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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been a major social phenomenon of societies all over the world. It is driven by the natural urge of every human being for a new experience, and the desire to be both educated and entertained. Tourism has the potential to grow at a high rate and ensure consequential development of the infrastructure of the destinations. It has the capacity to capitalize on the country's success in the service sectors and provide sustainable models of growth. The tourism product can be analyzed in terms of its attraction, accessibility accommodation and amenities. One of the well-known tourism products is ecotourism.

Generally, ecotourism deals with interaction with biotic components of the natural environment. Ecotourism focuses on socially responsible travel, personal growth, and environmental sustainability. Ecotourism typically involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. Ecotourism is intended to offer tourists an insight into the impact of human beings on the environment and to foster a greater appreciation of our natural habitats. Responsible ecotourism programs include those that minimize the negative aspects of conventional tourism on the environment and enhance the cultural integrity of local people. Therefore, in addition to evaluating environmental and cultural factors, an integral part of ecotourism is the promotion of recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation, and creation of economic opportunities for local communities. For these reasons, ecotourism often appeals to advocates of environmental and social responsibility. Many consider the term "ecotourism", like "sustainable tourism", an oxymoron. Like most forms of tourism, ecotourism generally depends on air transportation, which contributes to global climate change. Additionally, "the overall effect of sustainable tourism is negative where like ecotourism philanthropic aspirations mask hard-nosed immediate self-interest.

Eco-tourism is a growing area in the tourist-friendly state of Kerala. Eco-tourism in Kannur has taken off in a big way because Kerala has many destinations known for their natural beauty and exquisite landscape. As Kerala is one of the greenest destinations in India, the state is a perfect hub for promoting eco-tourism in a big way.

Tourism as an industry has been travelling with the wild pace and technological achievement and abroad are people from different places and cultures interacting with increasing ease. Since the globe had been shrunk into a village. Unlike our predecessors we can affordably and in a shorter time travel across the world in large numbers of comparatively safe. Tourism being one of the biggest and fastest growing industries. Globally, its benefits and the challenges keenly observed by governments affects the economic socio-cultural, environmental and educational resources and nations. The positive effects of tourism as a country's economy include the growth and development of various industries directly linked with a healthy tourism industry. Such as transportation, accommodation, wildlife, arts entertainment. This brings about the creation of new jobs and revenue generated from foreign exchange investments and payment of goods and services provided. Through improvement in the standard of living of locals in heavily visited tourist destination is usually little or non-existent. Inflation of price and basic commodities due to visiting tourists is a constant feature of these areas. On a large scale it offers a good alternative to some more destructive industries for generating income, on both on a national and private level. The tourism industry encompasses many different areas, it also creates jobs in many different areas with tourism comes hotels, restaurants, rental agencies, tour company; service stations. All those create many different levels of employment for people in a given community.

Tourism can be domestic or international and international tourism has both incoming and outgoing implication on a country's balance of payments. Today, tourism is a major source of income for many countries, and affects the economy of both the source host countries in some cases being of vital importance.

Kannur district is one of the important districts of Kerala especially for tourism because the potential of tourism in Kannur district is high. The St. Angelos fort in the Kannur cantonment, which was built in the year 1505 is a representation of Portuguese architecture and draws plenty of visitors. Kannur district derived its name from the location of its head quarters at Kannur town the old name of Kannur was Cannanore. It is believed Kannur have assumed its name from the combination of two

Malayalam words, Kannan (Lord Krishna) and Ur (Place) making if the place of Lord Krishna.

The former Kannur district was carved out of the portions of Malabar district and the Kasaragod Taluk of the Madras state, linked to Kerala as per the state Re-organisation Act. There upon 1st January 1957 it was bifurcated for administrative convenience, into three districts namely Kannur, Kozhikode, and Palakkad. Then Kannur district had six taluks namely Kasaragod, Hosdurg, Taliparamba, Kannur, Thalassery and North Wayanad. On 1.1.1979 North Wayanad was linked to Wayanad District. On formation of Kasaragod district, the taluks namely Kasaragod & Hosdurg were de-linked from Kannur district and the present Kannur district was formed with the remaining taluks namely Taliparamba, Kannur and Thalassery. The district is bound by the Western Ghats in the east ((Kodagu district of Karnataka), Kozhikode & Wayanad District in the South, Lakshadweep Sea in the west and Kasaragod District in the North. It is located between latitudes 11 degree 40 minute and 12 degree 48 minute towards north and between longitude 75 degree 10 minute and 75 degree 57 minute towards east .

Kannur the North Malabar district of Kerala is known as the land of looms and lores. For most Keralites, Kannur is famous for violence and bombs than a serene beautiful place which offers lots of potentials to the tourism of Kerala. Kannur in Kerala is always famous with media for various happenings taking place. It's a place of strategic military importance and famous for its pristine beaches.

Theyyam and handloom industry, Kannur has many tourist destinations like Mappila Bay, Payyambalam beach resort, St. Angelos fort, Thalassery fort, Gundert Bungalow, Ezhimala Naval academy, Pythalmala, Pazhassidam, Parassinikadavu snake park, Vismaya park and many others. The district is also blessed with hill stations, rivers, back waters, historical monument and religious centers. Another factor that will create more inflow of tourists to the state and district is 'Ayurveda'. The Kerala unit of the Confederation of India Industries and Health Department has entered into a partnership to set up an Ayurvedic village in Kannur. There is planning to cultivate for various herbs and medicinal plants in the village in

Kannur with the help of local herbs. Ayurveda and its treatments have gained great popularity among foreign tourists and Kerala state with Ayurveda has lot of scope in this. Soon the characteristics of Kerala as state with Ayurveda has lots of scope in this. Soon the other district of Kerala with tourist potentials can also expected a speedy development as there is a master plan for cities in the state has been planned.

Kerala has established itself as a prominent destination of world leisure tourism for its natural beauty and cultural assets. The growth of tourism in Kerala has been inducted by the buyer driver factors. The collective marketing effort through the tourism department has been limited. The scenario of medical tourism is also not much different from leisure tourism. If you wonder for a moment as to what make Kerala such an important tourists destination in the country, then perhaps you will end up with one conclusion. And that is the rich culture of the state. Be it the monuments, festivals, musical and dance forms. Cuisine they are all intrinsically related to Kerala's culture. As a tourist, you will have plenty of opportunity to enjoy these pleasures of Kerala. Infact, every minute of your trip will make you realize how deeply rooted culture is in the God's own country.

Before the arrival of the Portuguese the social set up of the Kolathunadu can be attributed to the social situations prevailed in Europe. In medieval Europe society was divided into Prayers, Fighters and Workers. The Prayers belonged to the highest class who were engaged in the ceremonial functions: they were the priestly aristocratic class. The second, the Fighters, were the ruling class. They governed the society. The last but not the least was the Workers class who were the agriculturists and who lived at the lowest level of society. In India, the caste system too enforced the same manner of societal division. Indian society was divided into four classes: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, vaishyas and Sudras. The Brahmins belonged to the class of Prayers, the Kshatriyas to Rulers who governed the country and the Vaisyas and Sudras to the class of Workers. Hence there was a resemblance between the division of Indian and foreign society.

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study about Scope of eco-tourism in Kannur
- To study about sustainable eco-tourism practices in Kannur
- To prepare suitable suggestions for the development and promotion of sustainable ecotourism in Kannur

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology is the systematical theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of the methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. Typically, it encompasses concepts such as paradigm, theoretical model, phases and quantitative and qualitative techniques. A methodology does not set out to provide solutions- it is therefore, not the same thing as a method. Instead, it offers the theoretical underpinning for understanding which methods so called “best practices” can be applied to specific case for example to calculate a specific result. Taking this objective into consideration, the methodology comprises the source of data, selection of sample size and method, questionnaire construction data.

1.9 SOURCES OF DATA

Both the primary and secondary sources of data were used to gather the data with regard to local peoples. Primary data include the method of gathering data with the help of questionnaires. Local people have administrated the questionnaire at the study site. Some secondary data use from some literature like books and websites to enrich the quality of the study.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The major limitation is the limited time period
- The study was done during the non-tourist season the availability of foreign tourist was limited
- Low response from local people as the medium of communication

