

# Significance of Responsible Tourism with Reference to Thenmala Ecotourism Project, Kollam

Angel Roy, Aparna M., S. Girish



**Abstract :** *Responsible Ecotourism is a travel in to deep nature which conserves the environment, strengthens the well-being of the local people and also involves interpretation and education. Ecotourism gives prominence to sustainable development of the environment and environmentally responsible behaviour is an environmental conservation mechanism. Environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists helps in reducing and avoiding damages to the ecological environment. Ecotourism occupies a significant position in overall tourism development. Apart from sustainable ecotourism this also includes alternative ecotourism, green tourism, leisure tourism, soft tourism, Geo tourism etc. Development in Ecotourism increases income of local people and employment status.*

**Keywords:** *Apart from sustainable ecotourism this also includes alternative ecotourism, green tourism, leisure tourism, soft tourism, Geo tourism etc.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has gain importance in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and it is one of the largest industries in the world today. Development of tourism sector have gained advancement in the field of technology and changing lifestyle of people. In most of the countries tourism is regarded as means of economic development. In response to the future of tourism there is increase in development of infrastructure and transportation. In olden days, people travelled only for the religious, business and commercial purpose. Later the development in the transportation promoted support for nature based tourist.

Ecotourism was emerged after the period of 1980's. It has been understood by the world due to the development of sustainable practices which improved ecological environment. Ecotourism is the responsible travel to natural areas which protect environment and look forward to the well being of local people. So ecotourism along with responsible tourism creates greater impact in the society and environment.

Thenmala in Kollam district in Kerala is the first planned ecotourism destination in India. It not only take care the integrity of ecosystem but also produces economic opportunities. Its main attraction is Dam, Artificial lakes, Wildlife sanctuaries etc. Thenmala attracts foreign and domestic tourist. Thenmala ecotourism project shows a greater impact into Responsible tourism.

## I. ABOUT THENMALA

Thenmala ecotourism is the first ecotourism project that came into existence in Kerala. Thenmala Dam is the most popular factor in Thenmala ecotourism project. Here there are various attractions in which Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary is the main one. This is one of the larger irrigation project among India, located in the district Kollam. A Palaruvi waterfall is another major attractions. There also includes Deer Rehabilitation Centre where tourists can watch their way of living and can also have a glimpse at the traditional tree house used by dwellers to escape from the pounce of wild animals.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Resmi G. (2018)** in his paper "An evaluation of ecotourism projects in Kerala: A study with special reference to Idukki district" tries to examine the importance of ecotourism in Idukki district. The study result shows that ecotourism resides a notable position in the overall tourism development in Kerala. It was found that development in ecotourism increased the income of local people and employment status. Ecotourism has the capacity to deliver a lot of economic benefit but depending on how well it is managed.

**Manoj P.K. (2017)** in his journal "Impact of Ecotourism: Evidence from Thenmala Ecotourism destination Kollam district, Kerala" explains extremely large potential of tourism regarding economic development and employment generation. In spite of excellent tourism resources in India, the country could not utilize its vast potential because of due attention. Study suggests strategies for sustained development of ecotourism.

**Shibi Chandradas (2014)** in his article "Ecotourism in Kerala: A study on opportunities and threats" describes ecotourism as one of the fastest growing tourism sectors in Kerala contributing 30% of the total revenue. This study reveals low penetration of female in the destination. Lack of infrastructure causes decline in visitors in same area. He concludes that tourism department must establish eco-park as to protect greenery of the state and increase status in the world tourism map.

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**Jithendran Kokkranikal and Angelique Chettiparamb (2012)** has done a study on the topic “Responsible Tourism and Sustainability: The case of Kumarakam, Kerala, India” discuss the notion of responsible tourism and its current use within the tourism literature. They also discuss the boundaries of certain tourism like Alternative Tourism, Ecotourism, Green tourism, Soft tourism, Geo tourism etc. They also discuss the interest of corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda in tourism. They suggest writings around responsible tourism and available declaration and guideline for implementation of strategies. Necessary importance must be given.

**Cyric Mathew (2002)** in his journal “Tourism development and its impact on the economic development of Kerala” explains tremendous potential of tourism in Kerala. Researcher found that educated sector are coming to the field of tourism because of its nature of profit .The mentioned state can develop as many tourist destination as possible. In his study he found that infrastructure facilities are the least developed facility in Kerala. He suggests existing legislation are to be rationalized as these laws should be synchronized with growth of tourism in the state.

**Joseph Antony (1997)** in his paper “The role of Kerala Tourism Development Corporation had in the promotion of tourism” explained tourism as an industry and role of KTDC and its working. He found that there is a high capability for tourism as an industry in Kerala. He mentioned the special relevance of ancient scientific system of medicine like Ayurveda, Yoga, and Naturopathy etc. In his study he found out that KTDC lacks professionalism at different levels of development strategy in KTDC.

### III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study depends upon the responsible tourism and mainly focuses on the response of the tourists and employees to know whether responsible tourism is effective or in any means they are useful for the nature and for their existence. Also to know about the problems that has been faced by the

### VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1 Correlations**

		encourage responsible tourism behavior	destination development take care of environment and minimum damage to ecosystem
encourage responsible tourism behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.143
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.323
	N	50	50
destination development take care of environment and minimum damage to ecosystem	Pearson Correlation	.143	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.323	
	N	50	50

Interpretation: The value of Pearson correlation is .143 which is significant at 0.01. It can be obtained that, there is a large positive relationship between responsible tourism behaviour and destination development and ecosystem management.

ecotourism projects and to study the aspects of responsible ecotourism within the local residents.

### IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the role of responsible ecotourism practiced in Thenmala Ecotourism project.
- To study the problems related to ecotourism.
- To study the participation of local residents in ecotourism.

### V. METHODOLOGY

#### 1. Primary Data

The study is mainly based on primary data. It is the information collected by the investigator directly. In this study the primary data has been collected via questions and personal interviews.

#### 2. Secondary Data

For this study, secondary data has also been used from various published sources like websites, books , reports , journal etc.

### VI. HYPOTHESIS

H0 : There is no significance difference in impact of responsible tourism and ecotourism

H1 : There is significance difference in impact of responsible tourism and ecotourism

### VII. LIMITATIONS

1. Due to season constraints study is focused only on 50 respondents.
2. The respondent might have biased view in answering the questions.
3. There was improper response from the part of employees

**Table 2 Correlations**

		encourage responsible tourism behavior	tourism create more employment opportunities for the local resident
encourage responsible tourism behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.021
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.883
	N	50	50
tourism create more employment opportunities for the local resident	Pearson Correlation	.021	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.883	
	N	50	50

Interpretation: The value of Pearson correlation is .021 behaviour and employment opportunities for the local which is significant at 0.01. It can be obtained that there is a residents. large positive relationship between responsible tourism

**Table 3 Correlations**

		encourage responsible tourism behavior	community undertake any resources protection activities like pollution control, afforestation in the destination
encourage responsible tourism behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.844
	N	50	50
community undertake any resources protection activities like pollution control, afforestation in the destination	Pearson Correlation	.029	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.844	
	N	50	50

Interpretation: The value of Pearson correlation is .029 which is significant at 0.01. It can be obtained that, there is a large positive relationship between responsible tourism behaviour and resource protection activity.

**IX. FINDINGS**

- 54% of respondent have an average opinion about the condition of road.
- About 70% of respondents gave a good opinion about safety and security and 16% of respondents gave a very good opinion.
- Opinion about destination development taking care of environment and minimum damage to ecosystem is agreed by 54% and strongly agreed by 40% of respondents.
- 46% of tourists responded that cooperation of local people is seen to be very cooperative.
- Majority of tourist gave a good opinion about the comfort station.
- 66% of tourist responded that waste management is good.
- 58% of tourist agrees that ecotourism induces real estate activities in Thenmala.
- There is a positive relation between encouraging responsible tourism behaviour and destination development taking care of ecosystem.

- There is a positive relation between encouraging responsible tourism behaviour and employment opportunities for local resident.
- There is a positive relation between encouraging responsible tourism behaviour and community undertaking resource protection activities.

**X. SUGGESTIONS**

- Government should efficiently involve in the development of responsible behaviour in ecotourism.
- Tourist should be encouraged about responsible tourism behaviour.
- Locally owned business should be encouraged in ecotourism project areas.
- More resource protection activities should be introduced in the ecotourism project.
- Effective waste management should be introduced in concerned area to reduce pollution.

**XI. CONCLUSION**

Responsible ecotourism means conservation of environment and well being of the local people together with educating them about responsible tourism.



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The study significantly has a positive relationship between responsible tourism and Thenmala ecotourism project. It was concluded that efficient destination development and more employment opportunities for local residents were the key elements to identify the responsible tourism in this project area.

The study found that the community efficiently undertakes resource protection activities to conserve the biodiversity.

Ecotourism Industries should introduce more resource protection activities to maintain the responsible behaviour principles and government should find more policies to promote responsible behaviour in the ecotourism. The findings of the study through a light on significance of responsible behaviour in Thenmala ecotourism project

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