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PAPUA NEW GUINEA -A GATEWAY TO THE WORLD TOURISM**Ashok Jayaraman,**

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the important monetary sources to a country's economy. It brings more revenue and it creates more employment opportunities for the nation which leads to a better standard of living. This paper will give a brief description of the Papua New Guinea tourism resources and the challenges. The country has major tourism bound resources which could be optimized and exploited. Though, there are challenges in the country, the government can overcome threats and establish the tourism industry as a gateway to the development of Papua New Guinea economy.

Keywords: PNG Tourism Resource, Culture, Challenges.

1. Introduction

Tourism is the movement of people from one destination to another also exploring the places. Tourism is one of the main economic generators of a country. The countries in Southwestern Pacific Ocean such as Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, etc. but in this study, the Papua New Guinea was focused (PNG) especially on its tourism products. PNG is situated in the south of the equator and 160 Kilometers from the north of mainland Australia. This country occupies the eastern part and 2nd largest island, New Guinea shares border with Indonesia. The country is with 8.94 million population and the capital is Port Moresby. The country is considered as one of the most mixed countries in the world. There are more than 800 languages by more than thousand communities divided by mountainous, terrain and sea (Katherine Januszewska, 2006). The history of PNG backs to 50,000-60,000 years ago from Southeast Asia. PNG used to be known as New Guinea previously. New Guinea was named by the Germans when they had been trading back in 1884.

The country is geographically scattered with 22 provinces and each has varieties of tourism resources. In this article, the author has found that the country has all the natural resources as such gold mining, fishing, palm oils, petroleum and tourism. Among these resources, tourism resource is considered as a major resource which contributes to the country's growth especially in the service sector.

2. Objective of the Study

The objective of the research is given below: -

1. To understand the concept of Tourism.
2. To promote the PNG tourism products in the market.
3. Identify the challenges in PNG Tourism.

2.1 Definition of Tourism Terms: -

Tourism is defined as the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places out-side their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited. The use of this broad concept makes it possible to identify tourism between countries as well as tourism within a country. 'Tourism' refers to all activities of visitors, including both 'tourists (overnight visitors)' and 'same-day visitors'. (www.world-tourism.org)

Tourism destination A tourism destination is a physical space with or without administrative and /or analytical boundaries in which a visitor can spend an overnight. It is the cluster (co-location) of products and services, and of activities and experiences along the tourism value chain and a basic unit of analysis of tourism. A destination incorporates various stakeholders and can network to form larger destinations. It is also intangible with its image and identity which may influence its market competitiveness (<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284420858>)

Tourism product A tourism product is a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific center of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers. A tourism product is priced and sold through distribution channels and it has a life-cycle. (<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284420858>)

Cultural tourism Cultural tourism is a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination.

These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions. (<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284420858>)

3. Literature Review

Responsible Tourism is about "making better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit. "Responsible Tourism requires the operators, hoteliers, governments, local people and tourists take responsibility and take action to make tourism more sustainable. Globalization provides an organizing concept through which we can explore the extent and impacts of global change in terms of economies, culture and politics (Allen and Massey, 1995).

The link between tourism, environmental and social components of sustainable development has received increasing attention. Industry stakeholders assert that; besides its economic contribution, tourism can lead to ecologically and socially sustainable development (WTTC and IHRA, 1999; Bhanugopan Ramudu, 2001). It is suggested that tourism can act as a catalyst for conservation and environmental protection because of the following factors: 1) it is generally non-consumptive and has less impact on natural resources than most other industries; 2) it is based on the appreciation of natural and cultural assets and has greater motivation to protect its resource base; and 3) it can provide valuable revenue and economic incentive to conserve resources which would otherwise be used in more damaging activities (WTTC & IHRA, 1999). Socially, tourism is credited for its potential impact on employment; income redistribution and poverty alleviation; contribution to native craft revival, festivals and traditions; and improvements to the physical and social infrastructure, enhancing overall health and social welfare (UN, 1999).

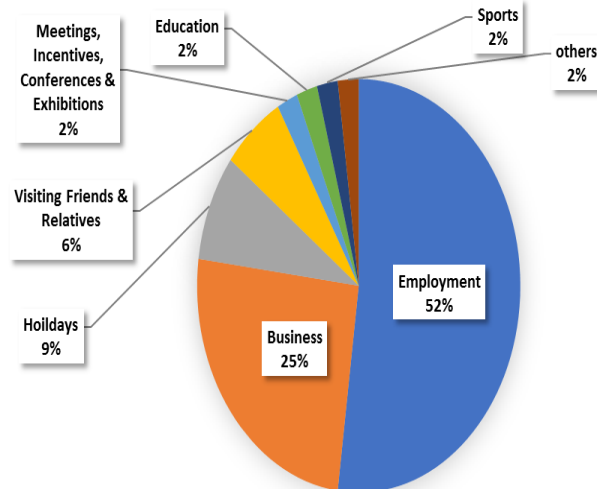
According to Mitchel, “culture is a set of learned core values, beliefs, standards knowledge, morals, laws and behaviours shared by individuals and societies that determines how an individual act, feels and views oneself and others”. Culture is both material and non-material. Material culture consists of man-made things such as telephone, television-automobiles, etc., whereas non-material culture includes intangible factors such as values, beliefs, ideals, language, knowledge, etc.

3.1 Purpose of PNG Visit

The Tourism Sector of PNG is facing challenges such as mining, loss of natural resources, safety and security, cost of travelling and other natural disasters. In the case of mining, the communities in the provinces are employed and they are not much focused on the tourism industry this may lead to change in their cultural activities especially cultural tourism. Secondly, the industry is facing law-and-order problems (Kiele et al., 2022). People have witnessed that there are crimes in PNG. If the law and order are executed properly the country can generate more foreign earnings from the tourism industry. Thirdly, the cost of travelling to the country is expensive. If the government permit other airline providers the chances are available in reducing the airfare and more international tourist will visit PNG. Moreover, the other challenges the country faces in the tourism industry are natural disasters like volcanoes, earthquake etc.

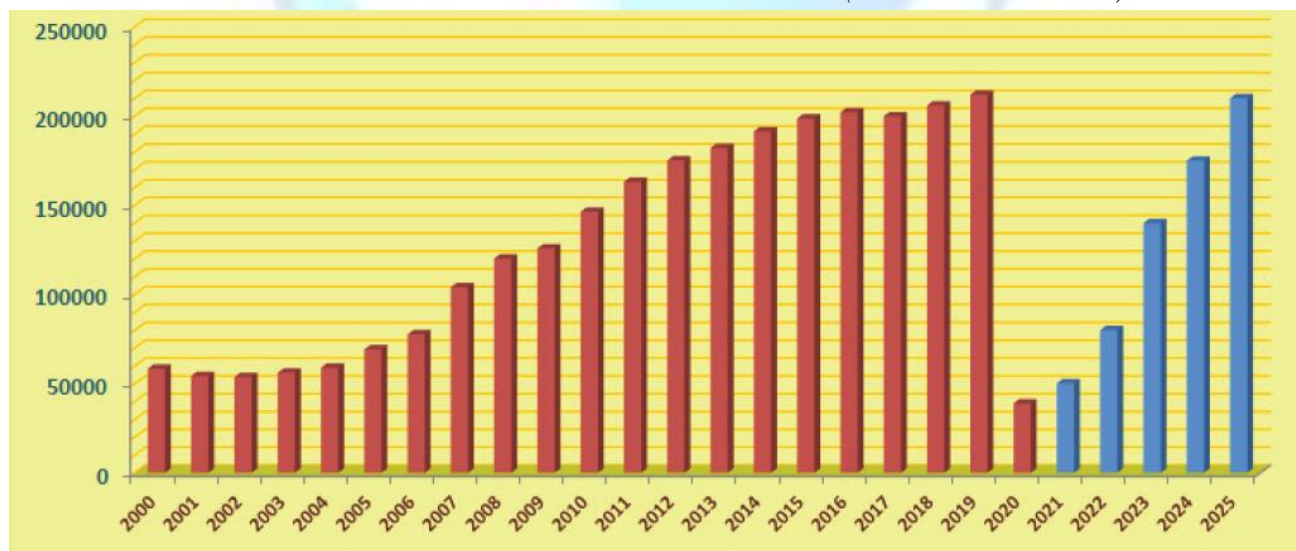
Tourism Education plays a vital role in developing the tourism sector. But few higher education institutes are offering tourism and hospitality courses in PNG. If higher education department gives more priority to tourism studies it would be a gateway to the nation and the country can market their tourism destinations by educating the citizen of the nation. However, the government should necessarily step in marketing PNG tourism.

The 4 A's of tourism is attraction, accommodation, amenities and accessibilities. This paper gives a brief introduction about the PNG tourism as an emerging tourism destination. The recent studies and the master plan of PNG shows that there is a gradual development in the foreign tourist arrivals to the country up to the end of 2019 (Show, 2021). PNG tourism should be proactive and collaborative with other service providers in PNG.

Chart 01: Purpose of Visit

Sources: Sumb 2021.

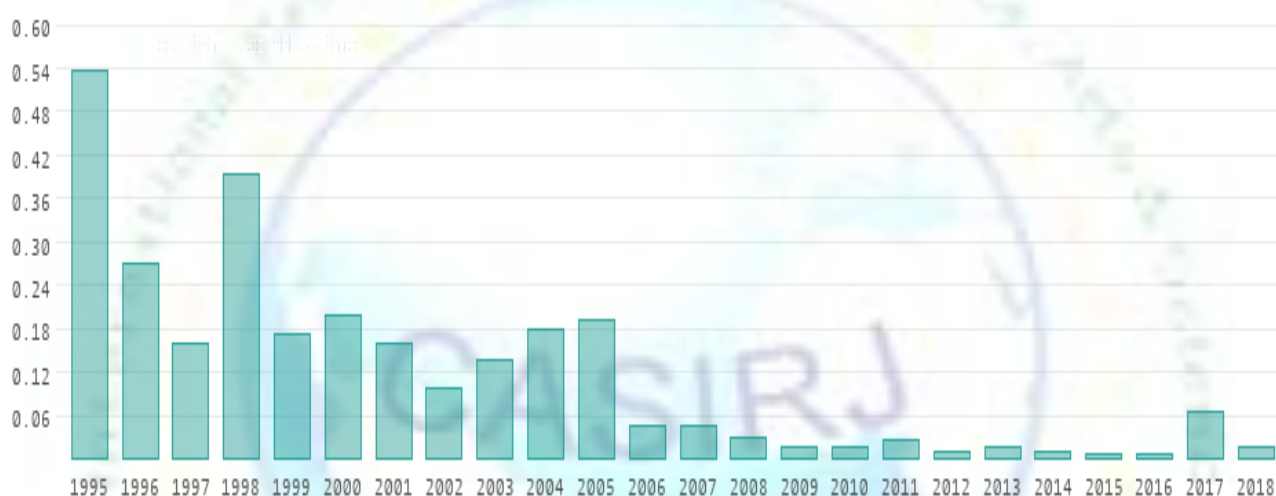
From the above chart 01 we can identify the purpose of visiting PNG in 2020 by the tourists, it is identified that 52% of people have visited PNG for the employment purpose, 25% have visited for the business oriented purpose, 9% of tourists spent their vacation, 6% of tourists visited PNG for attending the family and friends functions and 2% of tourists have visited Papua New Guinea for education, sports, MICE and other oriented purposes as shown in the above. The number of tourists visited the PNG was around 2,11,000 tourists in 2019. It was ranked 177th in the world tourism list.

Chart 02: Annual Visitor Arrival trends 2000-2020 (2021-2025 Forecast)

Source: Chapman, et al., 2021.

The COVID-19 had hit the entire world by the end of 2019, it had created a huge impact on the tourism sectors. The pandemic outbreak had caused the huge crisis in tourism and hospitality sectors like airlines, cruises, hotels etc. It was also reflected here and reduced the PNG's domestic and international tourists movement which has dropped the arrival of foreign tourists to PNG. Especially the tourists from Australia was dropped by 92%, America (86%), Japan (80%), Germany (90%), United Kingdom (89%), France (85%), New Zealand (86%), Malaysia (83%), Singapore (92%) and Philippines (81%). It has destructed the growth of PNG tourism sector. In the year 1995, the total revenue from the tourism sector is about 25 million USD which contributed by 54 % to the Gross National Product (GNP) (Asri, 2021). The below chart shows that PNG revenue from the tourism sector (1995-2018). The growth of PNG revenue has reduced tremendously especially after covid-19 as shown in the below chart.

Chart 03: PNG Revenues in Tourism



Source: World Databank.

"The temporary movement of people to other destinations outside their usual places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs." (Tutorials Point) Tourism is the second largest revenue generator in the economy. According to the United Nation World Tourism Organizational (UNWTO), the tourism industry covers the travel services which related to recreational, leisure, or business purposes. During the past decades, the tourism sector has experienced continuous growth and diversification and becoming one of the most dynamic sectors of the global economy (Lidia Andrades Caldito, Frédéric Dimanche, Olga Vapnyarskaya and Tatiana Kharitonova). Tourism sector comprises the activities of persons travelling and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes" (Charles R.Goeldner, 2009; Goeldner & Ritchie 2007).

3.2 Postmodernism

Harvey refers to postmodernism cultural form (1985) very broadly refers to the emergence of new cultural styles and to the idea that is now live in a new social epoch that superseded modernity: postmodernism is a widely used and debated idea, though it is not our intention to

provide a lengthy rendition on what postmodernism is and is not, or to provide an in-depth guide to protagonists, arguments.

An important feature of the new middle classes has been their identification as agents of the cultural change inherent in postmodernity, and they have been referred as ‘new cultural intermediaries’ (Bourdieu, 1984).

Table 01: Shifts in Contemporary Tourism

Old	New
Fordist	Post-Fordist
Mass	Individuals
Package	Unpackage/flexible
S's (Sun, Sea, Sand and Sex)	T's (Travelling, Trekking and Trucking)
Unreal	Real
Irresponsible (social, cultural and environmentally)	Responsible
Modern	Post-modernism

3.3 Responsible Tourism in Papua New Guinea

“Responsible tourism is: -

- To minimize the negative social, economic and environmental impacts.
- Tourism generates the best economic benefits for the local community. They are self-employed in making the handicrafts, cultural activities which attracts the tourist.
- To make positive contributions to the conservation of nature and cultural heritage embracing diversity.
- Papua New Guinea is culturally sensitive, encourages the respect between tourists and hosts, which builds local pride and confidence.
- Engagement of public in promoting the tourism and serving the tourists.
- Tourist should be responsible and should care the environment.

Table 02 Tourism in Metamorphosis

Old Tourists	New Tourists
Search for the sun	Experience something new
Follow the masses	Want to be in charge
Here today, gone tomorrow	See and enjoy but not destroy
Show that you have been	Just for the fun of it
Having	Being
Superiority	Understanding
Like attractions	Like sport and nature
Reactions	Adventurous

Source: Poon (1993:10).

In an approach that lacks explanatory powers in assuming an over-simplistic binary division and critique of the impacts (both positive and negative) of tourism, Poon suggests that mass tourism will fade into relative unimportance though not disappear altogether. Drawing upon an analogy of typewriters and computers she concludes. What Poon describes as new tourism is referred to as 'post-Fordist consumption' by Lash and Urry (1994:274). Although Poon's analysis is less conceptually elaborate, both approaches strike and the same chord.

3.4 Places to Visit in Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is divided into four geographical locations. They are: -

1. Highlands Region: Simbu, Eastern Highlands, Enga, Hela, Jiwaka, Southern Highlands and Western Highlands.
2. Niugini Islands Region: East New Britain, Manus, New Ireland, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (North Solomons) and West New Britain.
3. Momase Region: East Sepik, Madang, Morobe and West Sepik (Sandaun).
4. Southern Region: Central, Gulf, Milne Bay, Northern Province (Oro), Western (Fly) and the National Capital District (NCDC).

3.4.1 Cultural Attractions

The UNWTO has defined sustainable tourism as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"

The Heart of Papua New Guinea is Goroka, it's a mixture of cultures. Every year in September the painted warriors will celebrate the Independence Day of PNG. The mud mask event also is organized. The mud mask is identical of Asaro Mud Man. In Goroka, the cave paintings at Lufa can be seen. (Tourism Promotion Authority).

Enga Cultural Show is one of the recognizable and authentic events. It will be conducted every year in August. The singing show at Enga is a spectacle to behold which will be conducted for three days. The most famous ceremonial dances are the Mali and Shangai. The community will perform Mali and it is called social dance. Shangai is performed after the traditional manhood initiation.

Papua New Guinea is one of the multicultural nations which has 866 languages and 1200 cultures and each culture has different celebrations like Sing-Sing is one of the cultural shows where the community will sing and dance spontaneously. This will happen during marriage, feast, and peace. The Huli is one of the traditions on this occasion the locals from Hela province will wear cultural dresses. In Sepik region, the easter of Papua New Guinea is one of the most culturally diverse with over 250 tribal groups living in the vicinity of the Sepik River.

Papua New Guinea is surrounded by tourism products. The country can serve the tourist in attractive destinations such as Natural Park, Adventure Parks in Port Moresby. The mountainous

region namely Sogeri which is 500 meters above sea level. The place can entertain the trekkers. Sogeri has a Varirata National Park.

Papua New Guinea is most famous and known for adventurous tourism. The most popular attractions in POM are Kokoda Track. It is one of the spectacular and challenging treks. The other adventurous is scuba diving. Hailiku Village is famous for cliff jump in the jungle cave called “Mali Cave” Climbing Mount Wilhelm (4509 meters) is one of the highest mountains and it is located in Simbu province.

Papua New Guinea is one of the identical destinations for diving and other adventurous. Some of the most famous locations are Walindi in West New Britain, Loloata in the capital city of PNG, Nusa Island in Kavien and more.

Diving is a marine product in Papua New Guinea which is experienced by the diving experts and one of the greater destinations for diving anywhere else on the earth. Papua New Guinea harbours extensive marine life, barrier reefs, coral walls, coral gardens, patch reefs, sea grass beds and wrecks which attract an increasing number of international tourists especially the divers. Diving Locations like Walindi in West New Britain, Tufi in Norther Province, Loloata is close to the Port Moresby, New Ireland Province and more.

Bird Watching is another Papua New Guinea tourism product and more than 903 species of birds are present in the country.

Table 03: Other Places to Visit in PNG

Name of the Place	Tourism Product
Port Moresby	Nature Park, Parliament House, National Museum, Bomana War Cemetery, Adventure Park,
Southern Highlands	Wasi Falls, Mount Lalibu, Lake Kutubu
Hela Province	Huli Wigman, Tagari River
Jiwaka Province	Waghi River, The Bisil Kana River,
East New Britain	Kokopo Market, Baining Fire Dance
Morobe Province	Finschhafen, Salamaua and Siassi Islands.
Milne Bay	Mud Pools, Kenu and Kundu Festival

(T. P. Authority)

3.5 Threats for Papua New Guinea Tourism

3.5.1 Lack of Tourism Awareness

The Papua New Guinea community should know about the tourism and its importance. In most cases, the locals do not know much about the service sector especially the tourism. The government should introduce tourism courses from primary to tertiary education. Although most of the higher education institutes deliver tourism programs but they should be marketed to the people more intensively. Due to the lack of awareness on tourism and its benefits to the country, the PNG is losing its demands in world tourism market.

3.5.2 Safety and Security

Safety and Security of the people and tourist is one of the major challenges in Papua New Guinea, there are various safety and security issues the country is facing and the government should take action against ethnic clashes, robberies, murders, bag snatching, and in recent days' human trafficking is the highest crime and also the hold-ups. Due to these crimes the locals and the tourist are facing the safety and security problems. Thus, the international tourists are not showing much interest to visit the country.

3.5.3 Negative Publicity

The media are publicizing negatively about PNG for instance in the newspapers and social media the publishers are exhibiting tribal wars, ethnic clashes, robberies etc. In case of ethnic clashes, it is unpredictable that the fight arises between two communities and it will lead to killing people. In such cases, the tourist may feel negative to visit PNG. Hence, spreading the negative image will degrade the tourism sector of PNG.

3.5.4 High cost of goods and services

Papua New Guinea is abundant in natural resources. It is surrounded by forest and green lands. Though the country has resourced the cost of goods and services are expensive. Port Moresby is the capital of Papua New Guinea and it is one of the costliest places.

3.5.5 Unemployment

Unemployment is another factor that increases crime. The government should provide and generate more employment opportunities. Though, the government is encouraging the SMEs, they should give more preference to the entrepreneurs and that will open avenues for more job opportunities. If the rate of unemployment is reduced there are obvious chances of minimizing the crimes in the country.

3.5.6 Underdeveloped Infrastructure

The Country has vast land and tourism products but in most of the destinations the infrastructures are not reachable. No proper roads and bridges to connect people and the destinations. Basic water and sanitation are the biggest challenges in Papua New Guinea, though the country has natural resources it's not properly optimized. The government should take necessary actions to improve the sanitation facilities. Telecommunication is another challenge to the government, there are service providers in the market but the connectivity is underdeveloped. For instance, reaching a person in another province is not easy due to poor connectivity in telecommunication in the country. It should be strengthened. Moreover, most of the places in the provinces are without electricity and the people are living in dark. This also, leads to more crimes and unhealthy circumstance in the nation.

3.5.7 Lack of Healthcare Services

The country is struggling for a better healthcare sector. In most cases, the hospitals lack medicines and other medical equipment. There are private hospitals and public hospitals in the

case of private hospitals it's expensive and the public is facing huge resilient resilience the expenses are much and it is not affordable. On the other hand, public hospitals are not equipped with full medical facilities. There are a large number of patients with tuberculosis due to weak immune systems and malnutrition. The government should take action in controlling the diseases like tuberculosis etc.

3.5.8 Kidnapping

The recent sources say that the kidnapping of children and ladies are the high risks and threats to the country as well to the tourist who visits Papua New Guinea. Kidnapping and Murders are frequently happening in the country. At the same time the government handcuff the criminals to minimize the human trafficking and other smuggling activities.

3.5.9 International Transport Facilities

The government should allow other international airlines to operate their services to the country. The few airlines are playing and dominating the airline industry in PNG. High airfare causes the reduction of the tourist arrivals to the country because of high fares. If the government allows other operators the opportunities will be more to get the international tourists.

3.5.10 Environmental Threats

The major threat of PNG Tourism is environmental factors. The country is facing volcano eruptions, earthquakes, deforestation and more which may lead to demolishing the countries resources. The community should care about the environment in safeguarding the beaches and other attractive places. Water Pollution is a major threat for Papua New Guinea. The contaminated wash waters, industrial wastes and other toxic residues are disposed in the natural freshwaters. This will lead to water pollution and the water scarcity will arise in future. Thus, the government should take measures to stop such practices in the country (Nicholls, 2004).

4. Conclusion

From the above statements, this paper has highlighted the tourism products and the challenges in Papua New Guinea. The Tourism Master Plan, clearly states that the county is investing in human resource, infrastructure and other important sources in the tourism and hospitality sector. This may strategies and streamline the country in developing its tourism products to the world. At the same time, the government should take necessary actions to settle the challenging activities which are threats to the country. Overall, we can conclude that Papua New Guinea is a gateway to world tourism but marketing and promoting the destination is important and the media should forward the tourism products of PNG to the international tourism market.

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