

A Study on Trends to Promote Ethical and Responsible Tourism

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Abstract— The idea of "responsible tourism" is dissected in great detail within the framework of the research that pertains to tourism, as is its current application. In our opinion, the phrase's present use accomplishes nothing to advance the field of tourist studies or the terminology used in the industry. We then define responsible travel according to our own standards and argue that, although it is interconnected with other sustainability efforts travel terms like alternative, eco, ethical, green, soft, pro-poor, geo, integrated, and community-based travel also fall under this category, it also forms its own analytical domain. When discussing sustainability, we believe it is important to keep this in mind. According to our paper, the term has far more limited use outside of the regions where it has been acknowledged (such as South Africa and Kerala). Within the tourism business, we identified this sector as the most promising opportunity for the CSR goal to be realized in practice. The project to promote responsible tourism in Kumarakon, which may be found in the state of Kerala, has been presented in this article as a response to a plea made by Flyvberg (2006) for exemplars and paradigmatic case studies to acquire expertise in a particular industry. One of the most frequented tourist locations in all of Kerala is the town of Kumarakon. In the following discussion, we will analyse the distinctive governance structure of Kerala as well as the significance that tourism plays in the economy of the state. The 'how' of the implementation and the impact that has come from the efforts that have been made toward after that, an explanation of responsible tourism at the state and municipal level is provided. The next step is to define the overarching, non-mandatory principles that may be necessary for the successful implementation of policies and procedures pertaining to responsible tourism. In contrast to this, a strategy is described that makes use of the ad hoc adoption of 'responsible' practices that may be found in the private sector.

Index Terms- Responsible Tourism, Tourism, Corporate Social Responsibility

I. INTRODUCTION

Discussions on being a responsible traveller have been a regular part of the area of tourism studies since the 1980s. There are many different types of tourism, such as community-based tourism, integrated tourism, geo-tourism, alternative tourism, ecotourism, ethical tourism, and green tourism. soft tourism, which assists those who are less fortunate, and ethical tourism are examples of these forms of tourism, along with a plethora of other sustainability efforts, originated in the tourist literature as a reaction to the rising number of reports of social and environmental concerns linked with the industry as a whole. Alternative tourism, ecotourism, ethical tourism, green tourism, soft tourism, pro-poor tourism, integrated tourism, community-based tourism, and green tourism are all types of tourism that are examples of programs that promote sustainability. These notions have a significant relationship to the concept of responsible tourism. By supporting environmental conservation, cultural preservation, economic development, and social peace, these sustainable alternatives to mass tourism strive to enhance the lives of residents, especially those from disadvantaged groups. This is accomplished by attracting tourists to the area. Despite the fact that such projects contribute to the promotion of sustainable tourism concepts, their actual implementation is complicated by a variety of political, economic, and commercial obstacles.

In the following sentence, we will discuss the idea of "responsible tourism," as well as its application in contemporary academic writing on the subject of tourism. We show that the idea, in the manner in which it is now used, makes no contribution to the conceptual landscape of tourist trends and nomenclatures since it implies everything in its broadest sense. Our concluding comments on the topic are outlined in the

following paragraphs. In the next section, we will show that despite the fact that our knowledge is still extensive, it focuses on certain areas of interest that make the conceptual emphasis, and thus, the contribution to tourist studies, more evident. After this, we are going to discuss the methodology that we used, and after that, we are going to get into the meat of the case study. The second thing that we are going to do is examine the relevance of the word "responsible tourism," using our own definition of the term. In conclusion, a discussion of the implications the case study has for policy is presented. In the last part of the article, a summary of the most important issues is presented.

- Responsible tourism as a concept

In addition, the challenges that are associated with "sustainable tourism" are then brought into debates about "responsible tourism," which is an issue in and of itself since it muddies the line between the two concepts. For instance, the discussion on sustainability is often attacked for lacking conceptual clarity and for suggesting micro solutions to what is a macro problem, namely unsustainable agriculture. This criticism is leveled against the argument rather frequently. In addition, the discussion is based on the assumption that sustainable development can only be achieved via certain methods. Wheeler (1991) expresses skepticism over the expansion of green tourism initiatives and argues that responsible travel will not alleviate the problems facing the business as long as the number of visitors traveling to different parts of the globe continues to increase. It is an inevitability that the adverse consequences of tourism will increase concurrently with the expansion of the sector as a whole. As a consequence of this, if we wish to increase tourism in a reasonable way, we will have to restrict the number of guests who come to our location.

Sustainable travel and corporate social responsibility
The shifting ethical values of consumers and the rising pressure from a variety of stakeholders on firms to be more ethical were the driving forces behind the rise of corporate social responsibility efforts. According to Dodds and Joppe (2005), the term "corporate social responsibility" (often abbreviated as "CSR") describes the obligation of a business to take into consideration the concerns of all of the parties who have a stake in

its operations and activities in order to advance the cause of sustainable development. In principle, companies might reap benefits from corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives by instituting environmentally friendly business practices that save costs, win over employees, and elevate the company's image. They are accountable for a variety of things, including but not limited to ethical sourcing, waste reduction and disposal that does not include exploitation, equitable employment, accurate advertising, fair pricing, community partnerships, and responsible resource management.

But at the end of the day, profits are what push enterprises forward. Any concessions made at the expense of a company's economic viability require either particular governmental restrictions or consumer demand that favour those businesses' techniques (Henderson, 2007). In most circumstances, businesses make investment decisions primarily on the bottom line rather than any feeling of moral duty. Companies typically adopt CSR practices due to the modified, despite this, the business value still focuses on making a profit and may arise from either the need to comply with legal/policy mandates or due to concerns about public perception and the potential for long-term commercial gain. This value can result from either the need to comply with legal/policy mandates or due to concerns about public perception and the potential for long-term commercial gain. A business-led coalition in the UK called Business in the Community (BITC) was established to support corporate social responsibility (CSR).

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To study trends and promote ethical and responsible tourism
2. To study responsible tourism

- Research Methods

Case studies are going to be included as part of the study plan. According to Yin (2021), The evaluation of occurrences in the natural setting in which they occur is one of the distinctive qualities of research conducted through case studies. Studies of phenomena that need careful attention to the particular people, institutions, imageries, and events that take place within a given environment in order to properly

explain and account for their genesis are a good fit for this technique of inquiry since it allows for a more granular level of observation. This would allow one to advance from the level of 'beginners' to the level of 'virtuoso experts'. As Flyvberg (1987) pointed out, this is an argument in favor of learning from successful models, and Kuhn, in turn, was quoted by Flyvberg: If a field does not have a significant number of case studies that have been carried out successfully, then that field does not systematically create exemplars, and a field that is not successful does not have exemplars.

Flyvberg provides an additional definition of the term "paradigmatic case study." In this specific instance, in the field that this issue pertains to, efforts are now being undertaken to either conceptualize a metaphor or found a school of thought. In this sense, paradigmatic occurrences are not necessarily extraordinary or even regular; rather, they call attention to certain characteristics of the domain under examination.

It is not difficult to determine, with a reasonable degree of confidence, if a particular situation. The method by which the research is carried out, the reactions of the research community, the population that is being investigated, and maybe even the general public will all play a role in the outcome of the study. The strategic selection of a case is only one of the factors that will be considered. The significance of a case study is directly proportional to the amount of weight that is given to the validity claims that are made about the case study as well as the location of those validity claims in the discourse in relation to other validity claims.

As a result, the body of knowledge provides a backward explanation in the vein of the proverb the proof of the pudding is in the eating, given that there are few guidelines for the selection of such scenarios. This is due to the fact that Kerala is the location of this case study. In addition, the state has made important institutional changes in order to foster bottom-up planning with direct public input. These reforms have been adopted by the state. In addition to that, there have been reports of new programs that aim to alleviate poverty, such as the Kudumbashree. The

initiative to promote responsible tourism in Kerala was just recently launched by the state government.

Because of its intrinsic intrigue, our work will significantly benefit from having this rare incident serve as its background. As was said before, in the event that responsible tourism is to undergo a reevaluation and emerge as an extension of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda, it's helpful to examine how this conceptualization is going to be defined and clarify what people already understand by the phrase "responsible tourism." Stated differently, it is important to elucidate the many interpretations that exist of the phrase "responsible tourism."

Since it is common knowledge that Kumarakom is committed to practicing responsible tourism, there is an abundance of secondary data from which to draw. Because this was exploratory research, the only data we had access to for our first examination came from secondary sources. According to Cowton (1998), secondary data analysis is not only a valid research method in its own right, but it is also a useful initial step that may pave the way for the launch of primary research. This is the argument that is made throughout the article. Although the arguments that we provide in this study may not be flawless, and even if further primary research is required to completely investigate and develop them, we believe that they are still relevant for the disciplines of tourism and planning.

After that, we will present a brief overview of Kerala's tourism sector and proceed to explore the political climate of the state. In the next section of this essay, we will examine how Kumarakom, which is located in the state of Kerala in India, has embraced the concept of responsible tourism. In the third section of this essay, we go further into our arguments, and in the fourth, we wrap up our discussion and draw conclusions.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

KERALA'S INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

The Indian state of Kerala may be found on the Arabian Sea's eastern shore, not far from the southern tip of the Indian subcontinent. As of the census in 2011, the population was around 33.4 million,

according to estimates. Despite the state's very moderate economic growth, it has attracted the attention of development scholars due to its relatively high rates of literacy, health, and gender equality, as well as its relatively high quality of life. It has been suggested that redistributive programs, public action, and historical circumstances have combined to produce. According to Parayil (2000), those who are socially and economically disenfranchised need land reforms, a public distribution system for food, and other sorts of social welfare programs. Land reforms, a coordinated food delivery network, and a plethora of other social measures are among the many programs that have been implemented target the economically and socially disadvantaged and are examples of redistributive policies.

Concerning the management of the organization, the People's Planning Campaign, which began in 1996 as a bottom-up planning movement and incorporates participatory budgeting, has since been institutionalized. This movement is known as participatory budgeting. Planning from the bottom up enables communities to prioritize projects within a certain budget, as well as plan for them, carry them out, and monitor their progress. This is an annual event, and it is currently used to plan for about one fourth of the state budget that has been devolved to local governments in the state of Kerala. In other words, this event is held in Kerala. In general, the effort has been quite successful, particularly in the more rural parts of the country. Local communities have the freedom to devise and carry out programs that are economically, socially, and infrastructure-focused in order to meet their requirements in the most effective manner.

This investigation also makes extensive use of the data collected by the Kudumbashree program that is carried out in Kerala. Two of the underlying goals of this project to alleviate poverty that is being funded by the state are the empowerment of women (by means of women's collectives) and the growth of the local economy (by means of close integration with the local government, which is also empowered). Self-help is placed at the core of the curriculum, which takes an intersectional approach to tackling the issue of poverty. According to what is said in the manifesto:

To eradicate absolute poverty within ten years through concerted community action under local government leadership, by facilitating community organization of the poor to combine self-help with demand-led convergence of available services and resources to tackle the multiple dimensions and manifestations of poverty, holistically highlighting.

The structure that allows for the achievement of these objectives relies heavily on the local government structure shown in Figure 1. District offices under the purview of the State Poverty Eradication Mission are the ones in charge of overall coordination. The Neighborhood groups are comprised of ten to twenty women hailing from economically challenged homes, and they are arranged in a geographical fashion. At the level of the ward, these groups are consolidated into Area Development Societies, and at the level of the municipality, they are consolidated into Community Development Societies. The poor's location-specific needs may be more easily accommodated by policies thanks to the facilitation provided by spatial planning. These criteria are used as the impetus for change and the development of unique, complex programming through bottom-up planning.

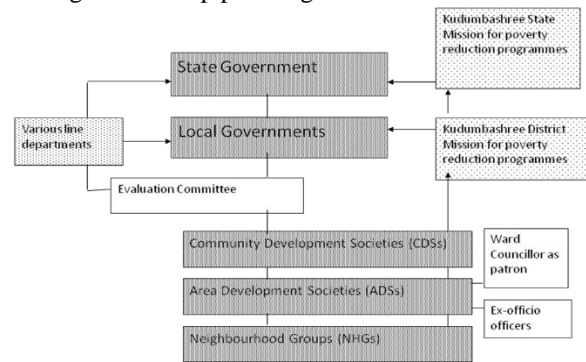


Figure 1: structure of the Kudumbashree Program's organization.

Kudumbashree units are engaged in a wide variety of fields, including but not limited to initiatives pertaining to housing, the education of children, cultural assistance, and so on. They also work on other projects including micro-enterprises (production and service), micro-finance for thrift and credit operations, micro-enterprises (both production and service), and women's empowerment via capacity building and debate.

The program has had indisputable success in decreasing poverty and increasing the independence of women, but it has had less of a consistent influence on the creation of micro-enterprises. This is in contrast to the undeniable success the program has had in improving the independence of women. In the world of business, there is no shortage of instances of victory, but there are also an equal number of examples of failure and struggle. In spite of the fact that Kudumbashree units get a lot of assistance, it is still difficult for them to sell their products.

- Industries related to tourism in Kerala

Because of its breathtaking natural beauty, Kerala has been a popular tourist destination in recent years. The millennium edition of National Geographic magazine ranked it as one of the top 10 "paradises found" anywhere in the globe. Prior to the 1980s, agriculture was the primary source of income for almost half of the state's people. Despite this, the size of the sector has decreased as the viability of farming has decreased. According to Tharamangalam (1997), the state's low level of industrial activity may be attributed to a number of different variables, one of which is a politically active trade union movement. As a result, tourism was singled out as a potentially game-changing method of contributing to the growth of the economy. As a direct consequence of this realization in the late 1980s, a variety of programs geared at the promotion and growth of tourism were initiated.

TRKL stands for Tourist Resorts Kerala Limited, and it was founded with the intention of initiating public-private joint projects with the most successful hotel corporations in the nation. Additionally, the Department of Tourism has been responsible for coordinating the Grant Kerala Shopping Festival (GKSF) from its inception in 2001 and has been publishing an annual calendar of Indigenous cultural events since the same year. Since the year 2000, the state has been actively participating in major worldwide tourism trade fairs, and it has also established its very own trade event, which is known as the Kerala Travel Mart. During this time period, attempts were undertaken to standardize ayurvedic procedures and encourage health (ayurveda) tourism by giving resources to local practitioners and health resorts. Both of these goals were accomplished.

- Sustainable travel in Kerala

The Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala, in association with the International Centre for Responsible Tourism and EQUATIONS (a non-governmental activist organization and 'hard' campaigner on tourism-related issues) held a state-level consultation on the topic on February 2nd and 3rd, 2017 in Thiruvananthapuram, the state capital. The topic of discussion was the subject of a state-level consultation. The tourist industry, local governments civil society groups, and state government agencies each had their own separate breakout sessions throughout the conference. Following this, each of these groups brought to light issues relating to the economy, society, and the environment. These issues were then documented in a workshop document, which was then used to provide direction for the creation of a plan to encourage responsible tourism. As a result of this, a State-Level Responsible Tourism Committee, also known as the SLRTC, was established with forty members coming from a variety of stakeholder organizations.

At the first ever SLRTC meeting, it was decided that four various types of locations in Kerala would serve as test sites for the responsible tourism project. These destinations were chosen because of their significance as tourist attractions, but also because of their varying visitor numbers and their sensitivity to the environment. Destinations such as Kovalam (which is almost at capacity on the coast), Kumarakom (which is known for its environmentally sensitive backwaters), Wayanad (which is known for its widely dispersed population pattern and its hill resort), and Thekkady. In addition to this, the group was supposed to include of companies and individuals that claim to have expertise in a number of sectors that are significant to the management of the tourism industry. Committees at the state level were entrusted with the work of creating guidelines for responsible tourism at destinations, while committees at the local level were tasked with finding out how to put those ideas into effect in specific towns. The state tourist agency was entrusted with assisting the local governments in the development of the initiatives, which the local governments were then tasked with carrying out and monitoring to see how successful they were at the destination level. The organizational structure that is recommended for the promotion of responsible

tourism is shown in Figure 2 which may be seen below.

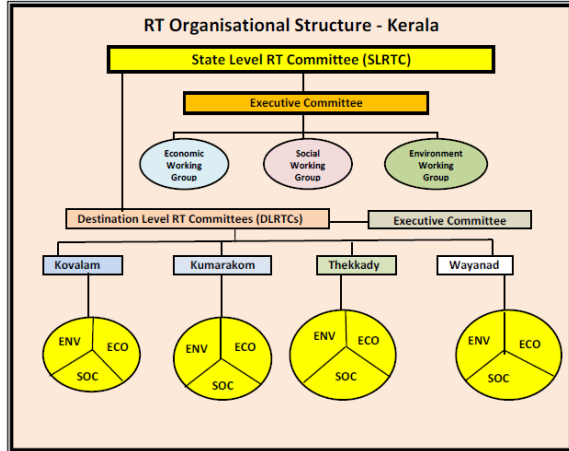


Figure: 2: Responsible Tourism in Kerala: A Proposed Organizational Structure

The responsible tourism approach was significantly improved by the establishment of a connection with the Kudumbashree program. As was said before, the Kudumbashree project has a strong aim to eliminate poverty via the facilitation and development of entrepreneurial skills amongst women, while also contributing to the development of the regional economy by means of the execution of program convergence. The federated Kudumbashree entities are not only a significant presence politically and socially, but they are also involved in the bulk of the state's attempts to administer the local level at the municipal level. The Kudumbashree initiative envisioned responsible tourism as a means to alleviate poverty by broadening access to markets for locally produced goods and services and by fostering the development of local companies. Since the company's inception, one of Kudumbashree's most persistent challenges has been the inability of its many business divisions to successfully sell the products they produce (Oommen, 2008; Pat, 2005). Because of this, they had a great deal of interest in the project about responsible tourism.

Concerns about the adoption of responsible tourism practices were voiced by attendees at a workshop that was held on the state level in February of 2007. The Kerala Institute of Tourism and Travel Studies (KITTS) conducted an analysis of the difficulties associated with the local food procurement for hotels in the four locations that were selected and outlined

the issues that are present in this industry. These problems were found to be widespread across all of the locations. According to the findings of this study, hotel owners could be receptive to the idea of purchasing food from local suppliers in principle, but there are a lot of obstacles that need to be overcome before this can happen in reality. Take, for instance:

- Throughout the year, there was a fluctuation in the demand for fruits and vegetables, which required flexible distribution methods. It was necessary to have the capacity to react promptly to swings in customer demand.
- It was essential to negotiate reasonable prices. The relevance of quality control of food items meant that in some circumstances local sourcing was more expensive and prices were lower elsewhere.
- Many of the local food producers were fairly modest firms, which allowed hotels to conduct business with them on an individual basis.

The above problems made formulating a strategy very necessary. The local governments located at the destinations that were chosen were given the responsibility of drafting a comprehensive strategy and initiating a variety of initiatives that adhere to the principles of responsible tourism. We're going to zero in on one spot, Kumarakom, and detail the activities that are taking on there. This area was picked in large part due to the generally favorable reputation it has among all of the Keralites.

- Responsible Tourism in Kumarakom
The majority of Kumarakom consists of agricultural land and is mostly involved in agriculture. It is located on the Vembanad Lake shore of Kerala, which is the state's southernmost coast. Although it covers a total area of 51.66 square kilometers, only 27.54 of those square kilometers are suitable for human habitation and agricultural use. Rice paddies cover a total area of about 12.5 square kilometers. Before the development of the tourism sector, agriculture, fishing, daily wage work, and shell-mining from the backwaters were the major means of survival for the region's population of around 24,900 people (Shyamalal, 2008). The region is well-known for its one-of-a-kind and sensitive backwaters environment, which consists of a bird sanctuary, rice fields, mangroves, and a network of inland water canals. This environment has earned the

region a lot of attention. The large Vembanad Lake, which is an important component of the natural setting in this area, is one of the primary sources of revenue for the city of Kumarakom.

The Government of Kerala leased a historic resort to the Taj Group in the year 1989 (Equations, 2007; Sebastian and Rajagopalan, 2008). The Taj Group is one of the leading hotel chains in India. This resulted in an increase in tourism, which by the early 1990s had established itself as one of Kumarakom's primary economic pillars. Because of this, tourism developed in a way that was more organic than strategic, which resulted in high hotel and resort prices for high spenders, widespread conversion of paddy fields to high value resort sites that had negative effects on the environment, skyrocketing land prices, decreased ability of locals to enjoy the lake, unwanted sociosexual advances from visitors, and a lack of community investment in the industry as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The phrase "responsible tourism" has been making the rounds in academic publications on the travel and tourism business as of late, and we have examined what its use may mean. We examined many instances of the term's use in the study of tourism and suggested that it has grown so pervasive in the area that its potential conceptual contribution has been lost in the mix as a result of its overuse. Instead, we suggested that the term's limited practical application in locations where it has been recognized (such as South Africa and Kerala, for example) supports a smaller scope of use and should be taken into consideration when defining the term's meaning. Within the tourism sector, we were able to identify this as an instance of the CSR strategy being put into effect. Although there are theoretical works on responsible tourism as well as statements of purpose and directions for putting these into practice, the tourism industry has not documented too many case studies that are based on exemplars.

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