



A STUDY ON MOTIVATING FACTORS OF THE TOURISTS ABOUT THE HOUSE BOATS SERVICES IN KUMARAKOM, ALEPPEY DISTRICT

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Abstract: *India is one of the admired tourist destinations in Asia and tourism plays a significant role in the economic development of the country. Tourism can help to triumph over discrimination and promote bonds and it has become an accepted part of the life style of a number of people and a powerful engine of economic growth in terms of wealth and employment generation in the modern period. Houseboats and backwaters are the two major tourist attractions among the many attractive places in Kerala. Thus the house boat services on the backwaters of Kerala is an essential consideration for the local people, Tourism sector, development of the State, as Tourism today is a crucial factor in world trade with international and multi-faceted dimensions as a means of earning foreign exchange, as a provider of employment and as a powerful tool of development. Hence this study focus to examine the house boat services rendered to the tourists, the enjoyment they reap out of the cruise and the delight the tourists gain on the waters which will also bestow increase the economy of the state. Thus this paper focuses on the perception of the tourists about the services rendered by the house boats in Kumarakom, Aleppey district. Primary data was administered to collect data through a well structured questionnaire using Rensis Likert's five point scales from 50 sample respondents using convenience sampling technique by adopting survey method. The Tourism department must take due care and diligence to overcome shortcomings if any. Tourism marketing involves tactical planning and accomplishment of various marketing strategies by adopting SWOC analysis. It must take into consideration the major other factors such as tourists, their likes and dislikes.*

Keywords: *Kerala Tourism, Backwaters, Kettuvallam, House boat services, etc.*

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world services are extensively used by people in all aspects of life. Currently services are more and more being used by the corporate as well as other sectors. In the



developed societies, service is one of the embattled growing sectors and is becoming progressively pronounced vis-à-vis agriculture. In the developing countries too, service industry is becoming one of the major employers.

Services' marketing has occupied an imperative place in business studies all over the globe. Marketers are applying the traditional and modern marketing techniques for marketing their services. In fact they are not differentiating between the marketing of physical goods and of services, but in reality, they are performing the marketing of services. They never considered this as a separate powerful activity which could bring more income and increase the standard of living. We live in a world of steady change; a world that constantly moves and progresses to higher levels of ease and comfort. Technological breakthroughs in communication technology and new directions in better facilitating travel are already changing today's world of travel. Global research by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) indicates that tourism in 2017 generated direct and indirect employment for approximately 292 million people worldwide, or about one in ten jobs in the planet generating 10.2% of global GDP.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

India is one of the admired tourist destinations in Asia and tourism plays a significant role in the economic development of the country. Tourism can help to triumph over discrimination and promote bonds and it has become an accepted part of the life style of a number of people and a powerful engine of economic growth in terms of wealth and employment generation in the modern period. Cruising along the backwaters of Kerala is an unforgettable experience as tourists experience the golden opportunity to have fun in house Boat which saunter down the cool placid waters of the world-famous backwaters, have a merry time and even spending a night as well out floating around.

House Boats are huge, slow moving, exotic barges designed for sheer leisure trips. They are the new versions of traditional Kettuvallams. "Kettu" means tying and "Vallam" means country boats. These Kettuvallams were earlier used to ship rice and spices and other goods between Kuttanad and the Cochin port and it was a three-day affair those days. A standard House Boat, which could be about 100 feet long, can hold up to 30 tons, and that is as much as three giant lorries can. A House Boat (which is made of hundreds of fine but heavy-duty planks of jack-wood) is held together absolutely by coir knots (not a single nail is used). This



framework is then coated with a caustic black resin extracted from boiled cashew kernels and it lasts for generations. Ancient principles and techniques are used by the local carpenters for constructing house boats with an average 70 ft long and 15 ft width in the central section. Alleppey district is the citadel of House Boats nearly 120 of the boats is well maintained and perfected as luxury liners. The crew cooks on board, and most often, their meals included delicious pearl spot fish caught directly from the water and serve the tourists lounging in the best-furnished cabins famous worldwide. The eight hour water cruise from Kollam to Alappuzha is considered to be the longest backwater cruises in Kerala. The long hour journey through the backwaters enrich the cherishing memory overflowing with the stunning beauty of the backwaters, the beauty of Chinese fishing nets, the sights of lotuses and water lilies, sprouting out of the water.

A ride in a House Boat is the most dazzling experience to get floated into, that one can feel cozy inside the luxurious House Boat watching millions of drops of water splashing and pounding on the rhythm of the falling rain. Thus the house boat services on the backwaters of Kerala is an essential consideration for the local people, Tourism sector, development of the State, as Tourism today is a crucial factor in world trade with international and multi-faceted dimensions as a means of earning foreign exchange, as a provider of employment and as a powerful tool of development.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Kerala, situated on the south western part of India, is one of the most admired tourist destinations in the country. Its unique culture and traditions, coupled with its varied demography, has primed it as one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. Kerala presents an amazing permutation of strength as a tourist destination. High quality of life, better health care systems, higher literacy level is some of the outstanding features of Kerala as a tourist draw. The Kerala houseboats that cruise these emerald waterways are an improvisation on the large country barges, which were an essential part of the land's ethos in days gone by. Modified to meet a novel concept of holidaying, the kettuvalloms (houseboats) are comfortably furnished with an open lounge, one or two bath attached bedrooms and a kitchenette, and is extremely eco- friendly, merging smoothly into the scenery. Every houseboat is manned by a crew of 3 men, usually a cook, guide and oarsman. House boating can be the most relaxing experience for any age, size or type of people. Hence this study focus to examine the house boat services rendered to the tourists,



the enjoyment they reap out of the cruise and the delight the tourists gain on the waters which will also bestow increase the economy of the state. This study will be very helpful to academicians, research scholars, houseboat owners, and Kerala Tourism department.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Houseboats and backwaters are the two major tourist attractions among the many attractive places in Kerala. The Kerala state launched the India International Boat Show, as the only boat exhibition of its stature in South Asia to convert Kerala into a hub of tourism centric activity. The backwaters mainly cover the four districts of the state - Kollam, Allappuzha, Kottayam and Kochi. Countless lagoons, lakes, canals, estuaries, and the deltas of forty-four rivers make up the 900 km backwater network of Kerala. The largest backwater body, the Vembanad lake flows through Aleppey and Kottayam districts and opens out into the sea at the Kochi Port. The Ashtamudi Lake, the second largest backwater stretch, offers the longest ride and is considered the gateway to the backwaters. The beauty of the backwaters permits the houseboats to sail on the waters and give zeal to the tourists. These services bring in more business to the local people city corporation and the district. Regularly tourists visit Kerala and enjoy the zest of the backwaters on the house boats. Thus, this paper shows significance on the service provided by house boats on backwaters to develop the tourism marketing in Kerala. Hence this paper focuses on the perception of the tourists about the services rendered by the house boats in Kumarakom, Aleppey district.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1 To examine the Perceptions of the tourists about the house boat services in Kumarakom, Aleppey District
- 2 To highlight the Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pizam, A (1978) in his study, "Tourism Impact-the Social Cost to the Destination as Perceived by the Residents", points out the social impact of tourism on the host community, such as vandalism, increased price of goods and services, drug abuse, increased alcoholism and increased cost of land and housing.

Thankamani, K (1980) in her research work, "Tourist Behaviour, Economy and Area Development Plan - Selected Tourist Centres of Tamil Nadu", examines the behavioural



aspects of tourists and assesses the tourism resources and impact of tourism on the local economy and employment structure.

David Blanton (1981) in his research paper discusses the social and cultural dimensions of tourism training in developing countries and notes that the training in this field narrowly focuses on vocational and technical skills.

The paper looks at the need for the development of programs which broaden the scope of training by taking into account the potential social and cultural risks of tourism for the industry worker, and the barriers to communication rising from different backgrounds, values, and expectations between hosts and foreign visitors.

Dash Bandu Gupta (1983) in his doctoral research work, "Income and Employment Effect of Tourism: A Case Study of Jammu and Kashmir State", analyses the income and employment effects of tourism on Jammu and Kashmir economy, based on an empirical study.

Hilary Metcalf (1987) analyzes the employment generation in tourism and leisure industry and identifies various categories of employment and work responsibilities in tourism industry. The study also highlights the necessity and importance of human resource development for tourism industry.

Morrison (1989) in his book Hospitality and Travel Marketing, views tourism as a people-industry since this industry is highly dependent on the quality of hospitality offered by employees who work at hotels, restaurants, attractions, gift shops etc.

Sudheer, S.V. (1991) conducts a detailed investigation in to the availability of natural resources, working of government machinery and the economic contributions of tourism in Kerala. The study reveals that the purpose of visit to Kerala is mainly for pleasure. The first Tourism Policy of Government of Kerala (1995) highlights the need for creating human resource of good quality to serve the growing needs of the industry to promote quality tourism.

Vijayakumar, B (1995) has made an attempt to highlight the importance of native tourism/eco-tourism and he assesses the demand for the same in a tropical region like Kerala which unfolds the manifold manifestations of nature. The study though confined to foreign tourists, has succeeded in establishing empirically the fact that the natural beauty of Kerala rather than artificial ones attracts the foreign tourists to 'Gods Own Country'.



Frank, M.G.O (1995) analyzes the emerging issues in tourism education and notes that tourism education offers a great potential to make a significant contribution towards the creation of value added activities in the tourism sector and the sustenance of its competitive advantage.

Narayana, S.V and Sivaramakrishnan, R (1996) analyzes the views of tourism related respondents in Pondicherry and the awareness of environmental variables and their relationship with tourism and also the perceptions of respondents on the quality of the environment existing. The study reveals that the quality of environment in respect of tourism, which includes various physical, socio-political and governmental factors, is poor in India. Demographic forces, ignorance, exotic policies and indifferent implementation are responsible for this. The environmental consciousness has not developed in public. The reasons for the failure of environmental activities are insincerity of government and public apathy. There is no serious effort from government to build up participative campaign through leadership.

Joseph Antony (1997) explores the role of KTDC in the promotion of tourism in Kerala. He observes that KTDC has been discharging its functions with a view to promote tourism as an industry and that it has a very significant and lead role in the development of tourism industry in Kerala. He has also analyzed the management of funds of KTDC and asserts that KTDC maintains a safe and good position with regard to its management of funds.

Sinha, P.C (1998) in his book *Tourism Marketing*, states that in tourism marketing it is an intangible experience that is being sold. Therefore, the satisfaction provided is a function of human element providing the service. Since a vacation provided is an amalgam of several products and services offered by different firms, tourist satisfaction depends upon services of different sectors.

Jha, S.M (2000) observes that since the quality is significant in tourism products, the staff of hotels, tour operating agencies, travel agencies, resorts, transport organizations should be trust worthy, competent to speak English and other languages, friendly, reliable, accessible and well behaved. The scientific planning and the development of attractive tourism products necessitate formation and maintenance of an amalgam of various tangible or material factors which include attraction, accommodation, transportation, recreation, restaurants, and shopping. The intangible or non material factors consist of the feel good



elements like the general attitude towards tourists at reception centers, various tourist destinations, airport, hotel approach of the employees, and tour agents and the feeling of safety and security provided by the police and officials.

Joseph S. Chen (2000) explores urban residents' loyalty to tourism development. Surveys with regard to perceptions of the effects of tourism development were mailed to Virginia residents. Responses to 210 questionnaires were analyzed. A factor analysis of 27 attitude items reveals a three-dimensional factor solution. The MANOVA procedure finds that respondents from different gender and age groups had different attitudes toward tourism development. A correspondence analysis further exhibits the attitudes toward tourism development between loyal and non loyal residents. Loyal residents felt that total tourism benefits should outweigh the negative impacts; non loyal residents were more concerned about the land value and traffic congestion.

Joseph S. Chen (2001) makes an attempt to help scholars and practitioners visualize the consequences of tourism development and urban residents' support for future tourism expansion. The study clearly portrays residents' concerns about tourism with four discernible factors including its economic, social, cultural, and environmental impacts. It is interesting to note that the path model proposed in this study indicates that cultural impacts did not have a direct effect on residents' support for tourism.

Kuldeep Kumar (2001) in his research work, "Changing Dimensions of Tourism Related Activities in Himachal Pradesh", identifies the core problems in the tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh. He also evaluates the existing policies and schemes and formulates appropriate strategy for the promotion of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The study concludes that cleanliness and crime-free atmosphere are the most important pre-requisites for the promotion of tourism. For this, the involvement of local people is a must. They must be convinced that ultimately tourism benefit the local people also.

Thami P. Santhosh (2002) has studied the contributions of tourism in general and deeply analyses the eco-tourism product potential, market potential and the need for the development of eco-tourism facilities. He has concluded that the eco-tourism market potential is very high and that it can be marketed widely as an important tourism product in Kerala.



Johny, C.D (2002) in his Ph. D research work, "Economics of Tourism in Kerala: A Study of Selected Tourism Spots", analyzes inter-spot variations in the trend of demand and supply of tourism activity.

Santhi Marie (2002) conducts a study on marketing strategies for quality tourism promotion by taking a sample of 60 tourists and 60 tourism service providers. The study reveals that only 50 per cent of sample tourists have satisfaction toward the services of tourism service providers and only 17 per cent of sample tourists have proper awareness about tourist attractions in Nainital. The study also finds that travel agencies and hotels do not provide any training to their staff and the lack of qualified employees lessens the efficiency of jobs and outcomes.

Anil Kumar, T.R (2003) has analyzed the seasonality of tourism in Kerala and has concluded that November to May is the peak time for tourists. He has also made an in depth study on the employment opportunities provided by the tourism industry especially airlines, travel agencies, and agencies for operators and has pointed out that there is tremendous potential for self employment in ancillary industries like handicrafts, Kuldeep Kumar (2004) in his doctoral research work, "Financial Performance of Tourism Industry in Himachal Pradesh – A Case Study of HPTDC Ltd", has studied the relationship between the general background of tourists and their purpose of visits, mode of travelling and the type of accommodation performed. The study reveals that majority of the tourists either belong to higher income brackets or low income brackets who visits for pleasure trip which is followed by business, climate change and pleasure.

Babu P. George and Bibin P. George (2004) in their article, "Past Visits and the Intention to Revisit a Destination", empirically establishes that there is positive relationship between the measures of past purchases from a destination and those of the intention to repurchase in the future. It posits that this relationship is mediated by the development of place attachment. It also examines the moderating effect of novelty seeking at two distinct levels, novelty seeking as moderating the relationship between past purchases and place attachment and also that between place attachment and future purchase intention.

Robert J. Johnston and Timothy J. Tyrrell (2005) has developed a dynamic model illustrating the interrelated behavior of tourism-related economic and environmental conditions throughout time. The model illustrates findings relevant to the search for sustainable



outcomes and characterizes potential conflicts implicit in different sustainable and non sustainable paths. The model demonstrates that in all but the rarest of circumstances, there is no single, universal sustainable optimum, and that a policy that maintains overly pristine environmental quality may be just as unsustainable - from the perspective of either the tourism industry or residents - as a policy that causes excessive environmental decay.

Bob Mckercher and Andrew Chan (2005) analyzes that much of the research documenting the size and importance of special interest (SI) tourism is based on secondary analysis of visitor survey data. Segments are defined by analyzing responses to activity questions, with the assumption being that activities are a valid proxy for motives to travel or trip purpose. The soundness of this approach is based on two suppositions that do not appear to have been questioned. The first is that visitor surveys are constructed in such a way that valid SI trip-purpose segments can be defined. The second is the existence of a direct correlation between actions and motivations.

Sarngadharan, M and Retnakumari (2005) in their study among three hundred international tourists on hospitality and tourism in Kerala, has revealed that the State has been far above the expectations of the international tourists in relation to attractions and hospitality.

Ellyn Kathalina Damayanti (2005) in his thesis, "Legality of National Parks and Involvement of Local People: Case Studies in Java, Indonesia and Kerala, India", examined legislative, administrative, and institutional arrangements of forest and protected areas, the process of establishing a protected area, and its disparity with the actual situation, and also to examine involvement of local people and find the points that may have led to the success and sustainability. Three new NPs each in Java and Kerala were selected for the case studies on legality, while Ujung Kulon NP in Java and Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Kerala were selected for the case studies on the involvement of local people. Differences between Indonesia and India can be found in the legislation and administration systems of forest and protected areas. Procedures in detail to establish a NP are different, but both have same major components, namely declaration, settlement of rights, demarcation and legalization. However, the actual situations in the study sites were similar, namely all NPs had not yet finalized the procedures of establishment. In Java, those procedures were a part of management plan, which means the procedures to acquire legality cannot be completed



until management starts. In the case of Kerala, the procedures were nominal and *de facto* considered to be completed.

Silpa and Rajithakumar (2005) remarked that human resources associated with the tourism industry should be well versed with the existing government rules, laws and regulations on the industry and allied areas such as transport, hotel, banking and insurance.

M/s Intercontinental Consultants and Technocrats Pvt. Ltd (2005) conducted a study to document the best practices formulated/adopted by the State Government and the tourism departments for promoting tourism. 2750 tourists were interviewed and their perceptions about tourism infrastructure, electricity, water, sanitation, communication, banking, transport, safety and security, health facilities etc were collected for the study.

Debasish Mazumda and Joshi, G.V (2006) in their study analyzes the problem of marketing a tourist destination in its perspective emphasizing on the experiences of developed and developing countries as to how to plan, market and manage tourism efficiently in the interest of Goa, the State in question, local population and the tourists who are the stakeholders. It takes into account the critical factors in tourist planning such as the existing infrastructure, basic tourist amenities, sustainability, role of private sector, investment and marketing strategies. Some of the major bottlenecks in marketing and tourism planning and development in Goa have been critically analyzed.

Manjula Chaudhry (2006) in her article presented the background of eco-certification - need and importance, different certification systems, important issues involved in the implementation of these systems, environmental awareness in India and the accepted eco-certifications by its tourism industry.

Vijayan, R (2007) in his research work, 'Tourism development and involvement of local people at destination', has studied the attitude of local people in tourism centres towards tourism development. He has also studied the impact of tourism on both economic and social life of destination people and also the role of officials in bringing awareness among local people regarding the benefits of tourism. The study reveals that the attitude of local people in tourism centres towards tourism development is positive. It is also found that the tourism officials have not succeeded in bringing awareness of the benefits of tourism to the local people. The study also reveals that tourism has a major impact on the economic life of



the destination people and at the same time tourism activities does not improve the social life of the destination people.

Saurabh Rishi and Sai Giridhar, B (2007) in their article, "Himachal Tourism: A SWOT Analysis", examines the perceptions and satisfaction of tourists to Himachal Pradesh using the Porter's model. The study reveals that although Himachal has unique natural offerings it is not able to cash upon them due to lack of various facilities. Most of tourists' expectations were met with but they depend on the presence of good necessities like amenities, food and water and proper infrastructural facilities like accommodation, transport, accessibility, etc which are found lacking in certain cases. A majority of the respondents believed that they would come again, based on the fact that the natural beauty of Himachal draws them towards it, provided that it develops the necessary facilities which are lacking currently. The tourists believe that Himachal does have the potential of becoming one of the world's top tourist destinations, if it can overcome its deficiencies and market itself well so as to position itself uniquely in the minds of tourists.

Sonia Khan (2007) in his research work, "Gender Issues in Tourism: A Comparative Study of Decision Making", concludes that gender is a significant variable that accounts for differences in vacation taking and participation in tourism activities.

Tourism Finance Corporation of India Limited (2007) in its study, "Incentives to accommodation infrastructure in India", assesses and reviews the impact of Capital Subsidy Scheme of Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India which is available to the budget category hotels in the country and to recommend whether to continue the scheme during the 11th five-year plan in the same form and manner or to suggest modifications/changes to make it attractive to the entrepreneurs and thereby augment the supply of the budget hotels in the country. The study reveals that the investment in the accommodation sector is linked to State govt. initiatives in promoting the tourist centers or demand driven by business growth. The study also suggests that the subsidy should be related to the importance of the location such as being a destination with tourist value as pilgrimage centre etc, and hotel offering some unique facility with a replica of the culture of the location, backward area and areas of seasonal importance.

Annamalai Murugan (2008) in his article, "Tourism Studies in Universities", observes that the Universities have a crucial role to play by educating people at all levels and conduct



research. He concludes in his study that a concerted effort with a mission-mode is called for and there is confidence that the universities will take up to the challenge of tourism education in the near future.

Jui chi chang (2008) in his article, "tourists' satisfaction judgments: An investigation of emotion, Equity, and attribution", investigates the relationships between aspects of consumption behavior - emotion, equity, and attribution -and the consequences of tourists' satisfaction. It also examines their different degrees of satisfaction in line with these three determinants. The component of equity, which is affected by cultural background, is found to have a greater effect on tourist satisfaction than people had thought, even though it was kept hidden by tourists when on the tour. This study proposes that the channel of communication could be used as a moderator to facilitate tourist satisfaction response. The results might help the travel industry refine its service quality and contribute to the literature of customer satisfaction attributes in the tourism industry.

Sandro Formica and Tanvi H. Kothari (2008) conducted a study to determine future forces that are likely to affect the future of tourism in the tristate area of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. The data for the study were gathered using the nominal group technique for scenario thinking, with informants from a variety of tourism businesses in the region. The findings of the study confirm that the tourism industry will be facing major challenges and experiencing swift changes. The global economy, changing market demographics, and emerging technology are forcing destination managers to adopt and implement proactive strategies to survive the competitive tourism environment.

Anilkumar, K and Sudheer, S.V (2008) identifies and evaluates the negative impacts of tourism on hosts and guests. The study revealed overpricing, littering, disturbance to and exploitation on tourists as the factors causing the high level negative impacts on international and domestic tourists visiting Kerala. Similarly, alcoholism, overpricing of commodities, littering, water pollution, drug trafficking, prostitution and increase in land value in tourist centers are the factors for high level negative impact on host community. Among other suggestions the study highlights the need for awareness creation among tourists and hosts and the need for appointing trained tourism police and cleaning guards at tourist centers.



Sarngadharan, M (2008) in his paper, "Tourism: Career Opportunities and Courses", states that tourism enhances quality of life, preserves national heritage and encourages the appreciation of diverse culture both by domestic and foreign visitors. In his opinion, professionally qualified persons having a good knowledge of history and geography of the country, its culture, customs and tourist sites will certainly find a career in tourism and travel both exciting and rewarding.

Biju, M.R (2008) in his paper, "Indian Tourism: Kerala Shows the Way", reveals that Kerala is increasingly rated as one of the must-visit destination not only by the highly discerning foreign tourist but also by the domestic tourist. The study also reveals that the strategy which heavily focuses on class tourism leveraging the product differentiation possibilities does seem to be the ideal option for the State. The study concludes that such careful nurturing of the unique tourism resources has promoted the growth of the tourism industry.

Ajims P. Muhammed and Jagathyraj, V.P (2008) in their article, "Challenges Faced by Kerala Tourism Industry", analyze in detail the problems faced by tourism industry in Kerala. The study has revealed that the greatest threat to tourism and travel, now-a-days, is terrorism in which the victims are mostly innocent people. The study has revealed that continuous research and time to time innovations alone will pave the way for achieving sustainability in tourism.

Sunanda, V.S (2008) studied the health tourism measures in Kerala with reference to ayurveda. She has also analyzed the marketing system developed for attracting the tourists. The study reveals that marketing environment of the health care tourism industry in Kerala is conducive to provide satisfaction of the needs and wants of the customers and that marketing system developed by the ayurvedic health care units has a favourable impact on the growth and development of ayurvedic tourism in Kerala. The study concludes that there are better prospects for the health care tourism sector in Kerala.

Mammooty, T.P and Raveendran, P.T (2008) in their article, "Promoting Malabar as a Tourism Destination: Perceptions of Tourists Visiting the Region", analyzes the tourism trend pattern in Malabar with that of the rest in Kerala. The study reveals that lack of various supporting systems, amenities and facilities restricts Malabar in attracting tourists, particularly foreign tourists. The study suggests that the main aim of tourism marketing strategy in a region like Malabar should be to ensure maximum effectiveness of promotional



activity in order to strengthen and enhance the region's position as an international tourist destination. In order to achieve the goal of positioning Malabar as an international tourist destination and to achieve the economic objectives, there is a need to formulate a Master Plan for Malabar.

Jubin Joy John, Hari Sundar, G. Anoop Das and Ravikrishnan (2008) in their article, "Study on Improving the Potential for Rural Tourism in Kerala- With Emphasis on Developing the Potential of Local Areas of Tourism. Importance with Special Reference to Ponnunthuruthu, Anchuthengu and Kumbalangi", reveals that Rural tourism will emerge as an important instrument for sustainable human development including poverty alleviation, employment generation, environmental regeneration and development of remote areas and advancement of women and other disadvantaged groups in the country apart from promoting social integration and international understanding.

Manoj Edward and Babu P. George (2008) in their article, "Tourism development in the State of Kerala, India: a study of destination attractiveness", have made an attempt to assess the destination attractiveness of Kerala, an emerging tourism destination in India. The study has revealed the strengths and weaknesses of Kerala from the demand side perspective, which suggests implications for destination marketing efforts. The analysis highlights the importance of specific destination attraction elements as core appeals of the destination. The analysis provides a solid theoretical rationale for the spectacular performance of Kerala tourism in the recent years across a number of fronts. The study is helpful to tourism decision makers in public and private sectors to understand the potential and development strategies of tourism in Kerala.

Gracious, J (2008) in his research work has made an empirical study on the cross-sectoral analysis of marketing mix implemented by different categories of tourism units in Kerala. The study concludes with a strong recommendation that the government of Kerala should give urgent attention to tourism marketing by setting up a separate institution with international standards and also it suggests giving continuous training programmes organized to update the skills in using modern ICT devices by various categories of people engaged in the tourism industry.

Gopal, R (2008) studied the key issues and challenges that a hospital faces in promoting medical tourism. The study reveals that the main driving force for patients to visit medical



tourists' countries like India, Singapore etc is the high cost of the treatment as well as the long waiting period. The study also points out that Kerala has been very successful in medical tourism. The presence of several tourist spots like the Alappuzha Beach, Kappad Beach, Kovalam Beach, Marari Beach, Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Tekkady Wild life Resorts etc and the ancient art of treatments have made Kerala very successful in medical tourism.

Libison, K.B and Muraleedharan, K.P (2008) in their article, "Economic Benefits of Pilgrimage Tourism: A Case Study of Sabarimala Pilgrimage with Special Reference to Pandalam Rural Locality of Kerala (India)", attempts to investigate how Sabarimala pilgrimage helps in giving manifold economic benefits to local residents of Pandalam rural area. The study is based on six wards of Pandalam grama panchayath. The study reveals that the high positive effects of pilgrimage season on income, employment and standard of living of local residents of Pandalam rural locality.

Sindhu, R. Babu, Suresh Subramoniam and Krishnankutty, K.V (2008), suggests that Travel Router can be made to execute on the Internet browser using special Visual Prolog features and this can make it more useful in the e-business era. Several such other expert systems, like hotel booking, car rental booking, tour planner or tourist destination finder can be developed as well and can be integrated into the tourism web portal of the state. Such portals can be used by even tourists who are on the move using WAP enabled devices like palm top.

Kavita Chavali and Subrat Sahu (2008) studied the importance of website as an information source in the promotion of tourism destinations which in particular attracts new visitors. It is also important to understand the ways to improve the visitor's experience and adding value to the websites. The study concludes that there is a lot of scope for further research in this area of comparing tourism websites and the role played by websites in the decision making process and attitude change to get the value of money spent by government and State tourism corporations at large.

Prabaharan, B., Arulraj, A and Rajagopal, V (2008) have made an empirical SERVQUAL research and have identified the mediating factor for service quality of domestic and foreign tourists. The tangibility dimension of SERVQUAL influences domestic tourists and the responsiveness dimension of service quality influences the foreign tourists. Hence, the study



concludes that the Kerala tourism staff has got a low impact of commitment towards the domestic as well as foreign tourists.

Nafees A. Khan (2008) analyzes the HRD initiatives of tourism industry with special reference to Air India Ltd. to enhance and sharpen the capabilities of its employees. The study also identifies the need of the Air India to incorporate the spirit of HRD in day to day functioning by utilizing all possible human resource systems and mechanisms to the organization.

BasilHansl, V (2008) investigates the progress made by India's tourism industry in the planning era, and the emerging issues (like alternative tourism) under globalization. It also examines the impact and challenges posed by GATS and the burgeoning service sector of the country as well as the pitfalls in tourism planning in India. The study reveals that the story of globalization and tourism are interrelated as both are crossing the national boundaries, making interconnectivity in the world on an unprecedented scale and unimaginable speed. GATS have indeed opened new vistas of growth for the tourism industry and fresh challenges are in the offing.

Siby Zacharias, James Manalel, Jose, M.C and Afsal Salam (2008) in their article, "Back Water Tourism in Kerala: Challenges and Opportunities", have studied the effect of back water tourism on the environment. The study concludes that there is an adverse effect on environment and house boats (Kettuvallom) are integral parts of backwater tourism.

Harsh Mehta (2009) in his thesis, "The Impact of Terror Incidents on US and EU Tourist arrivals in India: The Need for a Variable that Captures Terror Incidents in Tourism Forecasting models", empirically analyzes the determinants for USA and EU tourist arrivals to India using data over the period of 56 quarters from 1994 - 2007. The result reveals that terror incidents significantly and negatively affect tourist arrivals from these countries. The thesis concludes by claiming that terror incidents place a threat on the growth of the tourism industry.

Haiyan Song, Stephen F. Witt, Kevin F. Wong and Doris C. Wu (2009) in their study, "An Empirical Study of Forecast Combination in Tourism", analyze the statistical comparisons between the combination forecasts and single-model forecasts. It shows that the combined forecasts are significantly more accurate than the average single-model forecasts across all forecasting horizons. This provides a strong recommendation for forecast combination in



tourism. In addition, the empirical results indicate that forecast accuracy does not improve as the number of models included in the combination forecasts increases. It also appears that combining forecasts may be more beneficial for longer-term forecasting.

Jyothis, T and Janardhanan, V.K (2009) have conducted a detailed investigation on the service quality levels of health tourists who visited Kerala. Primary data is collected from 370 foreign tourists who had availed themselves treatment from Kerala health tourism providers during the period of year 2001 to 2007 through a questionnaire. The findings of the study reveal that majority of the health tourists expected more from the health tourism providers of Kerala than that of what they received.

Sasikumar, K and Santhosh, V.S (2010) made an attempt to identify the potential and marketability of various tourism products in Kerala. The study concludes that tourism marketing and promotion activities of various organizations in Kerala are required to be controlled and coordinated by a separate body to accomplish the high beam of sales in our tourist resources.

Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (2010) in its study "Analyzing the Factors Responsible for Slow-down of Tourist Arrivals in India", surveyed a total of 1272 tourists and 1051 tourist establishments at 10 destinations, examined the major causative factors of decline of tourist arrivals in India and the impact of these factors on the international tourist arrivals. The study succeeded in highlighting the overall scenario of tourism in the recent past, specifically those factors probably determining tourism demand, impact of crisis events on tourist arrivals and industrial activities and preparedness of industry participants to deal with crises of different nature in Indian context.

Santhosh, V.S (2011) in his study examined the policies and programmes of the Central and the State governments for the development of tourism industry in Kerala. The research has made an attempt to analyze the present tourism marketing practices in Kerala and the marketing mix of tourism viz., product, price, promotion, people and physical evidence. The foregoing review reveals that tourism industry plays a significant role in transforming the economy through eradication of poverty, generation of employment and contribution to the exchequer in the form of FEE. This socio-cultural and economic benefit necessitates promotion of this highly promising industry. A number of agencies are also functioning at global, national and regional levels both in government and private sectors for its promotion



and development. Though many studies on tourism have been conducted but they were restricted to areas such as its impact, contribution, marketing, employees' loyalty, career opportunities, challenges etc. But there were no exhaustive studies on tourism promotion and also the role played by the agencies in its promotion.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is descriptive in nature which examines the motivating factors which attracted the tourists about the services of the boat houses in Kumarakom, in Alleppey district. For the purpose of the study the Kumarakom house boats in backwaters of Kerala has been selected as study area. The main reason is that the researcher belongs to Kerala, and the backwater services are very unique in the study area mainly covering the four districts of the state - Kollam, Allappuzha, Kottayam and Kochi.

Primary data was administered to collect data through a well structured questionnaire using Rensis Likert's five point scales from 50 sample respondents using convenience sampling technique by adopting survey method. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Secondary data has been obtained from journals, articles, newspapers, websites and magazines, unpublished thesis and websites.

The collected data has been analyzed with the help of statistical packages namely SPSS 20 by using statistical tools such as KMO/ Bartlett's Test, Factor analysis and Cluster stimulation in Factor Analysis.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is limited only to geographical region of backwaters Kumarakom, Alleppey district
- The study is to restricted only to 50 sample respondents about their perceptions of the services of the house boats
- The analysis is purely based on the opinion provided by the sample respondents.

ANALYSIS & INTREPRETATIPONS

The main objective of this study was to determine the motivational factors of the tourists about the House boats services in Kumarakom, Alleppey District. The data collected from the sample respondents have been analyzed and interpreted for discussions. Reliability Test has



been used together with KMO and Bartlett's Test and Factor Analysis with Cluster stimulations to measure about the services of the house boats rendered to the tourists.

Motivating factors of the tourists about the House boats services in Alappuzha District

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.868
	Approx. Chi-Square	708.798
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	105
	Sig.	.000

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is used for testing the appropriateness of the factor model. The test is based on a chi square transformation of the correlation matrix. The chi- square value shows that the variables are appropriate for factor analysis. A higher value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistics indicates that the sample is adequate to explain the correlation between the pairs of variables with the other variables.

COMMUNALITIES

Variables	Extraction Values
Houseboat's ambience and appearance	.949
Safe drinking water	.949
Healthy and tasty food services	.947
Boat house is very clean and hygiene	.892
Safe night stay/ to reside	.862
Lighting facilities	.849
Special sea food preparations, beverages etc	.813
Sightseeing places of attractions	.775
Housekeeping facilities	.731
Hospitality	.731
Locker facilities	.724
Pest control measures	.712
Services of the caretakers/attenders/boat drivers	.644
Laundry services	.661
Indoor games, newspapers, magazines etc.	.643

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis



The amount of variance a variable share with all other variables included in the analysis can be inferred from the communalities table. Variable with higher extraction values show higher association with other variables. Variable such as Houseboat's ambience and appearance (.949),

Safe drinking water (.949), Healthy and tasty food services (.947), Boat house is very clean and hygiene (.892), Safe night stay/ to reside (.862), Lighting facilities (.849), Special sea food preparations, beverages etc (.813)., Sightseeing places of attractions, (.775)., Housekeeping facilities (.731)., Hospitality (.731)., Locker facilities (.724)., Pest Control facilities (.712)., Services of the caretakers/oarsmen/boat drivers (.644)., Laundry services (.661)., Indoor games, newspapers, magazines etc.(.643)., of the teachers show very low extraction value which show low correlation value.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.214	48.095	48.095	7.214	48.095	48.095	6.844	45.628	45.628
2	2.501	16.673	64.769	2.501	16.673	64.769	2.142	14.280	59.908
3	1.144	7.627	72.396	1.144	7.627	72.396	1.746	11.640	71.548
4	1.021	6.807	79.203	1.021	6.807	79.203	1.148	7.655	79.203
5	.677	4.513	83.716						
6	.669	4.458	88.174						
7	.482	3.211	91.386						
8	.361	2.409	93.795						
9	.331	2.205	96.000						
10	.213	1.420	97.420						
11	.158	1.052	98.472						
12	.118	.786	99.259						
13	.059	.396	99.655						
14	.043	.285	99.940						
15	.009	.060	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.



Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Safe drinking water	.971			
Healthy and tasty food services	.970			
Houseboat's ambience and appearance	.968		-.100	
Safe night stay/ to reside	.922			
Boat house is very clean and hygiene	.916		-.193	-.117
Lighting facilities	.903	-.135	-.125	
Special sea food preparations, beverages etc	.862	-.229		-.131
Indoor games, newspapers, magazines etc	.781		-.175	
Locker facilities		.820	.197	
Services of the caretakers/oarsmen /boat drivers		.737	-.182	.246
Pest control measures	-.174	.702	.416	.126
Laundry services		.526	.376	-.491
Housekeeping facilities		.176	.833	
Hospitality	-.323		.709	.345
Sightseeing places of attractions	-.102	.206	.238	.816

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

The above illustrates that the principal component analysis and rotated factor loading method is used for stimulating factors. From the above table, it is observed that out of 15 factors, 4 factors were identified by the rotation method. The total percentage of variance in the factors shows 79.203 percent.

Clustering of stimulating on the Motivating factors of the tourists about the House boats services in Alappuzha District

Factor	Particulars	Rotated Factor Loadings
I	Safe drinking water	.971
	Healthy and tasty food services	.970
	Houseboat's ambience and appearance	.968
	Safe night stay/ to reside	.922
	Boat house is very clean and hygiene	.916
	Lighting facilities	.903
	Special sea food preparations, beverages etc	.862
	Indoor games, newspapers, magazines etc	.781
II	Locker facilities	.820
	Services of the caretakers/attenders /boat drivers	.737
	Pest control measures	.702



	Laundry services	.526
III	Housekeeping facilities	.833
	Hospitality	.709
IV	Sightseeing places of attractions	.816

The above table depicts that clustering of stimulating Motivating factors of the tourists about the House boats services in Aleppey District. The table shows the various variables taken for the study to analyse the perception of the tourists about the house boats services. The clustered variables are shown with values ranging from Factor I, Factor II, Factor III and Factor IV.

FACTOR I - consists of the following variables (1-8) such as : “Safe drinking water, Healthy and tasty food services”, Houseboat’s ambience and appearance, Safe night stay/ to reside, Boat house is very clean and hygiene, Lighting facilities, Special sea food preparations, beverages etc., Indoor games, newspapers, magazines etc.

FACTOR II - consists of the next variables (9- 12) such as Locker facilities, Services of the caretakers/attenders /boat drivers., Pest control measures., and Laundry services.

FACTOR III - The next variables (13- 14) such as “Housekeeping facilities” and “Hospitality”

FACTOR IV- The next variable (15) is named as “ Sightseeing places of attractions”. Hence, the above factor that stimulates the Perception of the tourists about the house boats services are: Factor I, factor II, Factor II and Factor IV .

CONCLUSION

Kerala was considered once as an untapped beauty in south India, and a far-off place, to be visited after covering the other popular places situated in north India. But in 1986 tourism gained an industry status in Kerala. Today, an innovative holiday idea has restored these majestic representatives of a unique culture and with them their makers. Back waters are admirable tourist’s spot which attracts the iterant regularly. On 10th June, 2010,

The District Collector N. Padmakumar, has urged the houseboats owners to take measures to improve services. He stated the need for collective efforts to improve the quality of services, awareness on safety and training the employees. (The Hindu 10.06.2010, “Call to improve quality of houseboat services”)



The Tourism department must take due care and diligence to overcome shortcomings if any. Tourism marketing involves tactical planning and accomplishment of various marketing strategies by adopting SWOC analysis. It must take into consideration the major other factors such as tourists, their likes and dislikes. The strengths and weaknesses of competitors, tourism objectives, communicative media and immediate risk factors to be taken as a vital need for the need of the hour for the tourists visiting Kerala. Hence marketing strategies must be designed on the recent trends to create customer values. Foreign tourists should be well honored and taken care by the State.

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