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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry has steadily acquired an increasingly significant position in the global economy. A naive impression of it may illustrate the industry merely as a provider of basic facilities with a view to meet the expectations and perceptions of the tourists. A closer look would, however, reveal that, it incorporates and entails a whole set of complex factors and forces. Tourism promotes people-to-people contacts, ethnic cultural understanding, mutual appreciation and co-operation, thereby promoting peace. The development of tourism depends on various factors such as attraction, accommodation, transportation, recreation, restaurants, shopping, hospitality, safety and security, attitude of the host community, tourist destinations and so on.

In India, tourism has been gaining popularity with the active involvement of Government and other promotional agencies. India, with its diverse culture and geographic areas and its relatively low cost man-power is suitable for the development of the industry. Tourism in India is growing well as is evident from the tourism statistic

Kerala, a State situated on the tropical Malabar Coast of south-western India, is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country. Named as one of the "ten paradises of the world" and "50 places of a lifetime" by the National Geographic Traveller, Kerala is famous especially for its ecotourism. Its unique culture and traditions, coupled with its varied demography, has made Kerala one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. Growing at a rate of 10 per cent, the tourism industry is a major contributor to the State's economy. Today, Kerala tourism is a global super brand and regarded as one of the destinations with highest brand recall.

Hill tourism is one of the fast growing tourism sectors in Kerala, contributing 30 per cent of the total revenue from tourism sector (Tourism Statistics, Government of Kerala). Eastern Kerala consists of land encroached upon by the Western Ghats; the region thus includes high mountains, gorges and deep-cut valleys. The wildest lands are covered with dense forests, while other regions lie under tea and coffee plantations or other forms of cultivation. The Western Ghats rise on average to 1500 metre elevation above sea level. Certain peaks may reach to 2800 metre. The Kerala hills offer pleasant

and pleasurable diversions that range from going on hiking, biking, trekking and hill climbing tours, wildlife safaris to the numerous wildlife sanctuaries located on the hills. The mist covered Kerala hills with clear blue skies as the perfect background and the evergreen forests that clothe these hills create a visual panorama that heightens the pleasure of all the tourists.

Munnar, one of the popular hill stations in Kerala, known as the Kashmir of South India, became a popular tourism destination very recently and within a short period the tourist flow has increased a lot to this place. This leads to mass tourism here and most of the land area is encroached by the private people for the construction of hotels, shops and other tourism facilities which has caused damages in the environment and on the ecosystem. In due course of time, if these continue, they will become a threat to the existence of this environmentally fragile area. By realizing this, ecotourism initiatives were started in the year 2002 aiming to reduce the tourist flow and also the negative impacts on the fragile ecosystem.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Tourism topography investigation of travel and tourism, as an industry and as a social and cultural activity, Tourism geology covers a far reaching assortment of premiums including the regular impact of tourism. Ecotourism is characterized as “responsible travel to characteristic territories that moderates the earth and enhances the prosperity of nearby individuals.” It is a type of nature – based tourism that advantages neighborhood and destinations environmentally, socially and financially. Eco-tourism is a result of the worldwide condition cognizance that started around five decades back. These explorers design ahead of time and find out the social setting that they will connect in the most typical sightseers of the times. Kerala is one of the most famous eco-destinations. Tourism industry in Kerala ought to be eco-friendly and sustainable. Kerala ecotourism intends to give individuals a chance to have an understanding of the local culture. Development and Marketing are the vital actions for any business which is competitive and successful. This is obviously the certain case in the quickly changing tourism industry. Therefore tourism destination marketers must continually audit, modify once in a while by their showcasing objectives, pictures, systems and plans.

Marketing of tourism is a significant complex activity, because producer is marketing a thing that does not have any physical existence and to satisfy the consumer's request is a tedious task in such a context and the feeling that he cannot exhibit enough and this space differs from person to person. Tourism promoting can be characterized as the precise and composed endeavors applied by the National Tourist Organizations and the tourist enterprises at international, national and local levels to improve the fulfillment of voyagers, gatherings and people, in perspective of the managed tourism development.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To study about tourism
- To study the tourism profile of India and Kerala
- To study about major attractions of Munnar
- To study about tourism of Echo point, Munnar
- To find out the problems faced by tourists in Echo point

1.4 SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Today, the increasing concern about the environmental protection and the related issues make tourism industry take special efforts to protect the natural resources of this industry from environmental degradation. Ecotourism is playing an important role in this aspect. Thus, studies related to this area will be very helpful to the tourism promoters while developing ecotourism destinations in the future. Though the research has limited to a single ecotourism destination of Kerala, the findings and recommendations may be applicable to most of the other ecotourism destinations of Kerala and other states of the country.

1.5 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles

associated with a branch of knowledge. Typically, it encompasses concepts such as paradigm theoretical model phases and quantitative or qualitative techniques.

A methodology does not set out to provide solutions, it is not the something as a method, set of methods or so called, “the best practices” can be applied to specific case for example, to calculate a specific result. The proper objective setting of the study is ensuring a specific result. Taking this objective into consideration, the methodology comprises the source of data, selection sample size and methods, questionnaire construction of data.

1.5.1 SOURCES OF DATA

Both primary and secondary sources of data were used together the data with regard to tourist and officials. Primary data include the method of gathering data with the help of questionnaire. Tourists and officials were administered the questionnaire at the study state. The secondary data pertaining to the tourism of Echo point, Munnar. In addition many institutions, libraries, interpretation centres, were also visited to collect hard and soft copies of literature for getting an indebt knowledge and clear understanding on the research problem. Several research references, such as journals, books periodical web references and data basis were also reffered to understand the concepts, current trends, challenges, problems and development of tourism and aspects in relation with other key elements.

1.5.2 Selection of Sample size and sample method.

A convenient sampling method is adopted for the study. A total 50 tourist and travelers are interviewed with a structured questionnaire. Questionnaire distributed to the tourist and travelers in the site area to collect the visitor experience and suggestions for the better development of tourism of Echo point, Munnar.

The time period for the collection of data is schedule from November 2019 to February 2020.

1.5.3 SAMPLE SIZE

For the present research work a total of 50 samples have been collected from the tourists of tourism of Echo point, Munnar. The data collected, filtered and finally determined for data analysis.

1.5.4 QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION.

Questionnaire is considered a research instrument used to capture the best data from the field after the preliminary field works. Survey and review of literature. A well-structured questionnaire was prepared.

The questionnaire was designed for the tourists of tourism of Echo point, Munnar

1.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After the primary data is collected the data is coded and filtered and finally the 50 questionnaires from the tourist have been finally retained for data analysis. The selected data is coded and feuded in Microsoft Excel software and analyzed to get the output. Simple percentage method is used to get the output. And this data are to be converted into the graphs and diagrams.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS.

The project report layout has been outlined as below:

Chapter 1

Deals with the introduction of the study. The introduction chapter starts with a brief introduction about the topic. This chapter also included major objectives, significance and scope of the study in a systematic manner. The chapter also highlights the sources of data collection method, sampling method, sample size, questionnaire design, pilot study and use of statistical tools.

Chapter 2

The second chapter contains review of literature. This chapter deals with the scholarly articles related with the project topic.

Chapter 3

This chapter begins with the introduction of the cultural tourism. The major part of this chapter deals about tourism of Echo point, Munnar.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents the analysis of Primary Data collected from the visitors of tourism of Echo point, Munnar. It presents the output of the primary data in different tables relevant to the study. This chapter presents interpretations consists of data analysis of visitor respondents.

Chapter – 5

This is the final chapter which highlights various findings of the study in a systematic manner and the chapter also suggests some important improvement of preservation of the tourism of Echo point, Munnar.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Time constrain was the major limitation of the study
- Since there is a serious shortage of official statistical information about tourism in Munnar, the researcher has to totally depend on the opinions of the respondents.
- Most of the tourists are non-cooperative with the researcher in data collection.