EFFECTIVENESS OF RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AT KUMARAKOM, KERALA

N.K.Nikhil [*]

Dr.Santha S. [**]

Abstract

Background

Kerala has emerged as one of the prime tourism destinations on the national and international map and is considered as the tourism trendsetter in the country. The availability of plenty of natural resources, skilled manpower, supportive entrepreneurial community, strong local-self-governments, civil society organizations, multitude of micro enterprises, streams of professionals and academicians, responsible media and responsive tourism industry, provide the state an ideal setting to implement and practice 'Responsible Tourism. Responsible Tourism initiatives at Kumarakom came up with outstanding results and emerged as the model destination in the implementation of responsible tourism. Responsible Tourism hereafter called RT.

Aim

The current study has been undertaken to analyse the effectiveness of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakom, Kerala.

[*] M.Com(IV Sem) Student

[**] Associate Professor   in Commerce

Post Graduate Department of Commerce and Research Centre, St. Peter's College, Kolenchery, Ernakulam Dist., Kerala- 682 311,India.

Materials and Methods

For the purpose of study, 50 respondents (business houses) were selected as samples by adopting convenience sampling method. Analysis was done via statistical software 17.0. Karl Pearson Chi-Square Test, Friedman and percentage were used.

Results

The study on the effectiveness of Responsible Tourism revealed that the major impact of RT is the increase in the standard of living of the respondents. With regard to concessional loan, not much impact is seen .The business houses were able to equipping themselves for Tourism .Only a few new customers are there for local handicraft because of the absence of variety handicrafts, unattractive nature of handicrafts and unavailability of handicrafts at tourist spot.

Conclusion

The study on the effectiveness of Responsible Tourism revealed that the major impact of RT is the increase in the standard of living of the respondents. The business houses were able to equipping themselves for Tourism .

Keywords: Friedman test, State Level Responsible Tourism Committee, local-self-governments, micro enterprises, World Tourism Organisation, World Travel and Tourism Council.

Manuscript

Introduction

Kerala has emerged as one of the prime tourism destinations on the national and international map and is considered as the tourism trendsetter in the country. The availability of plenty of natural resources, skilled manpower, supportive entrepreneurial community, strong local-self-governments, civil society organizations, multitude of micro enterprises, streams of professionals and academicians, responsible media and responsive tourism industry, provide the state an ideal setting to implement and practice 'Responsible Tourism.' Responsible Tourism initiatives at Kumarakom came up with outstanding results and emerged as the model destination in the implementation of responsible tourism. In addition to this, the programme bagged different national and international recognitions.

Chris Cooper, John Fletcher, David Gilbert and Stephen Wanhill (1993)` have produced a book on "Tourism principles and practice" which throws much light on demand for tourism, tourist destination, role of government organisation, and marketing for tourism. The disclosure with respect to carrying capacity, socio-cultural and environmental impacts, marketing for tourism, tourism development planning etc., is very much informative.

Clare A. Gunn (1994)[1] in his book on "Tourism planning - Basics, concepts, cases opines that "both a regional plan and a continuous regional planning process are needed if tourism is to be developed properly. A specific plan renewed periodically can docurnent   strengths, weaknesses and desired action at the macro scale. However, because both markets and supply side development are dynamic, such plans must be accompanied by ongoing planning from all public and private decision - makers".

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68

Gordon D. Taylor (1994) [3] states that: "Growth in the number of tourists and the amount of their expenditure cannot be the sole objective of tourism. A far better criterion would be the number of tourist the area can support at a high level of satisfaction, at a profitable level of operation and with improvement in the quality of environment, over a set of time period".

Sharma K.K. (1991)[4] in his book "Tourism in India" advises to improve the hospitality services associated with tourism as "For the healthy development of tourism in a country like India, 'a land of contrasts', it is desirable for the government to provide facilities for training in hotel management, tourism and travel agency work Great emphasis must be laid on linguistic efficiency in the major languages of Europe"

Sharma K.K. (1991)[5], Editor "New Dimensions in Tourism and Hotel Industry" discusses wide range of tourism subjects such as chartered flights, ocean cruise by tourist ships, resort management, tour operation, health tourism, time sharing holiday homes, industry standards etc

Significance of the study

Kerala has emerged as one of the prime tourism destinations on the national and international map and is considered as the tourism trendsetter in the country. The availability of plenty of natural resources, skilled manpower, supportive entrepreneurial community, strong local-self-governments, civil society organizations, multitude of micro enterprises, streams of professionals and academicians, responsible media and responsive tourism industry, provide the state an ideal setting to implement and practice 'Responsible Tourism.

Recognising that Responsible Tourism takes many forms that different destinations and stakeholders will have different priorities, and that local policies and guidelines will need to be developed through multi-stakeholder processes to develop responsible tourism in destinations. In principle, the need for all stakeholders to adopt a more responsible approach to tourism is

undeniable; the aims of Responsible Tourism must include sustainability, improved living standards of local people, lower carbon emissions and animal welfare. The goals for achieving the triple bottom-line – economic, social and environmental – should be set locally with the complete involvement of the local people. Though several studies have been conducted in the area of Tourism, no studies have been so far conducted in the area of Responsibility Tourism. In this context, the present topic entitled "Effectiveness of Responsibility Tourism at Kumarakom, Kerala" assumes greater importance.

Scope of the study

The present study concentrates on the effectiveness of Responsible tourism at Kumarakom in terms of its major responsibilities; i.e. whether it succeeded to meet its Economic Responsibility, Social Responsibility and Environmental Responsibility. The respondents of the study include the Business Houses of Kumarakom. The analysis has been made on the basis of the perception of the respondents of the study.

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to analyse the effectiveness of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakom, Kerala.

Hypothesis of the study

H_{01} There is no significant difference in the ecological and socio- economic factors before and after implementation of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakam.

Research Methodology

Selection of sample

A sample of 50 respondents was collected from Business Houses by adopting convenience sampling method for the purpose of study.

Collection of data

The primary data were collected from the respondents based on structured interview schedule. The Secondary data were collected from the Annual reports of Ministry of Tourism Departments at Central and State level, ICRT, Responsible Tourism wing and Local Government bodies. Various study reports made by different national and international agencies related to Tourism and Responsible tourism topics were also considered for the study.

Tools of Analysis

The data collected were suitably classified and analysed keeping in view the objective of the study. Analysis was done via statistical software 17.0. Karl Pearson Chi-Square Test, Friedman test and percentage were used .

Period of study

The survey was conducted during the period April -May 2015.

Limitations of the study

As convenience sampling method was used, the selection of the units from the population on the basis of availability and /or accessibility was the major disadvantage under this study. The study was limited to Kumarakam Village pertaining Business Houses Operating in the Village.

Effectiveness of Responsible Tourism projects implemented at Kumarakom, Kerala-Analysis

The study revealed that 52% respondents belonged to the age group of 40 o 50years (Table 1) . The majority of business houses (54%)operated in the form of Sole Proprietorship business (Table 3). 32% of the business houses were engaged in manufacturing segment, 34% operated in service segments (House Boat, Boating And Transportation Service),18% engaged in trading products(Handicraft, Agro Produce Like Tender Coconut etc) and rest 16 % of them were

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71

engaged in farming segment. Service industry played a prominent role in economic operations and it is the main source of tourist attraction at Kumarakam (House Boat and Boating) (Table 4). 56% of Business Houses dealt with Organic Products (Organic Row Material or Organic Produce), 30% of the Business Houses dealt with Non Organic Products and 14% of the Business Houses dealt with Mixed Product (Combination of Organic and Nonorganic Product).The study revealed that the majority of the Business Houses dealt with Organic Products(Table 5).22% Business Houses operated with Owned Fund, 56% of them operated with Grand fund received from Governments and Government Agency, 22% of them dependent on Combination of Owned and Borrowed Fund (Table 6) It was understood that the majority of the business houses operated with grand received from Governments and Government Agency.

84% of the Business Houses earned a very high or high earnings during summer, and 8% of them have a low earnings during summer season. The study revealed that the majority of the firms earned very High earnings during summer (Tourist Season and Favorable Climatic Condition for Tourisms) (Table 7). 66% of the business houses were of the view that they earned a "Very High" or High return during winter and 10% with a low or very low return during winter season. The majority of the business houses were of the view that they earned High Return during winter (Tourist Season and Favorable Climatic Condition for Tourisms) (Table 8).86% of the business houses earned a low or very low earnings and only 4% of them got a high return during rainy season (Offseason). It was understood that no Business House made a "Very High "earning during Rainy season (Table 9).The satisfaction Level of the business houses with the Present Responsible Tourism Policy of the Government, Shown in Table 10 revealed that the majority of the Business Houses (52%) have a very high or high level of satisfaction with the current Government policy and 34% have a low or very low level of satisfaction with this aspect.

The level of Satisfaction with Present Responsible Tourism Projects undergoing at Kumarakam revealed that 50% business houses have a very high or high level of satisfaction and 24% of them have a low level of satisfaction level in this aspect . The study revealed that the majority of the business houses were satisfied with the Present Responsible Tourism Projects undergoing at Kumarakam panchayat and was seen as an economic tool of prosperity (Table 11).

The major impact on economic status of the business houses after introduction of Responsible Tourism was the increase in the standard of living of the respondents which was ranked as first. Progress in the business was ranked as second. However the repaying capacity was ranked as last due to variation in the cash flow during different seasons. With regard to concessional loan, not much impact is seen as nobody has availed it because of financial illiteracy. They depended mostly on indigenous bankers for finance. Chi- square test also showed a significant difference since the p value 0.000 is less than 0.01(Table 12).The major impact of RT was that the business houses were able to equipping themselves for Tourism which was ranked as first. Recognition was ranked as second. Most of the tour operators got the status of licensed tour guides, awards etc. New customer for local handicraft was ranked as last because of the absence of variety handicrafts, unattractive nature of handicrafts and unavailability of handicrafts at tourist spot. Chi- square test also shows a significant difference since the p value 0.000 is less than 0.01(Table 13). The major impact of RT was proper waste management which was ranked as first. Increased use of Agro Products was ranked as second. Chi- square test also showed a significant difference since the p value 0.000 is less than 0.01(Table 14).

Hypothesis Testing

H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the ecological and socio economic factors before and after implementation of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakam.

Chi-square test has been applied to know whether there is any significant difference in the ecological and socio economic factors before and after implementation of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakam. The test result given in Table 15 revealed that there is a significant difference in the ecological and socio economic factors before and after implementation of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakam since the p value .000 is less than .01 .Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{01} **stating that there is no significant difference in the ecological and socio economic factors before and after implementation of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakam is rejected.**

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Table   1 Age of Respondents

Age of Respondent	Frequency	Percent
30-40	11	22.0
40-50	26	52.0
50 Years and Above	13	26.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Primary Data.

Table 2 Gender of Respondent

Gender of Respondent	Frequency	Percent
Male	32	64.0
Female	18	36.0
Total	50	100.0

Source :Primary Data.

Table 3 Type of Business

Type of Business	Frequency	Percent
Sole Proprietorship	27	54.0
Partnership	23	46.0
Total	50	100.0

Source : Primary Data.

Table 4 Nature of Business

Nature of Business	Frequency	Percent
Manufacturing	16	32.0
Service	17	34.0
Trading	9	18.0
Farming	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0

Source :Primary Data.

Table 5 Nature of Product

Nature of Product	Frequency	Percent
Organic Product	28	56.0
Non Organic Product	15	30.0
Mixed Product	7	14.0
Total	50	100.0

Source :Primary Data.

Table 6 Source of Fund Used

Source of Fund	Frequency	Percent
Owned Fund	11	22.0
Grand	28	56.0
Combination of Owned and Borrowed Fund	11	22.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Primary Data.

Table 7 Earnings During Summer Season

Earnings	Frequency	Percent
Very High	32	64.0
High	10	20.0
Neutral	4	8.0
Low	4	8.0
Very Low	-	-
Total	50	100.0

Source :Primary Data.

χ^2 =11.280 with 3 degrees of freedom significant at 5% level.

Table 8 Earning During Winter Season

Earnings	Frequency	Percent
Very High	8	16.0
High	25	50.0
Neutral	12	24.0
Low	3	6.0
Very Low	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source : Primary Data.

χ^2 =34.600 with 4 degrees of freedom significant at 5% level.

Table 9 Earning During Rainy Season

Earnings	Frequency	Percent
High	2	4.0
Neutral	5	10.0
Low	20	40.0
Very Low	23	46.0
Total	50	100.0

Source : Primary Data.

$\chi^2 = 35.280$ with 3 degrees of freedom significant at 5% level.

Table 10 Satisfaction Level with Present Responsible Tourism Policy of the Government

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very High	11	22.0
High	15	30.0
Neutral	7	14.0
Low	1	2.0
Very Low	16	32.0
Total	50	100.0

Source : Primary Data.

$\chi^2 = 15.200$ with 4 degrees of freedom significant at 5% level.

Table 11 Satisfaction Level with Present Responsible Tourism Projects

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent
Very High	18	36.0
High	7	14.0
Neutral	13	26.0
Low	2	4.0
Very Low	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

Source : Primary Data.

$\chi^2 = 14.600$ with 4 degrees of freedom significant at 5% level.

Table 12 Economic Status (Friedman Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on Ranks)

Economic factors	Before introduction of RT		After introduction of RT	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Standard of Living	5.62	6	14.58	1
Concessional Loan	5.25	8	9.79	7
Repaying Capacity	5.74	3	9.42	8
Increase in Income	5.64	5	10.32	6
Increase in Savings	5.54	7	11.12	4
Cost of Production	6.10	2	11.41	3
Progress of Business	5.68	4	12.54	2
Subsidies	6.47	1	10.78	5

Source: Primary Data.

X^2 =376.234 with 15 degrees of freedom significant at1% level.

Table   13 Social Status (Friedman Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on Ranks)

Social Factors	Before introduction of RT		After introduction of RT	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
New Customer for Local Handicraft	10.92	2	5.03	8
Ability to Identify New Customers for local ART	3.77	8	10.77	4
Women Empowerment	5.36	6	10.63	5
Recognition	6.74	4	11.91	2
Contact With Tourist	4.15	7	9.31	6
Contact With Financial Institution	5.42	5	7.89	7
Contact With Government	8.77	3	11.20	3
Equipping One Self for Tourism	11.29	1	12.84	1

Source: Primary Data.

X^2 =333.959with 15 degrees of freedom significant at1% level.

Table 14 Ecological Status (Friedman Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance on Ranks)

Ecological Factors	Before introduction of RT		After introduction of RT	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Infrastructure	5.72	1	2.03	4
Waste Management	5.66	2	6.26	1

Use of Agro Products	**5.55**	**3**	**4.18**	**2**
Availability of Fresh Water	**3.88**	**4**	**2.72**	**3**

Source: Primary Data.

X^2 =333.959with 15 degrees of freedom significant at1% level.

Table 15 Ecological and Socio-Economic Factors (Friedman Repeated Measures Analysis of

Variance on Ranks)

Factors	Before Introduction of RT		After introduction of RT	
	Mean	**Rank**	**Mean**	**Rank**
Use of Agro Products	22.91	16	32.30	3
Availability of Fresh Water	14.43	26	20.30	22
Concessional Loan	10.85	37	19.95	23
Repaying Capacity	11.80	32	19.91	24
Increase in Income	11.42	35	21.03	19
Increase in Savings	11.01	36	21.78	17
Cost of Production	12.01	31	23.44	15
Progress of Business	11.46	34	25.48	13
Subsidies	12.75	30	21.40	18
New Customer for Local Handicraft	12.86	29	27.94	10
Ability to Identify New Customers for local ART	27.55	11	9.54	39
Women Empowerment	27.06	12	13.41	27
Recognition	30.07	7	17.47	25

Infrastructure	31.79	6	8.78	40
Standard of Living	11.67	33	32.08	4
Contact With Tourist	24.20	14	10.51	38
Contact With Financial Institution	20.51	21	13.18	28
Contact With Government	29.26	8	20.76	20
Equipping One Self for Tourism	31.97	5	28.10	9
Waste Management	32.65	2	34.41	1

Source :Primary Data.

$\times^2$ =1014.768 with 39 degrees of freedom significant at 1% level.