

Destination Life Cycle and Assessment - A Study of Goa Tourism Industry

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ABSTRACT

In this paper an attempt has been made to evaluate the performance and assessment of the Goa tourism industry with reference to the Destination Life Cycle Model. In this study a survey was conducted during the time span of July 2009 to October 2009. A total of 600 tourists of which 298 are international and another 302 were domestic tourists; were interviewed. These tourists were interviewed with close ended questions to get an insight into the status of the tourism industry in the state. The survey was restricted to the Tiswadi Taluka/ segment in north Goa. Views of host community is absent in the present study. Results from the suggestions reveal that Goa's beach tourism has not yet reached the much hyped stagnation stage. The present study also suggests apparent measures for hospitality and tourism industry to inject an element of sustainability by introducing 'Village Tourism' as well as undertaking proper planning and structuring of the industry based on Destination Life cycle Model. This paper attempts to fill the gap of a very under-researched area namely Goa's beach centric tourism with relation to Destination Life cycle Model. Simple percentage values, Chi-square, and other statistical *analysis* is applied to interpret, analyze and present data.

KEYWORDS: *Goa Tourism, Destination Life Cycle, Stagnation, Village Tourism.*

INTRODUCTION

Goa, the jewel in the India's crown has been blessed with nature's bounties lavishly and has attracted attention since time immemorial. It was once a Portuguese colony for 450 years long years, and was finally liberated on 19th December 1961. Post liberation it has gained prominence as a world tourist destination. The white Gothic churches against a green backdrop with swaying palms and whispering waves fascinate one and all. Goa is the tiniest state of India, admeasuring 3,702 km², and is located on the west coast. It is bounded by the state of Maharashtra to the north and by Karnataka to the east and south, while the Arabian Sea drapes its western coast.

Besides a 105km of shoreline, with its world renowned beaches, Goa has to its credit, innumerable sacred places of worship, temples, churches, chapels, world heritage sites, monuments of historical importance, colonial buildings and the like. Goa can also boast of its rich flora and fauna, due to its Western Ghats range, which is in fact designated as a luxuriant biodiversity locale. The state, has a pleasant and sunny setting, an ideal climate on an average the temperature varies between 25°C - 30°C (approximately 67.96F - 81.56F), which is one of the primary reasons as why tourists from Europe and other parts of the globe flock here. Other appealing factor is the cultural heritage of this state, which is a congruent blending of the east and west. People of all religion live in harmony here, and the locals have an inherent peace loving attitude that is irresistible. It's Carnival and Shigmo have carved a niche in the cultural itinerary and left an indelible mark on the tourists.

The popular tourists season begins in latter half of August up to first week of June. In the recent past Goa is projected as a 365 days holiday destination and has been receiving positive response especially from the domestic tourist. Goa is basically professing beach centric tourism, though it has now ventured into other forms of tourism namely- spiritual, adventure, health and the like. Undeniably beaches were and are a hot favorite tourist destination on the schedule of foreign as well as domestic tourists. From the hippy discovery of this 'land of good times' in the sixties, Goa has come a long way. Can we possibly extend the life span of our sand, surf and sun holiday destination any further? How long will this fascination last? Or has it finally reached a saturation point is the concern.

Objective of the Study:

Objective of the present study, is to get an insight into the state of affairs of tourism in Goa and its status with reference to the Destination Life Cycle Model, this is undertaken to bring about effective planning and structuring of the industry.

Methodology:

Micro Study: Survey was undertaken of 300 domestic and 300 international tourist, which was initiated in July 09, pre-tested in August'09 and administered in September and October09, in Tiswadi Taluka. Structured questionnaire was administered, to understand the perception of tourist relating to tourism in Goa. Secondary data was collected through various research articles, manuscripts and websites.

Literature Review:

In the eighties, Butler (1980) adapted the life cycle product model to the tourism industry and created the "Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model", (Exhibit 1), He established six stages namely exploration, investment, development, consolidation, stagnation. Stagnation can further progress into decline, rejuvenation or continued stagnation.

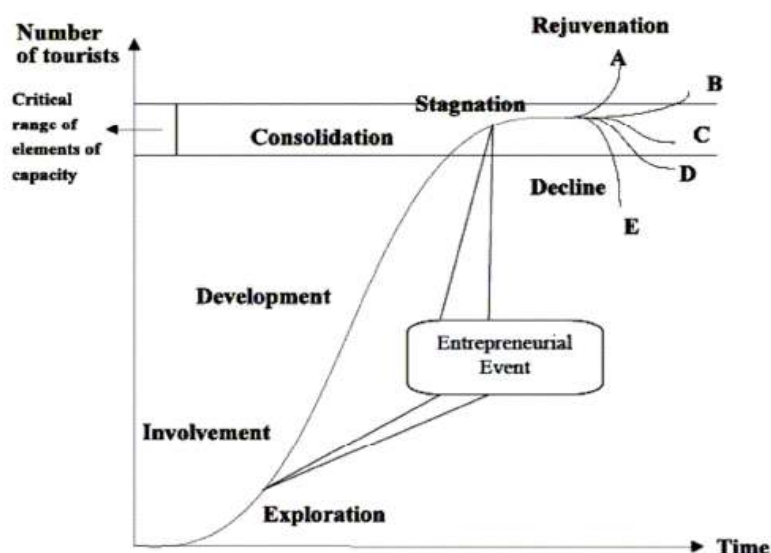
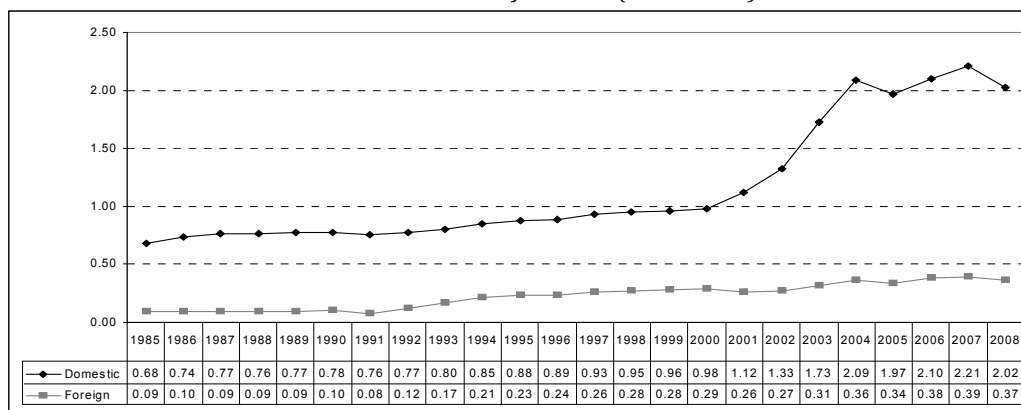


Figure 1: Destination Life Cycle (Butler, 1980)

If one has a look at the Destination Life Cycle of Goa's beach centric tourism industry, it has traversed a couple of stages. To begin with 'The Exploration Stage', commenced in the sixties, when the Flower Children having accidentally stumbled upon it, discovered this tourist's paradise for posterity. North Goa coastline villages of Anjuna, Calangute, Baga in particular offered it's virgin white beaches to these 'founding fathers' of today's tourism industry. Besides the sun, sand and surf, the white shoreline also provided the much required privacy and seclusion to lead 'their' way of life with no questions raised. In 1961 visitors from as many as 39 countries, totaling 1439 persons and 10,422 night lodgings came to Goa. Afonso

AveCleto, Rodrigues Tensing (1994). With the guests at the local's doorsteps, it meant demand in terms of food, accommodation, medicines, music, and drugs. Farmers, Toddy tappers, fishermen and the residents in general had new opportunities knocking at their doorsteps. Invariably, their involvement in the tourist's activities was inevitable. In fact State Bank of India opened its branch in the state, at Calangute. Tourism once injected in the system implied development of infrastructure, facilities being provided by government, and with time big industrial houses, star hotels and other stakeholders gradually started taking interest in it.

Exhibit 2. Flow of tourists (1985-2008)



Source: Tourism Statistics 2006 & 2007. Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, 2008

Over the years, Goa has witnessed a steady rise in the arrivals of both foreign and domestic tourists. Tourists have been flocking here for various reasons, but the sun, sand and surf synonymous with fun and frolic has fascinated travelers and tourists the world over. The eighties witnessed *involvement* and *development* of the state to meet the demands of the guests, the initial nineties experienced slump due to the financial crisis faced by the country. But with the opening of the economy, and the subsequent I.T. boom triggered a rise in the popularity of the state, and translated into an increase in the arrivals of the domestic tourists, which spilled over into the new millennium. One observes that the flow of the foreign tourists over the decades have been more or less steady not crossing .05 million limit. The Year 2003 saw a record total of 532 charter flights come in bringing 140,000 foreign tourists. Goa touched a figure of 2.045 million by December 31, 2003. While as per survey compiled by the State Directorate of Planning and Statistics and tabled in the Assembly last month 2.5 million tourist flooded the state in 2009, Kamat Smitha (2010).

Dr. S.B.Patkar (2004), in his presentation on 'Impact of Tourism on Goan Agriculture and Environment claims that Goa is in the *'Developing Stage'*, and cautioned that later it will lead to stagnation and decline. In his words, 'In the long run local people involved in tourism industry will have to face competition with large business houses dealing in tourism products, and if stagnation or decline occurs then local people will suffer, as switching back to agriculture will be difficult'. N K Piplani (2001) reveals, "a region like Goa, a city like Shimla or a leisure spot like the Badkal Lake have reached a *maturity level*. They no more require promotion and have similarly exhausted their carrying capacity (infrastructural, environmental or social impacts). Their problem on the contrary is of retaining their image, checking the decline and doing away with the negative impacts of tourism. (Noronha Frederick, 1999), 'Industry believes that Goan tourism has *not yet reached* its "saturation point". Shobhaa De, in her column for the Times of India, questions- Has Goa lost its Groove...? and concludes Goa has after all *lost its 'mojo* (magic). So also Bradbury Michelle (2010), a British tourist who has been visiting the state for the last 20 years, in his letter to a

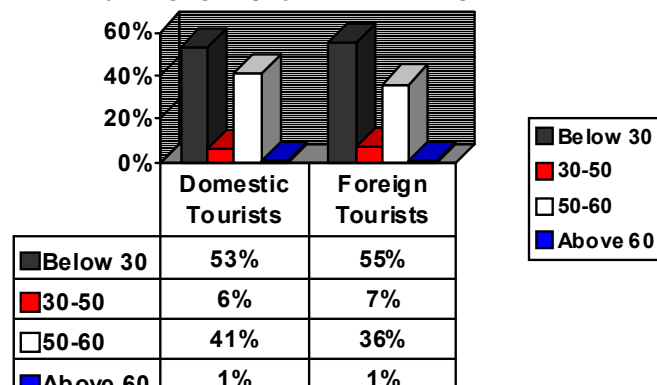
local daily claims, “Goa has lost it’, to her counterparts who offer a much cleaner, safer and more social able destinations. If foreign tourists are wary of the destination, domestic tourists are bitten by the state’s holiday image. The provisional figures for 2009, showed Goa got 21,27,063 domestic tourist as against 3,76, 640 foreign tourists, in the previous year, Fernandes Joaquim (2010).

But the bubble will someday burst, in the case of such eventuality, Piplani (2001) suggests internal marketing, product improvement, to check the decline, while Noronha Frederick (2002), professes, it would help if Goa could work to diversify away from its brand-image. (Butler, 1980; Weiermair, 2007) urges for a focused effort on developing a transformational strategy in the form of rural/village tourism for rejuvenating the tourism industry in the region. Wilson David (1997), opines that it would seem sensible to maintain the current broad market base of the industry, and encourage greater diversification in the type of tourists who visit Goa with more emphasis being placed on cultural and heritage tourism. Subash, Smitha, Klaus (2009), Village/Rural tourism acts as a rejuvenator for bringing the stagnating/declining stage of tourism industry back to second/subsequent growth stages of tourism industry life cycle. This is because rural tourism has the inherent characteristics of becoming a sustainable tourism concept once it is developed and managed properly.

Analysis:

Destination life cycle, has many critics, however as a framework within which to view the development of destination, and as a way of thinking about the interrelation of destination and market evolution it provides many useful insights, Cooper Chris, Fletcher John et al(1994). Cooper Chris (2002), maintains that the approach adopted for destinations will be dependent upon the destination’s stage on the life cycle. The life cycle stage is rather difficult to compute, though one may instinctively know the position. ‘Cooper’, adopted growth indicators such as: rates of volume growth; ratio of repeat to first-time visitors; length of stay; visitor profiles; expenditure per head; and visit arrangement (package/independent) to identify life cycle stage. In this regard, it is important to note that, as compared to last year, room occupancy and revenue for financial year 2009-2010 dropped between 8-10%, and 15% respectively. The British arrivals dropped by 18% and the Scandinavians arrivals too have declined though German and Swiss arrivals remained stable. But, this is compensated by significant spurt in arrivals from Far East Europe- Russia, Estonia, Belarus, etc and for the first time direct flight from Tajikistan is in operation Fernandes Joaquim (2010).

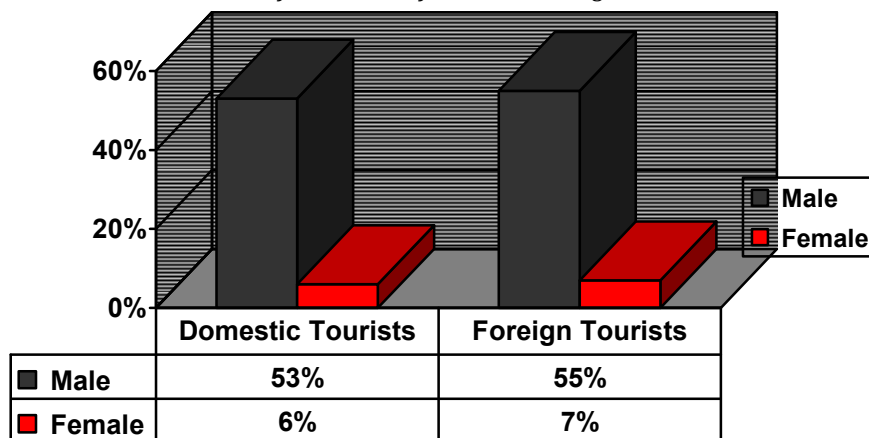
Exhibit 3: Profile-Age group of tourists visiting Goa.



A look at the exhibit 3 graph indicates the popularity of Goa among the youth. This can probably be attributed to the fact that the state is associated with fun, frisk and frolic. The 50-60 bracket, also seems fascinated by what the state has to offer in terms of holidaying.

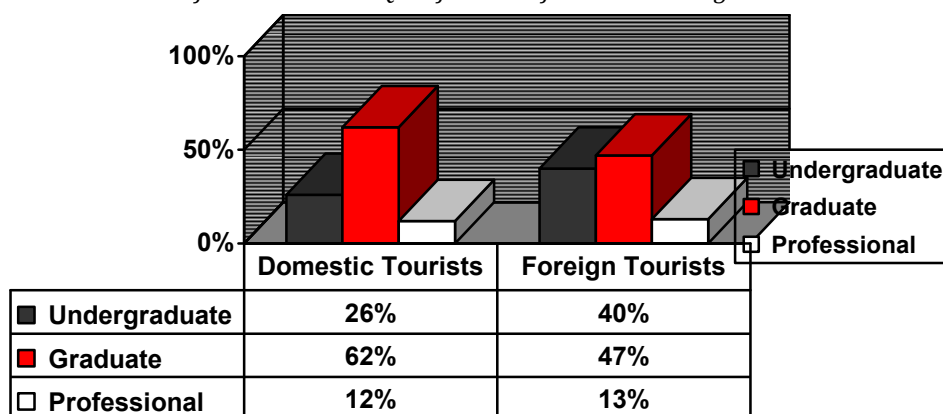
While for both the class of tourists i.e. domestic as well as the international a mere 2% fall in the senior age group who would like to unwind here.

Exhibit 4: Profile-Gender of tourists visiting Goa



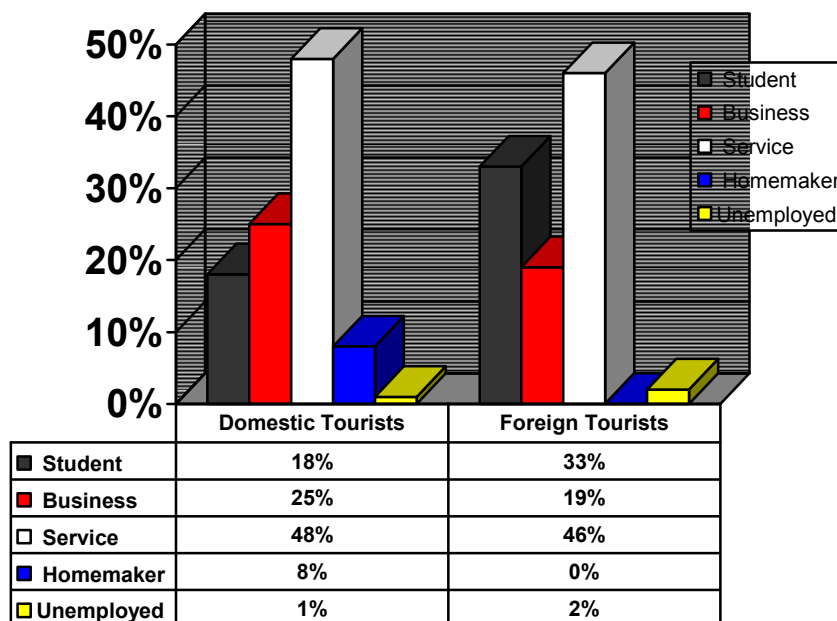
As far as the gender of the guests visiting the state is concerned, men seem to frequent it on a higher scale. In fact, among the tourists, the domestic tourists male come in hordes to the state especially during the weekends. As far as the ladies are concerned as compared to their male counterparts they fall relatively short in traveling and holidaying in the state. Can this be attributed to their safety and security concern? Is a factor that's needs further probing.

Exhibit 5: Profile-Educational Qualification of tourists visiting Goa



A look at exhibit 5 indicates that 62% of the domestic tourists have completed graduation while 26% are undergraduates as against 47% and 40 % of their foreign counterpart. Both the class of tourists belonging to professional bracket is relatively close standing at 12% and 13% respectively. Stress should be laid on this bracket to draw them in the state by stressing on 'MICE'-meetings, incentives, conference, exhibitions and the like. The Goa Fest 2010, for the Indian advertising community, held from April 8- April10 drives home the point.

Exhibit 6: Profile-Occupation/Profession of tourists visiting Goa



This graph gives a lucid picture of type of tourist visiting Goa. There is a general notion that the backpackers swarm the state, but guests belonging to the service sector top the list. While 25% of the domestic tourists belong to the business class, which needs to be expanded further as disposable income is higher in this bracket. Interestingly, besides the student class, unemployed too visit this destination, 1% -domestic and 2% of the foreign tourist. If sustainability has to become a reality then the focus should be on business and service class.

Exhibit 7: Forms of tourism

Forms of tourism			
Tourist type	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Test Statistic *Significant at 5% level.
Individual explorer	60	102	22.54 (<i>p</i> -value 0.0020)
Package	72	66	
Business	24	24	
Leisure	60	48	
Study	36	18	
Health	12	18	
Sports	12	06	
Others	24	18	

A look at exhibit 7, reveals individual explorers head the list, followed by package tourist followed by consumption of leisure and recreational tourism (*p*-value 0.0020). The least response is in sports tourism, which implies there is greater scope to expand in this form of tourism by organizing hallmark events in the sports arena. Plans to introduce educational hub in Goa is also in the pipeline, while health tourism is what international tourist are looking out for whether its dental services, surgery, yoga or ayurveda a huge market awaits to be tapped.

Exhibit 8- Marketing of Goa

Marketing of Goa.			
Media	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Test Statistic *Significant at 5% level.
Promotion by Govt	72	42	57.476 (p -value 0.0000)
Travel Literature	12	42	
Feedback of other travellers	84	36	
Travel org.	72	72	
Internet	60	108	

Marketing is invariably a powerful tool to garner guests in the state, (p -value 0.0000). What better way than by the word of the mouth by a fellow traveler, this was a means adopted by the earliest guests namely hippy and seems to be in vogue even as on today. Besides travel organizations, role of the Government by participating at various international mart, festival of India etc has evoked positive response, but nothing can compete with internet supremacy to influence holidaying decisions. In fact GTDC, Goa Tourism Development Corporation intends to utilize social networking sites like Twitter and Face book, for its image building. TOI -2010

Exhibit 9: Length of stay

Length of stay			
Stay	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Test Statistic *Significant at 5% level.
1 day-less than a week	46	54	55.687 (p -value 0.0000)
week-less than a month	172	120	
Month-3 months	72	60	
3 months- 6months	10	36	
more than 6 months	0	30	

Domestic as well as the foreign tourist normally prefer to holiday between a week to a month (p -value 0.0000). Foreign tourists have an extended stay which comprises beyond six months. As is evident international tourists spend a longer time in the state to enjoy the warm, pleasant climate as against the freezing cold back home. Some have settled down for good and even opened shop offering competition to the locals. But, with the introduction of the inhospitable Visa formalities, the scenario is changing impacting the arrival figures and the same concern is voiced by foreign tourists visiting the state, Bradbury Michelle (2010); Fernandes Joaquim (2010).

Exhibit 10: New avenues for tourism industry in Goa

New avenues for tourism industry in Goa			
Goa needs to move into new form of tourism	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Test Statistic *Significant at 5% level.
Competition from other states	174	159	9.8685 (p -value 0.0197*)
Beach tourism has reached saturation point (Has Goa's beaches lost charm)	39	66	
Create sustainable industry	75	69	
Other aspects	12	06	

The reason why Goa should move into new avenues is the tough competition faced from other states ($p = 0.05 = 0.0197^*$). Competition from other states like Kerala, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa in terms of nature's bounties, pricing, and a positive response from the residents, is a challenging issue. Surprisingly beach centric tourism has not lost its appeal though 22% of the international tourists as compared to 13% of their Indian counterpart opine that beach centric tourism has reached a saturation stage in the state, this could be possibly attributed to the overcrowding on the once pristine shoreline, and the swarming of the domestic tourist on its shores. And, yet they have not had enough of the sun, sand and surf. Both the class of tourist agrees there is a need to inject sustainability into the industry which is indeed a testing undertaking.

Exhibit 11: VILLAGE PANCHAYATS IN GOA AND TOURISTS ARRIVALS

	Taluka	Tourists Arrival (2006)		Village Panchayats	#
		Domestic	Foreign		
<u>SOUTH GOA</u>					
1	Salcete	6,06,263	1,21,676	[Aquem-Belco, Benaulim, Chinchinim, Cola, Curtorim, Davorim, Dramapur, Loululim, Macasima, Navim, Navim-Nachol, Paia, Dramapur-Solim, Sertora, St. Jose-de-Areal, Talaulim, Velim.]	18
2	Mormugao	2,32,800	53,475	[Cansaulim, Chicolim, Cortalim, Majorca, Sencosale, Veloso-Pala, Verma.]	7
3	Canacona	15,295	10,708	[Agorda, Cola, Coligao, Gaandongram, Lolem, Poingunim, Stralhat.]	7
4	Sanguem	7,904	886	[Bolim, Colim, Curti, Darbandora, Calem, Kirpal-dabal, Mollen, Netorim, Rivora, Sencodem, Sanvordem, Ugaem.]	12
5	Quepem	-	-	[Anboulim, Assolda, Bati, Beroim, Cauzem-Pira, Awadem, Molcomem, Mopira, Naguerim-Betui, Xeldem.]	10
		8,12,441	1,86,125		54
<u>NORTH GOA</u>					
1	Tiswadi	5,84,744	90,071	[Azoalim, Bolim, Carimbolim, Chembat, Chodan-Madal, Khorim, Cumbajua, Curca-Bambolim, Gollim-Navelim, Mercedes, Neura, Sao-Lourenco, Sao-Mateos, Se-Old-Goa, Sencosale-Pala, St. Andre, St. Cruz, Taleigao.]	18
2	Bardez	5,68,679	1,27,228	[Aldona, Anjuna, Aspora, Azoagao, Assonora, Bastora, Colangute, Camerim, Colvale, Moita, Nachicola, Nerul, Pans, Penha-de-Franca, Pilema, Pombusa, Reis Magos, Revera, Saligao, Salvador-do-Mundo, saagolda, Solim-Mama, Solim-Sodim, Socoro, Thivim, Uccasaim Veris-Casca.]	27
3	Ponda	90,532	946	[Bardona, Brikui-Khandola, Adcolna, Borim, Cundal, Curti-Khandepar, Durbhat, Mascam, Panchavodi, Quatula, Karim, Savel-Verem, Shiroda, Talaulim, Tirim-Corgao, Usgaon-Garjem, Velim-Pril, Verem-Vagurim, Vohoi, Wadi - Talaulim.]	20
4	Pernem	10,368	5,802	[Agarwade-Chopdem, Aloma, Anambol, Casarem-Amberim-Porocodem, Chandol, Gorgao, Dhargal, Ibrampur, Mandrem, Mojim, Ozorim, Palim, Paroim, Koli-Terecol, Tambosim-Mopa-Ugaem, Timem, Tuem, Varkhad, Vinoda.]	19
5	Bicholim	15,670	174	[Advalpal, Cudnem, Kanapur Sarvan, Lalambarim, Moxinguem, Mayem, Mascarem, Muigao, Pale-Colombi, Piligao, Solim.]	11
6	Sattari	-	-	[Bromdam, Kistodem, Donguri-Thana, Gulati, Honda, Karim, Mauzi, Nolim, Nagargo, Puzolem, Porim.]	11
		12,66,212	2,24,219		106
	TOTAL (2006)	20,78,653	3,00,344		160
	(2007)	22,08,886	3,68,457		
	Jan-March (2008)	4,18,026	1,77,668		

Source: Tourism Statistics 2006 & 2007. Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, 2008, Directorate of Panchayats

In order to familiarize with Goa's tourism industry, it is also important to know that Goa is segmented into 2 districts –North and South and further divided into 11 Talukas, 5 in south and 6 in north Goa. The most popular Talukas among domestic as well as international tourists is Salcete, Mormugoa in south, and Tiswadi, Bardez in north Goa, nearly (18+27+16+27=88 Villages) have offered beach centric tourism and face the danger of stagnation in the near future. Interestingly, Sattari and Quepem have no visitors at all, (10 + 11=21 Villages) are waiting to be explored. Cancona, Ponda, Pernem have lukewarm response and is progressing from the exploration stage. Sanguem, Bicholim, Quepem are into mining and the possibility of introducing tourism has to be explored for example Mayem which is a manmade lake at Bicholim is extremely popular among the guests. Thus by identifying status of each talukha, appropriate planning and restructuring of the tourism industry can be established.

CONCLUSION

As of now the whispering waves breaking on Goa's shores still fascinates tourists around the globe, but it is just a matter of time for the state of Goa, propagating beach centric tourism to reach the saturation stage. Literature review brings to light the fears expressed in this regard and the options open to face such eventuality. British arrivals have definitely declined, in fact the traditional foreign tourists are moving out of the state, and are being replaced by new wave of tourists namely Russians and other east Europeans and domestic tourist, **thus offsetting the decline and putting off the stagnation stage**. To retain these new guests and inject sustainability to the industry, it's about time **proactive measures** are adopted by the Government by consolidating the resources; in this regard it is imperative to market the state beyond its beaches. This maybe possible, by introducing new forms of tourism, one such option being '**village tourism**'. Each Taluka has a number of villages. Such villages in the state can be distinctly documented w.r.t. its history, culture, feasts, flora and fauna and the same can be packaged and **promoted** to the existing and new markets. These new destinations can be located at various stages on the life cycle destinations, so that these novel destinations can avoid the pitfalls and the mistakes committed by beach centric tourism villages namely hurried, haphazard and chaotic growth of the industry. For this the **participation** of the people, private and public bodies is essential, this coordinated gesture will aid to chart out the intricacies involving the infrastructure development, and restructuring of this significant industry of the state. The returns would be injecting a new lease of life to this 'land of good times', by proper planning and implementations, thus avoiding the mistakes of the past. A long term **vision** in this regard is the need of the hour, and though Destination life cycle model may not be an infallible tool, it sure can prove an effective one.

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