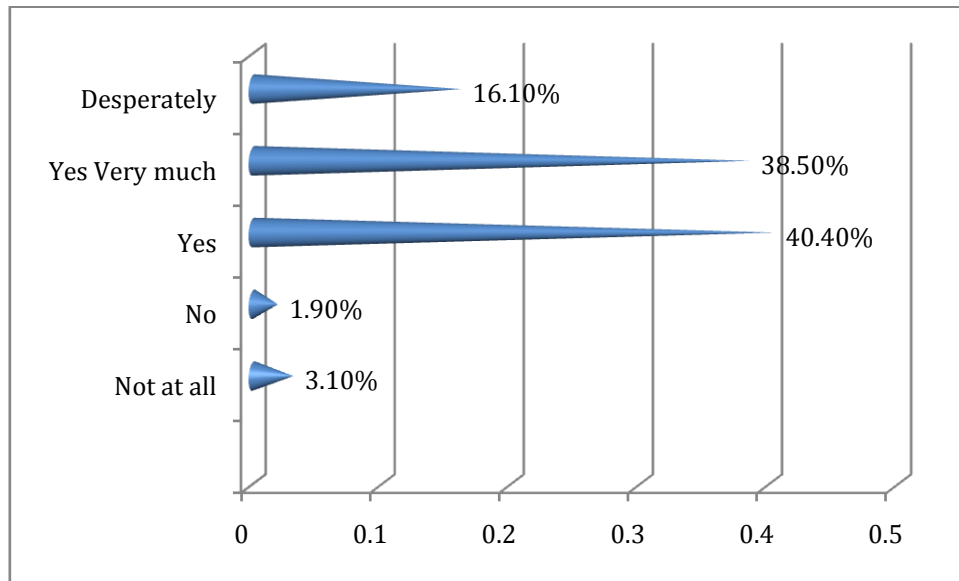


Fig.3: Enjoyment level of Rain tourism packages

The **96%** respondents were very affirmative about their enjoyment level associated with green capped mountains, waterfalls, natural beauty and rain associated activities. It is but common as people of all ages are more fascinated towards outing with nature for rejuvenation. Getting wet and joy under waterfalls, soothing the eyes by viewing fresh green mountains and landscapes. It becomes more impactful when it comes to the people from desert and region with less or no rainfall

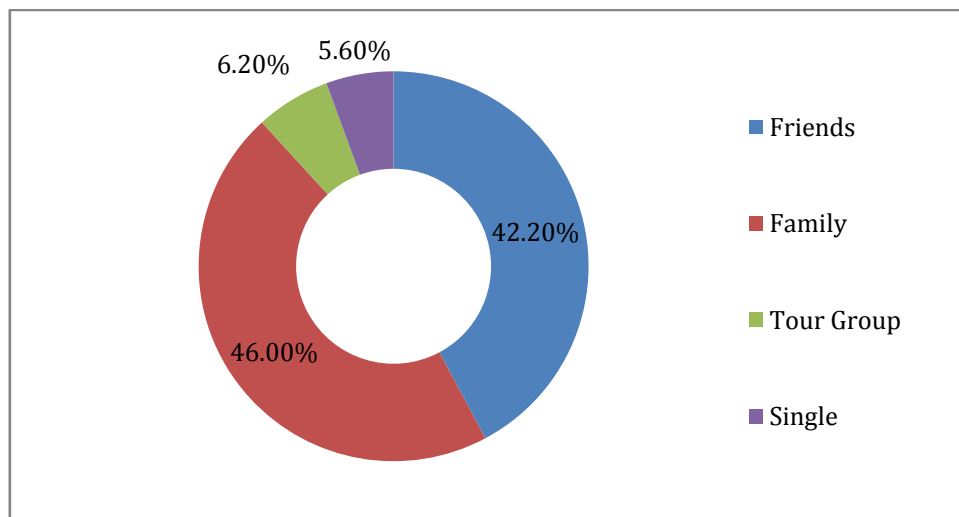


Fig no.4 Preference pattern of the tourists

The respondents preferred to visit to Konkan during monsoon to enjoy rains with their families and friends hence the packages should be developed keeping in mind the family enjoyment or a same age group friends. Moreover separate hotels can also specialize in providing amenities and planning activities for friend groups and family groups as both have different preferences, requirements and expectation

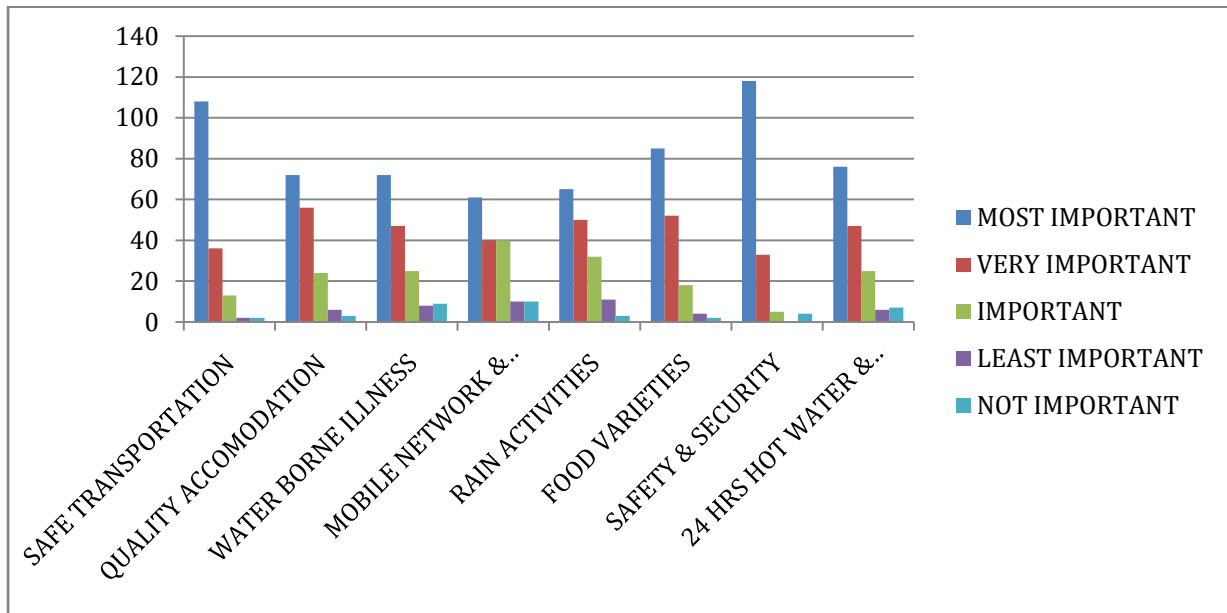


Fig. no. 5 Comparative analysis of evaluation of Tourist destination on various parameters.

The above parameters are the variable concerns at the tourism destination that were been evaluated from the respondents on a likert scale. The bar diagram states that during monsoon, the prime concern of the tourists is Safety and security along with Safe transportation. The Safety and security is in reference to quick help in case of emergency, safety from natural calamities arising due to heavy rains. Food variety, 24hrs. Hot water & electricity, control of waterborne illness can be categorized into very important parameter while rain activities and mobile network into important necessity as per the tourists evaluation.

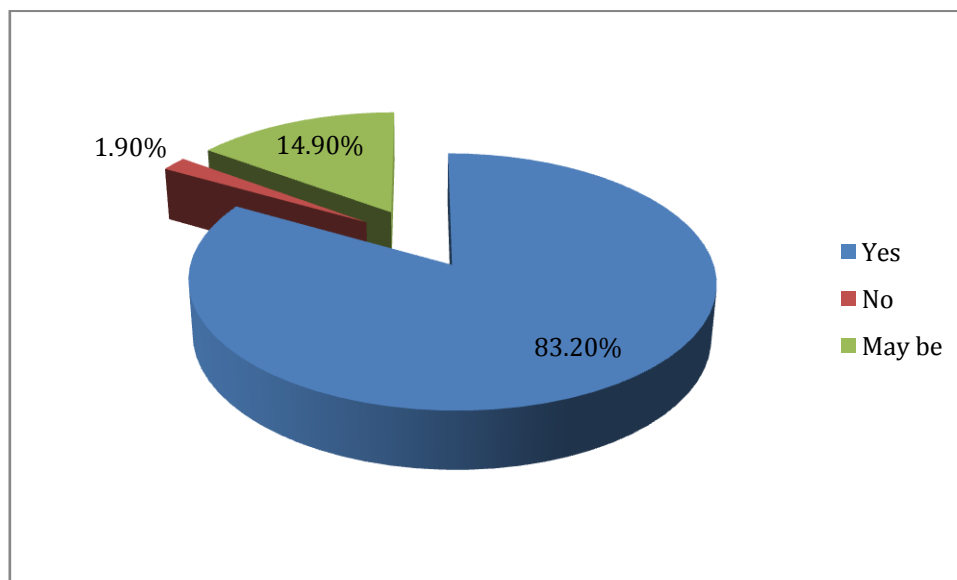


Fig no. 5 Perception about success of Rain Tourism in Konkan

The pie chart clearly conveys that the perception of the respondents is a strong belief and support to the success of the Rain Tourism concept in Konkan, only 1.90% has opposed it where as 14.90% were not sure about their opinion. Their willingness towards the concept is

the biggest ray of hope for Konkan to channelize and plan safe packages which will be a valued experience to visitors and generate mouth to mouth publicity.

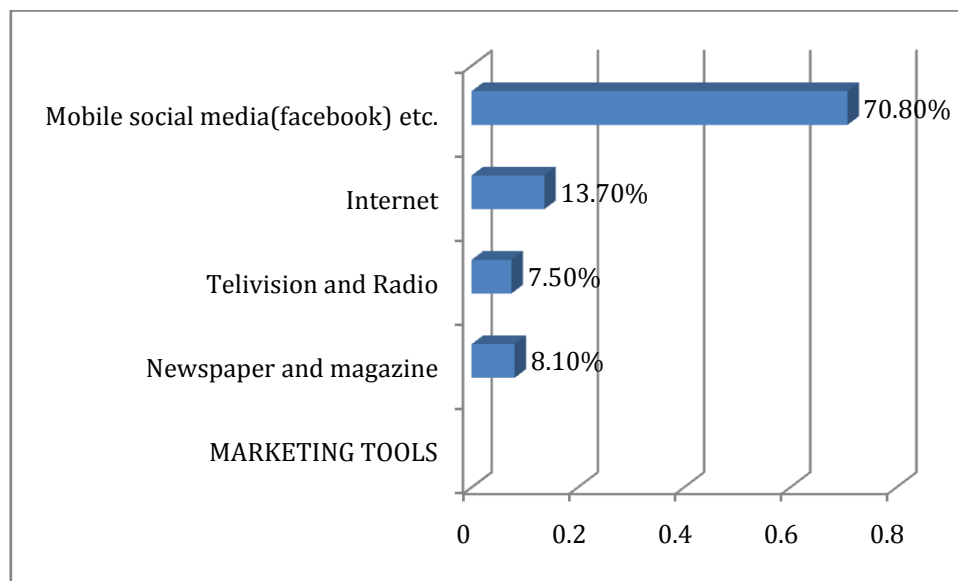


Fig.no.6 Marketing tools for Rain Tourism

The technological advancement in the society and its dependence on the mobile and internet has totally out-dated the traditional tools of marketing like newspaper, magazines, television, radio etc. Hence a very lively and attractive advertisement can be made and circulated through internet and digital social media networking like Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp will be more effective and impactful in creating awareness. Even hotel or packages reservations if done through mobile Apps will be more fruitful and rewarding.

Chi-square test was applied to test the hypothesis to check the significance of Rain Tourism in Konkan region with respect to the age group.

#Hypothesis test 1

#H0: Age group does not have an impact on the overall response for monsoon packages

#H1: Age group impacts the response to the overall response to the monsoon packages

X	Y	X ²	df	p-value
Age	Overall response	41.74	10	8.342 e-06

Fig no. 7 Impact of age of sample on the overall response on monsoon packages.

As p-value is less than alpha, we reject the null hypothesis in favour of alternative hypothesis that clearly indicates that Age of tourists impacts the overall selection towards monsoon packages. Hence the Hospitality Industry has to offer different packages for different age groups as per their priorities.

Findings and Suggestions based on study:

Rain tourism is a niche tourism concept that can be successfully if applied in Konkan region as tourists in areas especially with less or below average rainfall have shown their willingness to visit Konkan during monsoons. Transportation, safety and security is the prime concern for the tourists, hence safe road infrastructure especially in the Ghats section, Special Charter Bus connectivity from big cities like Pune, Mumbai , Kolhapur, Belgaum, Sholapur etc. driven by specially trained driver in Rainy season can be encouraged to avoid mishaps. Konkan Railways also has overcome the initial complications making it the safer mode of mass transportation connecting Metro city Mumbai with a garland of nature's beauty. A Special Emergency Task force should be appointed at local level by the Government to professionally handle natural calamities with a quick response.

The hospitality industry needs to develop various kinds of packages with relevant activities for different segments like bachelors, family, senior citizens, single travellers etc. Since Konkan is a favourite destination for family oriented tourists the hoteliers should also focus in providing suitable relevant amenities and facilities in their property. Municipal or Gram Panchayat bodies should focus on providing safe potable water to curb water borne illness threat. Even the hotels and restaurants should provide filtered safe potable water at their venues. Government should strive to develop basic tourism infrastructures like Tourist Information Centres managed by locals, location signage at all strategic points, provisions for mobile network and 24hrs electric supply at the destination.

Hoteliers should also keep alternative power backups. They should be open to serve contemporary (Burgers, Pizza, Pasta etc.) and other variety of food cuisine along with traditional local delicacies. Quality accommodation proportionate to value for money , most importantly 24hrs hot water supply should be intended. Rain activities should be planned and professionally provided to the tourists like Mud pies for rain dance, Rain gears loaded heritage walk, Monsoon camping, Rain gauge workshop, Rice farms plantation activity, Ayurveda spa, Rain trek, Horse safari, natural waterfall showers, Open discotheque, Wine or Beer appreciation and testing sessions, Government or NGO initiated Food tourism events like Rain food festivals or cookery shows etc., Rain sports like football, volley ball etc., adventure sports like river rafting, Waterfall rappelling and many more. This will definitely help in creating interest and lifting the bar of tourist satisfaction.

An aggressive marketing flyers and videos are required propagated especially through internet or social media tools like Facebook, whatsapp, etc. Tourists should be encouraged to put their testimonials or feedback on the social media or websites of the hotels or OTA portals instantly from the location during their tours. This will help in building confidence and motivate viewer to opt for Rain tourism in Konkan.

Conclusion:

Konkan bears all the necessities to be one of the most popular tourism destinations of India. It is grooming itself with wide National highways, State highways, magically scenic rail routes. Developing of International Airport adjoining Raigad will open the new avenue of inbound tourists from the globe. Konkan tourism confronts a slack period from the month of June to September due to heavy monsoons. Rain Tourism is boon niche concept that will support not only the Hospitality Industry, locals and the Government by earning surplus revenue but also

gift the tourists with a memory to cherish for a lifetime. The Tourists from the regions with less or below average rainfall can be the potential customers who can experience the beauty of approx. 4000 mm rainfall. Konkan has lot of challenges like changing the mind sets of locals and the potential tourist making them affirmative towards the niche avenue. Aggressive marketing is required in terms of flyers and videos preferably on the internet and social media networking is required. The Government also requires supporting the cause with new friendly policies, provisions for 24hrs. Electricity, medical facilities, mobile and internet connectivity better safety and security infrastructure. Hospitality Industry needs to improvise on the value for money amenities and facilities. Planning and developing interesting rain related activities for different age groups and types of tourists is very important as it will be the main attraction. Ganesh Festival celebrated in Konkan is a perfect example of rich cultural heritage of India which can be showcased on a large scale to attract tourist around the world.

Konkan is a gem blessed to India which if developed in a planned way will definitely contribute to the country's economy and create an identity for our nation. Rain tourism has the potential to bridge the gap in the Tourism and Hospitality business due to nature's interference.

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