

TOURISTS' OPINION TOWARDS ECO-TOURISM

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Abstract:

Ecotourism is frequently recommended as a technique for encouraging conservation, however the evidence is conflicting. Since local perceptions of natural resources and conservation might play a significant role in determining conservation behaviour, it is crucial to understand whether ecotourism has an impact on how positively local communities view conservation. One tourist's behaviour can also be used as a stand-in for the behaviors of other tourists when evaluating the social function of the tourist. Tourists set the societal norms of behaviour in the tourism industry by their actions. This study was carried out to examine visitor perceptions of ecotourism in Karnataka because issues relating to natural resource protection and ecotourism are currently top-of-mind for the general population. The research study includes three categories: ecotourism development, tourist behaviour, and awareness level on ecotourism. The study's findings show that there is a critical need for increased public involvement, programmes to raise awareness, government initiatives, and instruction on responsible tourist behaviour among travelers.

Keywords: Ecotourism, ecotourism development, tourist behaviour and awareness.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism brings many other benefits to both economy and society such as the increase of revenue, creating many job opportunities, the strong attracting of investment resources, especially strategic investors and the tourism industry also contributes to restoring, preserving, and promoting the value of heritage, tangible and intangible relics in localities. The development of tourism significantly contributes to poverty reduction and economic restructuring (Giao, H.N.K., Vuong, B.N., Phuong, N.N.D., & DAT, N.T. 2021). Any tourism program which is: nature - based, ecologically sustainable, where education and interpretation is a major concept and where local people are benefited can be called ecotourism (V., Sivakami; V. T., Bindu-2020). Eco-tourism as a modern tourism model has become the popular trend with the fastest development in the tourism industry; tourists' eco-tourism behavior has become the key to the environmental protection of eco-tourism destinations. Ecotourism refers to ethical travel to untouched natural areas with the intention of preserving the environment and the welfare of the local populace (AbhilashaMazumdar1 , Dr. Parbin Sultana (2020).

Eco tourism in India: A select few locations, like the Himalayan region, allow you to take in Mother Nature's bounty. The first planned ecotourism destination in India was Thenmala, established to serve eco-tourists and lovers of the outdoors. The geography of India is home to a diverse range of plants and animals. The expansion of the wildlife resource has been aided

by the declaration of numerous wildlife areas and national parks. There are currently 441 sanctuaries and 80 national parks in India. The practice of poaching has largely ended.

Eco tourism in Karnataka: Karnataka's forests and ecosystems have benefited from eco-tourism, making travel and adventure there a thrill. They have successfully blended the objectives of protecting the environment and enhancing local communities to develop an efficient ecotourism system. Travel and tourism as a whole contributed INR 6,385.1 billion (6.6 percent of GDP) to the Indian GDP in 2012. It is anticipated that this amount will increase by 7.3 percent in 2013 and by 7.9 percent to INR 14,722.3 billion in 2023.

Tourists and behaviour: The most significant indicator or prediction of future tourist behaviour is current tourist behaviour. Taking into mind the social function of the tourist, a visitor's behaviour might also be a sign of how other tourists would act. Tourists' actions establish the social rules of conduct in the tourism environment. Other consumers likewise adhere to these standards; those who have not yet both those who travel or engage in touristic activities. Current tourist behaviour is the most important predictor or indicator of future visitor behaviour.

A visitor's behaviour might also be an indication of how other visitors would behave when considering the social role of the tourist. The behaviour of tourists establishes the social norms in the surroundings for tourism. These norms are followed by other consumers as well; those who have not persons who visit places or take part in tourism activities.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researcher has reviewed more than 50 articles for the study and found very few articles on the above topic. Therefore selected the topic on tourist opinion

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

India is renowned for the richness of its landscape, culture, traditions, holidays, and religious practices. Indian is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, and the country's tourism sector contributes significantly to economy. One of the popular travel destinations is the state of Karnataka. The negative impact that tourism has on the environment is a drawback. ,tourism is needed as a way to lessen the impact of tourism on nature and natural resources in order to prevent the load on these resources. This study's main focus is on travelers' perception towards eco-tourism in Karnataka.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the type of tourism and the tourist attitude in tourism spot in Karnataka.
2. To study the tourists awareness on ecotourism and its impact on the development eco-tourism
3. To study the social responsibility of tourist in the tourism places.
4. Research methodology

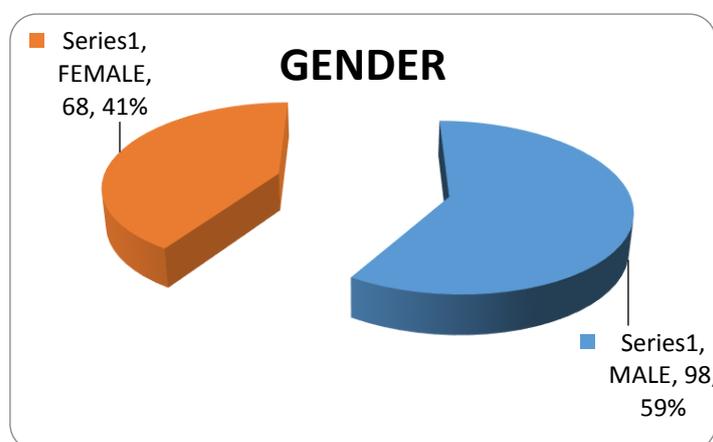
Research design: Descriptive research design is adopted in this research study.

Data collection: In the study area of Karnataka, the six places only selected in this survey. These are: BR hills, Nandi hills, Chikkamagalur, Kemmanagundi, Sakleshpur and Savanadurga. 30 questionnaires were issued to travelers in all six places total 180 out of which 166 filled, valid questionnaires were received and same information was used to analysis.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Profile Of The Respondents

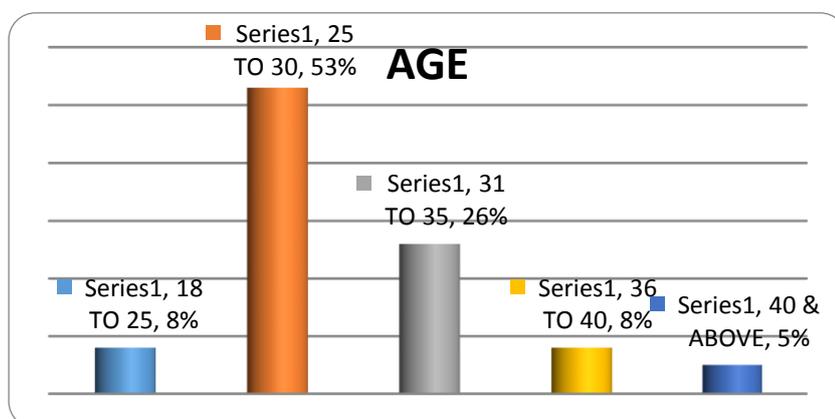
4.1.1 Gender



GENDER	
MALE	FEMALE
98	68

Interpretation: Above data analysis interpret that male tourist having greater interest in the select the tourism places and they are takes the decision on destination of tourist place.

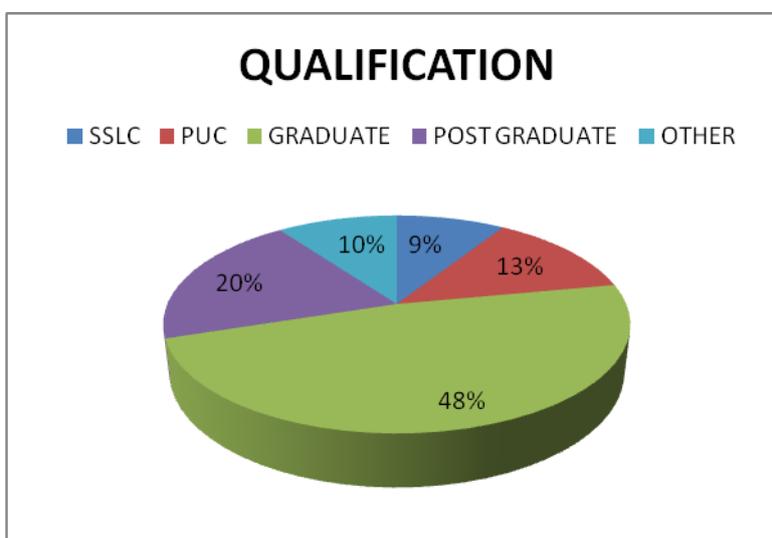
4.1.2: Age



AGE	
18 TO 25	8%
25 TO 30	53%
31 TO 35	26%
36 TO 40	8%
40 & ABOVE AGE	5%

Interpretation: From the above data analysis one can interpret that 25 to 30 years old energetic respondents are more show their interest in tourism spot.

4.1.3 Qualification

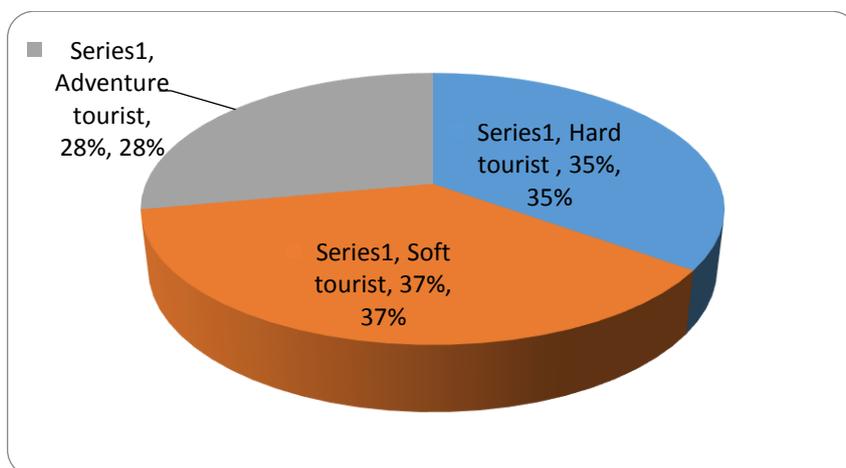


QUALIFICTAION	
SSLC	9%
PUC	13%
GRADUATE	48%
POST GRADUATE	20%
OTHER	10%

Interpretation: From the above data analysis results, one can interpret that half of the respondents population have completed their degree and most of them are also holding a master's degree which reflect that the educated tourists more interested in tourism places.

4.2 Attitude of Tourist: The tourism spots are classified in to three categories. Hard tourist, Soft tourist and Adventure tourist. The following table is shows the tourist attitude in the three categories.

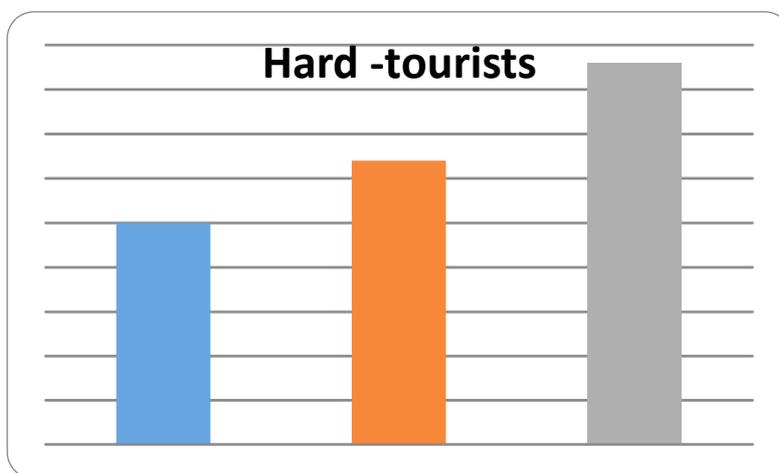
Hard -tourist	Soft -tourist	Adventure -tourist
35%	37%	28%



Interpretation: From the above data analysis one can interpret that respondents are more or less equally interested in all three types of tourism. Soft tourists are more comparable with other two types of tourists.

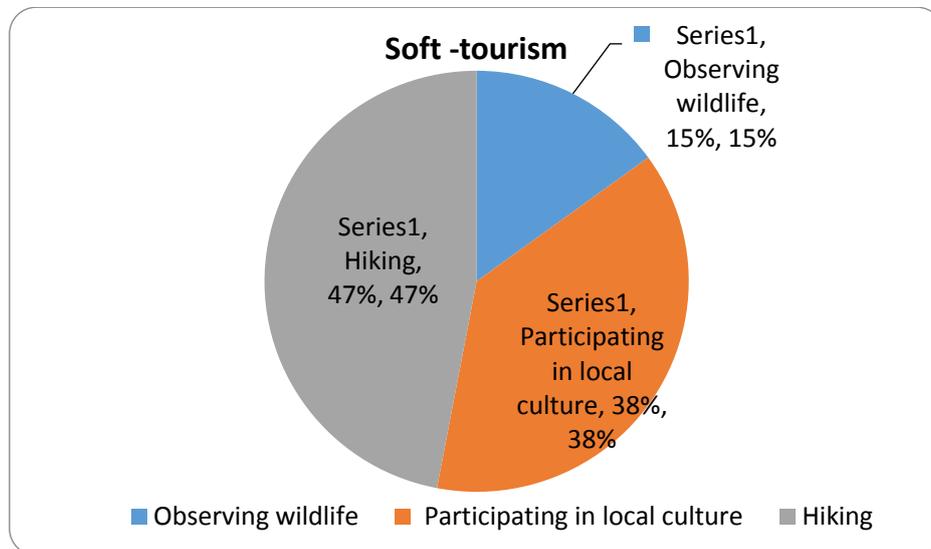
4.2.1 Hard - tourists:

Hard -Tourists		
Bird watching	Nature photography	Botanical trips
25%	32%	43%



Interpretation; In Hard,-tourists majority of the respondents are willing to participate in Botanical trips followed by nature photography and bird watching.

Soft -Tourist		
Observing wildlife	Participating in local culture	Hiking
15%	38%	47%



Interpretation: The respondents were more interested in hiking activity as being part of Soft-tourists and least interested in observing the wild life.

Adventure -Tourist					
Surfing	Scuba diving	Snorkeling	Wind surfing	Whitewater rafting	Sport fishing
12%	47%	9%	15%	10%	7%

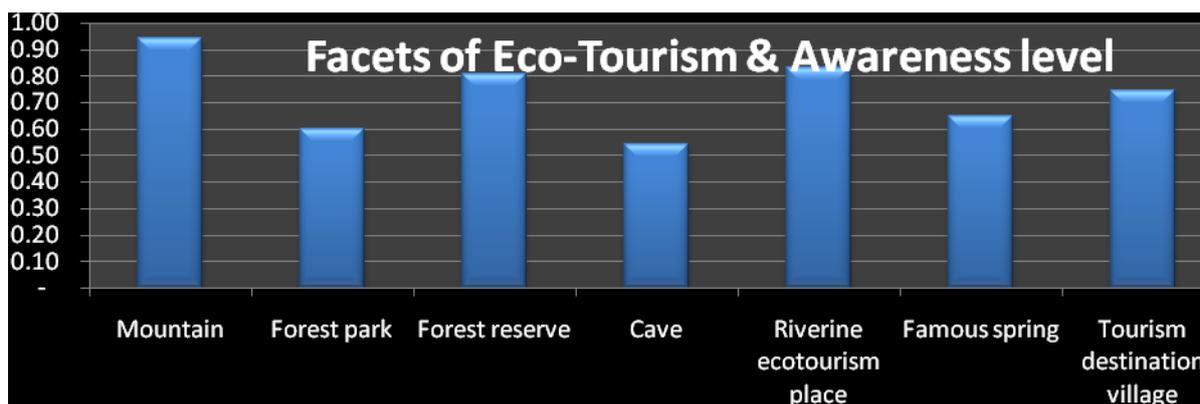


Interpretation: As part of adventures, -tourists respondents were more interested in scuba diving and wind surfing followed by surfing and white water rafting.

Interpretation: The study's results indicated that, in order to advance, tourism, there is a critical need to raise public knowledge of natural resources, encourage public participation, and conserve biodiversity and the natural world.

4.3tourists Awareness on Eco-Tourism

Facets Of Eco-Tourism	Awareness Level
Mountain: Climbing, mountaineering, sightseeing, recreational camping,	0.95
Forest park: Walking pathway, Scientific and recreational camping, jungle trekking	0.60
Forest reserve: Scientific tourism, research station (plant biodiversity, heritage reserve for endangered Zagros Forest species (mainly Quercuspersica, Quercusinfectoria and Q. libani)	0.81
Cave: Mass visitors, camping in surrounding forest	0.83
Riverine ecotourism place: River cruise, recreational camping (in river borders), recreational /hook fishing, sight-seeing	0.54
Famous springs: Public recreation and entertainment around them	0.65
Tourism destination village: Handy crafts (carpet, rug,), traditional food production (grape juice, raisins, pomegranate paste, animal oil, medicinal plants, essential oil extraction), traditional agricultural activities (built terraces, orchards, animal husbandry)	0.75



Interpretation: The majority of tourists define ecotourism as maintaining natural areas, camping among forests and caves, scientific travel, and visiting research facilities (plant biodiversity reserves). The additional activities they classify as ecotourism include purchasing handicrafts, visiting forest villages, sampling local cuisine, and taking a river boat.

4.4 Factors Affect on Development of Eco Tourism

Factors Affect On Development Of Eco-Tourism	Mean	S.D	C.V
Conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity	4.4	0.5	0.2
Job creation and live hood resilience	3.45	0.5	0.2
Monitoring and control of land degradation	3	0.8	0.3
Participation of public	4.5	0.5	0.2
Increase public awareness on natural resources	4.8	0.4	0.1
Proper extension and management on local festival and cultural shows	4.2	0.5	0.1
Necessary services such as camping sites, car park, restroom., rubbish bin,	4.3	0.5	0.2
Effectives security for international tourist	4	0.5	0.2

4.5 Social Responsibility of Tourist

Social Responsibility of Tourist	Mean	SD	CV
Minimize negative impacts (social, environmental, economic)	4.83	0.6	0.1
Enhance the well-being of local communities	4.43	0.7	0.2
Make positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage	4.64	0.7	0.2
Culturally sensitive and build local pride and confidence	4.51	0.6	0.1
Respect local customs, culture, and tradition	4.91	0.4	0.1
Use Local Resources	3.53	0.7	0.2
Lessen Your Trash Impact	3.54	0.7	0.2
Generates greater economic benefits for local people	4.93	0.3	0.1
Become a temporary local, not a tourist	4.48	0.7	0.2
Do your Research	4.78	0.6	0.1

Interpretation: Respecting regional traditions, culture, and customs are three most important behaviors of a responsible tourist in promoting and engaging in eco-tourism are to maximize economic benefits for locals, minimize adverse effects (social, environmental, and economic), and make constructive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage.

5. CONCLUSION

Ecotourism can be a significant economic and educational endeavor. It has the potential to reach a larger audience and foster conservation support while educating the general public about the value and fragility of such ecosystems. It also encourages non-consumptive use of wilderness areas for the benefit of nearby communities that rely on these delicate environments. The amount of information and education provided to tourists influences their behaviour. It is encouraging that ecotourism has the potential to positively influence environmental awareness and attitudes in people who are not directly impacted by it. According to the research study, the respondents had overall positive environmental behaviors. The research results demonstrated that tourists were pro-environment and that they had numerous concerns for the environment. They also demonstrated that tourists are aware of their role and responsibility, the effects of their activities on the destination site, and are somewhat willing to change their behaviour for the long-term sustainability of ecotourism.

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