

Opinion and Perception of Tourists towards Ecotourism Development and Management in Madurai

Dr.S. Rani, P. Nagalakshmi and P. Easwaran

Abstract--- *In world economy and global trade, tourism has become an important sector. Tourism is making a significant and revolutionary effect on the economic scenario of world. This industry perform as a powerful one of social and economic changes in the world. It helps to make positive contribution to the balance of payment, increases investment and employment and changes economic structure. India is acting as tourist favourite place which is attracting more number of people from various destination. It has become major one in the contribution of Indian economy in way of earning foreign exchange and reducing unemployment. In Tamil Nadu, there are many places considered as visit. Most of the people from foreign countries prefer Tamil Nadu as most attractive place for tourism. Among the various places Madurai is considered as most attractive tourist place in Tamil Nadu. This study made an attempt to investigate the tourist's preference towards the eco-tourism development. The study concluded that the visitors from various places of home and host country perceived that there is an improvement in the accessibility of the tourist places. The information providing in the places are very useful to know about the places very well.*

Keywords--- *Eco-tourism, Tourist Perception, Sustainable Development, Ecology Development, Madurai Tourism.*

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tourism

In world economy and global trade, tourism has become an important sector. Tourism is making a significant and revolutionary effect on the economic scenario of world. This industry perform as a powerful one of social and economic changes in the world. It helps to make positive contribution to the balance of payment, increases investment and employment and changes economic structure. Tourism industry helps to earn more when compared with the amount spending. It also creates more direct and indirect employment opportunities from upper level to lower level. For example, qualified and managers who are trained from five star hotels to room boys, sales people and also artisans. The unemployed and youth who are underemployed from developing countries gets new prospects of employment from tourism industry.

1.2 Tourism in India

India is acting as tourist favourite place which is attracting more number of people from various destination. It has become major one in the contribution of Indian economy in way of earning foreign exchange and reducing

Dr.S. Rani, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankoil.

P. Nagalakshmi, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankoil.

P. Easwaran, Research Scholar & Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Karpagam Academy of Higher Education, Coimbatore.

unemployment. India has more number of people with number of religious which different types of cultural and variety of natural attractions. But India has a minimum of share in the world tourism.

1.3 Tourism in Tamil Nadu

In Tamil Nadu, there are many places considered as t visit. Most of the people from foreign countries prefer Tamil Nadu as most attractive place for tourism. Among the various places Madurai is considered as most attractive tourist place in Tamil Nadu. Madurai is generally called thoonga Nagaram that is city which never sleep. There are number of places available in Madurai to visit like Meenakshi Amman Temple, Thirumalai Nayakar Mahal, Vaigai Dam, Alagar Koil, Meghamalai, Samanar Hills, etc.

1.4 Eco Tourism

Eco tourism is nothing but the travel which is conserve the environment, confirm the sustainability of local people welfare and also involves education and interpretation. It is related to communities, conservative and sustainability. The following are the principles which are to be follow by the people who want to participate in eco tourism;

- Reduction of psychological, social, physical and behavioural effects.
- Create awareness and respect related to environment and culture.
- There should be a positive feeling to both local people and visitors.
- Generate financial support to the hosts and industry.
- Create a good experience to the visitors in order to increase host countries' environmental, political and social condition.

1.5 Benefits of Eco-Tourism

Eco Tourism provides the following benefits;

- Eco tourism is an important tool to both for people and earth
- It is a learning experience for every tourist from various places in the world
- It improves the stability of economic of the country
- It helps to reduce the carbon foot print

1.6. Month-wise Foreign Tourist arrivals in India, Jan 2017 – June 2019

Table 1.1

month	Foreign Tourist arrivals (FTAs) in India			Percentage (%) change	
	2017	2018 (P)	2019(P)	2018/17	2019/18
January	9,64,109	10,45,035	11,03,380	8.4	5.6
February	9,31,025	10,49,255	10,87,694	12.7	3.7
March	8,85,936	10,21,530	9,72,866	15.3	-4.8
April	7,17,899	7,45,051	7,71,353	3.8	3.5
May	6,22,408	6,06,522	6,10,590	-2.6	0.7
June	6,63,470	6,83,928	7,21,015	3.1	5.4
July	7,79,309	8,06,495		3.5	
August	7,19,129	7,86,003		9.3	
September	7,19,964	7,19,845		0.0	
October	8,66,976	8,90,229		2.7	
November	9,97,738	10,12,564		1.5	
December	11,67,840	11,91,472		2.0	
Total (Jan-June)	47,84,847	51,51,321	52,66,898	7.7 @	2.2 @
Total (Jan-Dec)	10035803	10557929		5.2	

Source: (i) Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India, for 2017, 2018 & 2019

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Batra (1990) stepped to know the challenges faced by the tourism industry of Rajasthan. He analysed in his study that the problems related to post and potential obstacles in the development of tourism industry. In order to improve the status of the society, he suggested that the tourism activity must be consider as a dynamic one. For this there should be a good bond of local people with the tourist from other countries. It helps to barriers present in the state. **Rao (2005)** analysed the relationship of foreign exchange with the tourism. He concluded that tourism industry is an important source of earnings from various foreign countries. He mentioned that the development of the country may affect negatively if tourism development organised badly. **Singh (2008)** stepped to analyse the various types of travel motivators and also travel attractions. He suggested that historical and cultural factors play an important role in the development of tourism.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study stepped to accomplish the below aims;

- To overview the concept of tourism and eco -tourism
- To investigate the tourist's preference towards the eco-tourism development

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study covered to Madurai District. The major scope is to study the tourist's preference towards eco-tourism development in Madurai. The period of the study is from January 2019 to June 2019.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data was collected by using questionnaire framed with the use of five point liker scale. It was designed easily for the understanding of the respondents. The primary data collected by using face to face interview. The questionnaire framed which is related to the study. There are three specific location were selected based on the availability of visitors, time constraints and also accessibility. Secondary data were used from various journals, magazines, news papers, etc.

VI. RESULT AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

In this heading, the demographic profile of the visitors were presented. It includes their age, gender, education and employment level, family monthly income and dwelling place.

Out of 100 respondents, 67 per cent of the visitors are male visitors. It indicates that the male are more interested to visit and try to know the cultural information of various countries. There are 55 per cent of the visitor completed their university degree. Among the respondents, there are 60 per cent of the visitor are working as full time. Most of the respondents are fall under the age group of 25 to 35 years. Among the 100 respondents, most of them visited Madurai at first time that is 60 per cent. Other 26 per cent of the visitors visited at second time. Remaining 8 per cent of them visited at third time and other 6 per cent are visited more than three times. Among the 100 tourists, above 85 per cent of the want to visit again the same place by admiring the information and quality. Remaining are

interested to visit again because they want to visit more number of other places. Among 100 respondents above 70 per cent are from the domestic visitors from Madurai and other than Madurai. Only 20 per cent of the visitors from international level.

6.2 Tourist' perception towards the eco-tourism resource management

Table 6.1: (Respondents = 100) (%)

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Development in accessibility	2	86	4	5	3
Development in providing interpretive trails	18	75	2	5	0
Development in providing data to educate people	29	63	3	3	2
High in accommodation price	2	7	28	58	5
Efficiency in the management of ecology	21	67	6	4	2
Reduction of congestion	29	51	9	7	4
Increase employment to the local people and Increase the earnings	24	69	1	3	3

The above table shows that the perception per cent of the respondents towards eco-tourism management. There are seven statements framed to know the perception level of the visitors. Among that the improvement in the development of accessibility to the visiting place. Out of the 100 per cent, 86 per cent of the visitors accept the accessibility to the visiting place has improved in Madurai. 75 per cent of the visitors agreed that the interpretive trails have been developed. 63 per cent of the visitors agreed that the provision of information in order to educate people regarding the places has developed. Though number of visitors has increased the accommodation price is not fix highly like hotel fee. It is agreed 58 per cent of the visitors. Ecology management is so good in the visiting places and this statement is accepted by 67 per cent of the visitors. In order to increase the number of visitors and encourage their convenience, the authority has reduced the congestion in the famous places. This point has accepted by 51 per cent of the respondents. We all known that tourism industry is an important tool in the development of an economy of our country by boosting up of foreign exchange. Not only to the country but it also increase the earnings of the local people and private industry. This point accepted by 69 per cent of the respondents.

6.3 Tourist's perception towards maintenance of ecotourism resources

Table 6.2: (Respondents = 100) (%)

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Provide management plan better	14	71	5	7	3
Strict rules and regulations	13	77	6	2	2
Improvement in the interpretation programme	20	69	8	2	1
Motivation of education and awareness	35	62	1	0	2

The above table clearly explained about the tourist's perception towards maintenance of eco tourism resources. There are four statements were framed and answers received from 100 visitors from various countries. First one is, the management plan implemented by the government is better. There are 71 per cent of the visitors agreed the same. In order to protect the environment and tourist places, government framed and followed very strict rules and regulations. This point attracted 77 per cent of the visitors. There is an improvement in the interpretation programme. This is accepted by 69 per cent of the visitors. People have taken much effort to create awareness and make education. This is appreciated by 62 per cent of the visitors.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study attempted to know the perception regarding eco-tourism in Madurai. In tourism industry, there is a new concept is developed that is eco-tourism. It is understand about to take care of eco system without alter the base, history of natural, cultural and environment, conservation of local resources. The concept of eco system can be developed by protecting natural environment. Madurai has emerged as most favoured tourist place in Tamil Nadu. In order to keep this record, Madurai tourism has taken a number of activities to develop tourism environment as friendly one. The study concluded that the visitors from various places of home and host country perceived that there is an improvement in the accessibility of the tourist places. The information providing in the places are very useful to know about the places very well. Even though, many number of visitors increases the accommodation cost is keeping reasonable one. It is most attractive factor of many tourists. Maintenance of eco -friendly environment is keeping better in and around the places. They felt that it helps the local people to increase their earnings. The management plan should follow in an effective manner in order to develop tourism quality. The tourism industry gets more earnings by maintaining the policy implementation in vary effective manner.

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