



*Abstract of Doctoral Dissertation<sup>1</sup>*

## **The Role of District Tourism Promotion Councils in the Promotion of Tourism in Kerala**

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### **I. Introduction**

Tourism is one of the most successful and fast growing business activities in the world. Economic diversification and technological improvement has created a very conducive environment for tourism development. Tourism acts as a driving force for employment generation, poverty alleviation and social harmony. It is considered as an agent of social change bridging gaps among nations, regions and people. Travel and tourism is one of the world's largest industries, employing over 235 million people and generating 9.2 per cent of global GDP in 2010.

Tourism, being the largest service industry in India, contributes 6.23 per cent to the national GDP and 8.78 per cent of the total employment

in India. The Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTA) in India during 2010 was 5.58 million and the foreign exchange earnings from tourism in India during 2010 were Rs.64889 crore. The government of India has taken concerted steps in the promotion and development of tourism industry at national, regional and local levels.

Kerala, being a role model in tourism development among Indian States, is considered as a 'tourist paradise'. has been significantly successful in its tourism endeavours through a focused promotion. A balanced climate, green vegetation, natural tourist spots, fully literate population etc can be considered as Kerala's strength in tourism. Tourism in Kerala is really non-seasonal in nature. In 2010, Kerala attracted 6.59 lakhs of foreign tourists and 85.95 lakhs

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of domestic tourists, thus making it one of the fastest growing tourism destinations in the world. As a major economic activity, tourism contributes 9.0 per cent of GDP of Kerala during 2010. The total revenue generated from tourism comes to 17348 crore.

## II. Statement of the Problem

The flagship of tourism industry in Kerala is the Department of Tourism. KTDC, BRDC, TRKL, DTPCs, KITTS, KIHMS and a host of government departments such as Forest and Wildlife, Irrigation, Museum, Zoo and Archaeology are the other important state sponsored institutions which play a key role in the tourism sector of Kerala. Among the promotional agencies, DTPCs set up by the government of Kerala in all the 14 revenue districts, exploit the tourism potential of the State through sustained efforts by coordinating various government departments, voluntary agencies and other agencies interested in travel and tourism, and by ensuring local initiatives and mobilization of resources at local levels. More than 250 distinct tourism spots of varying degree of importance and potential can be found across the State. Moreover, the State has innumerable project possibilities which have to be identified and implemented from time to time based on emerging trends. At present, nearly one-third of the identified tourism spots in Kerala are promoted and maintained by DTPCs. This shows the significant role played by DTPCs in The Role of District Tourism Promotion Councils in the Promotion of Tourism in Kerala the promotion of tourism in Kerala.

However, based on the available literature, it is revealed that the role of promotional agencies in Kerala particularly the DTPCs has not been addressed by the social scientists. Thus, by considering the vast and varied potential of tourism in the State and the promotional efforts of DTPCs in Kerala in creating a key platform for the State and positioning itself competitively in the international market, a detailed study on the role of DTPCs in the tourism development of Kerala is found to be pertinent. It is against this backdrop that the present study has been carried out.

## III. Scope of the Study

The study attempts to evaluate the role of DTPCs in the promotion of tourism in Kerala. It aims at reviewing the tourism promotion in India and abroad with specific reference to the organizational structure and functioning of DTPCs and evaluation of various activities undertaken viz., awareness and product promotion programmes and amenities/facilities provided at tourist destinations. Identification and implementation of programmes, effectiveness of programmes and the benefits of the projects of DTPCs to the host community are also covered under the purview of the study. The study has been conducted based on the perception of officials, tourists and host community of the selected six DTPCs in Kerala.

## IV. Objectives of the Study

The present study is undertaken with a view to evaluate the role of DTPCs in the promotion of tourism in Kerala, from the point



of view of officials, tourists and host community. The specific objectives are:

1. To review the tourism promotion in India and abroad and also the organizational structure and functioning of DTPCs in Kerala.
2. To enquire into the identification and implementation of the projects of DTPCs for the promotion of tourism in Kerala.
3. To assess the effectiveness of the programmes of DTPCs in Kerala.
4. To assess the benefits of the projects of DTPCs in Kerala from socio-cultural, economic and environmental point of view.

### V. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been formulated on the basis of the objectives of the study.

$H_{01}$ : Not more than one half of the host community perceives that tourism awareness programmes of DTPCs in Kerala through media are effective.

$H_{02}$ : Not more than one half of the host community perceives that tourism awareness programmes of DTPCs in Kerala through campaign are effective.

$H_{03}$ : Not more than one half of the tourists perceive that the product promotion programmes of DTPCs in Kerala are effective.

$H_{04}$ : Not more than one half of the tourists are satisfied with the facilities at the destinations of DTPCs in Kerala.

$H_{05}$ : Not more than one half of the tourists perceive that the price charged for facilities at the destinations of DTPC in Kerala are high.

$H_{06}$ : Not more than one half of the host community perceives that the projects of DTPCs in Kerala are beneficial to the host community.

### VI. Methodology

The present study is empirical in nature based on both primary and secondary data. Multi-stage sampling has been used to select the sample. In the first stage, sample DTPCs has been selected. In the second stage the tourists, host community and Officials at the destinations maintained by the sample DTPCs have been selected.

#### VI. (A) Selection of Sample DTPCs

All the 14 DTPCs functioning in the 14 revenue districts of Kerala form the population for the study. The southern region comprises of four DTPCs (Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha), the central region consists of five DTPCs (Kottayam, Idukki, Palakkad, Thrissur and Ernakulam) and the northern region comprises of the remaining five DTPCs (Malappuram, Kozhikkode, Kannur, Wayanad and Kasargode). For the intensive study, two DTPCs were selected from each of the three regions on judgment sampling technique by considering the DTPCs which had a large number of tourists and maintained a wide variety of tourism products. Accordingly, Thiruvananthapuram and Alappuzha (representing the south), Idukki and Ernakulam (representing the central) and Kozhikkode and Wayanad (representing the north) were selected (Table 1).

**Table 1: Selection of Sample DTPCs**

Region	DTPCs in Kerala	DTPCs Selected
South	1. Trivandrum	1.Trivandrum 2.Alappuzha
	2. Kollam	
	3. Pathanamthitta	
	4. Alappuzha	
Central	1. Kottayam	1.Idukki 2.Ernakulam
	2. Idukki	
	3. Ernakulam	
	4. Thrissur	
	5. Palakkad	
North	1. Malappuram	1.Kozhikode 2.Wyanad
	2. Kozhikode	
	3. Wayanad	
	4. Kannur	
	5. Kasargode	
Total	14	6

**VI. (B) Selection of Sample Tourists**

The monthly average of tourists for the peak season (September to February) during the last three years from 2008-2010 constitute the

population. A total of 480 tourists consisting of 360 domestic tourists and 120 foreign tourists were selected conveniently for the detailed study (Table 2).

**Table 2: Selection of Sample Tourists**

Region	DTPCs Selected	Domestic			Foreign			Total	
		Population*	Sample		Population*	Sample			
South	Trivandrum	100715	98	120	26824	32	40	130	160
	Alappuzha	23234	22		6752	8		30	
Central	Idukki	46683	28	120	6589	7	40	35	160
	Ernakulam	156398	92		28718	33		125	
North	Kozhikkode	50066	73	120	1156	22	40	95	160
	Wayanad	32382	47		939	18		65	
Total		407478	360		70978	120		480	

\*Monthly average of tourists for the peak season-September to February-during the last three years from 2008-2010.

#### VI. (C) Selection of Officials at DTPCs and Host Community

There were 41 project officials in all the six selected DTPCs. All the officials were

selected for the study. For selecting the host community, 25 persons from various destinations of each DTPC were selected conveniently and thus it constituted a sample of 150 (Table 3).

**Table 3: Selection of Officials of DTPCs and Host Community**

Region	DTPCs Selected	Project Officers Selected	Host Community Selected
South	Trivandrum	11	25
	Alappuzha	5	25
Central	Idukki	6	25
	Ernakulam	9	25
North	Kozhikkode	5	25
	Wayanad	5	25
Total		41	150

#### VI. (D) Collection of Data

The primary data were collected from three categories of respondents – tourists, host community and officials of DTPC with the help of three separate sets of scientifically pretested structured interview schedules. The secondary data were collected from the official reports of

the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India; the Department of Tourism, Govt. of Kerala; the State Planning Board as well as from the published and unpublished research reports on tourism of various tourism promotional agencies, research articles, market research agencies, books and the Internet.



## VI. (E) Tools of Analysis

For data analysis, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) has been used. The analyzed data were interpreted with the help of arithmetic and statistical tools such as average, percentage, compound annual growth rate (CAGR), chi-square test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Z test. The mean was applied to determine the relative order of preference of the respondents. The chi-square test was applied to examine the significant variation in the opinion among respondents in the three regions of Kerala. CAGR was calculated to find out the growth rate in FEE and tourist arrivals. ANOVA was used to find out the relationship of demographic variables on selected group variables. Z test was applied for testing the hypothesis.

## VI. (F) Period of Study

The study limits itself to a ten year period starting from 2001 to 2010. It was during this period that the government recognized the importance of a district level agency for tourism promotion by giving priority in allocating substantial amount to the DTPCs for identification and maintenance of tourism destination and also for creating awareness among host community. However, secondary data related to the preceding and succeeding years have also been incorporated in some areas of the study, wherever found essential for drawing conclusions. The interview for collecting primary data was conducted during the peak season of tourism in Kerala from September 2010 to February, 2011.

## VII. Limitations of the Study

The study has the following limitations.

1. The statistical data published by different agencies on various aspects of tourism are found to be different.

2. For assessing the benefits of projects of DTPCs, the details of the employment generated from its different projects and the fund utilized for the projects have not been made use of and the details on these aspects are not available with the DTPCs.
3. The sample of tourists for the study has been selected conveniently as the data on the number of tourists visited in each of the destinations of DTPC are not available.
4. Some of the officials of DTPCs were reluctant to give information regarding the effectiveness of programmes undertaken and their level of satisfaction towards the facilities at the destinations.

## VIII. Presentation of the Report

The study report is presented in seven chapters.

Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Tourism Industry – Growth and Development
Chapter 3	Tourism Promotion in India and Abroad
Chapter 4	Identification and Implementation of the Projects of District Tourism Promotion Councils in Kerala
Chapter 5	Effectiveness of the Programmes of District Tourism Promotion Councils in Kerala
Chapter 6	Benefits of the Projects of District Tourism Promotion Councils in Kerala
Chapter 7	Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Suggestions

**IX. Major Findings of the Study**

1. Majority of the host community are unemployed and are born at tourism destinations and have no relationship with tourism.
2. Most of the domestic tourists are Keralites (47.5%). The share of other South Indian States is 40.3 per cent. The percentage share from Central and North Indian States is only 12.2 per cent. The highest percentage of foreign tourists is from European countries with a share of 45 per cent, followed by Asian and Australian countries, North and South American Countries and African countries.
3. Nearly 50 per cent of the domestic tourists are youngsters in the age group of 28 years or less. At the same time, majority of the foreign tourists are in the elder generation of 45 years and above. The youngsters among the foreign tourists represent only 26.7 per cent. Further majority of the domestic tourists are regular travelers but majority of the foreign tourists are irregular travelers.
4. Considering the source of information about destination, tourists ranked travel agencies as the first, followed by tourism information centres and websites. It is further noted that all the tourists assigned the last rank to websites of DTPC irrespective of the region.
5. As regards the purpose of visit at tourist destinations, tourists assigned the first rank to historical monuments followed by scenic beauty, good climate, peaceful atmosphere, pollution free environment and entertainment as the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth and the sixth rank respectively.
6. Kerala and Andhra Pradesh are the two States in India where tourism has become the affair of district level authority. DTPCs in Kerala are registered as individual units functioning at each of the 14 revenue districts. There is no uniformity in the staff pattern of DTPCs in Kerala. Most of the employees in DTPCs are appointed on temporary/contract basis and even the post of Secretary is on deputation basis.
7. It was found that the primary resource of DTPC is the project specific funds allotted by the DoT and most of the DTPCs are functioning with the assistance of government. It was observed that these DTPCs they conduct feasibility studies - economic, environmental, social and cultural-before implementing a project. More over, they themselves developed projects.
8. While the Planning Officer in the DoT is responsible for implementing Centrally Sponsored Schemes, the Assistant Planning Officer is responsible for implementing State Plan Schemes.
9. Regarding the difficulties in the implementation of projects, it was observed that protest from host community was the first difficulty, followed by lack of basic infrastructure, shortage of staff, financial constraints and environmental issues.
10. Visual media and publicity boards are the most effective, while website is moderately effective and print media is the least effective in creating awareness among host community.
11. Campaign among general public, campaign among small entrepreneurs and campaign in educational institutions are viewed as moderately effective in awareness creation.





12. The print/visual media and the functioning of information centres are the most effective tool for product promotion. But websites and exhibitions are moderately effective.
  13. Tourists are highly satisfied with the waste management and tourist guide facilities and moderately satisfied with the functioning of information centres, safety and security facilities and parking facilities at the destinations of DTPCs.
  14. With regard to the level of satisfaction of various facilities, it was revealed that tourists are not satisfied with entertainment, shopping, telecommunication, food and beverage, drinking water, local conveyance and sanitation at the destinations of DTPCs.
  15. It was found that the price charged for facilities viz., entertainment, telecommunication, local conveyance, sanitation, tourist guide and parking at the destinations of DTPCs were average. However price charged for shopping facilities at the destinations was high.
  16. The level of benefits of DTPCs projects was moderate in ensuring restoration of historical building and promotion of cultural advancement of the destinations and low in supporting the revival of traditional art, craft and culture, preserving the cultural identity of destination, providing cultural exchange and education and promotion of social interaction of the destinations.
  17. The level of benefits of DTPC projects was high in providing job opportunities, motivating the expansion of local business units, increasing the standard of living, investment income and infrastructure in the destinations but moderate in increasing their shopping opportunities.
  18. It was revealed that the level of benefits of DTPCs projects was moderate in increasing the environmental awareness but was low in conserving and preserving the nature.
- X. Suggestions Based on the Findings of the Study**
1. DTPCs should initiate wide propaganda among the host community to make them aware of its programmes and to ensure their participation to a great extent. To boost the tourist's inflow, DTPCs should conduct extensive product promotion campaign by organizing Kerala festivals, road shows in different parts of the country and abroad and by hosting international and national conventions, fairs, traditional sports and game events, and ethnic food festivals in Kerala.
  2. DTPCs should either construct a new web site or to revamp the existing one to more user friendly by incorporating information regarding how to reach the destination, the distance from important centres, primary attractions, climatic conditions, precautions to be taken, if any, types of accommodation available and its rate, culture of the people, handicrafts and local commodities available, fruits and vegetables and food habits/pattern of the locality etc. More over, Create a database of tourists who visited at the various destinations of DTPCs in Kerala.
  3. DTPCs should resort to additional sources of funds by way of grants, loans, donations, etc from financial institutions, local bodies, co-operatives, NRIs, NGOs and even from individual investors. The DTPCs can also approach the government to increase the project specific funds to meet the emerging needs.





4. Constitute a State level apex body called '*STATE TOURISM PROMOTION COUNCIL*' for coordinating the activities of DTPCs. In addition, the Governing Body and Executive Committee of the DTPCs should be reconstituted by reducing the proportion of non-official members and also ensure that they must have considerable knowledge in the area of tourism.
5. Diversify the activities of DTPCs by setting up multiplexes, shopping malls and departmental stores at important places to attract and entertain the tourists. In addition, issue license to tourist guides and their service should be monitored periodically and measures should be taken to improve their service by conducting enrichment programmes.
6. In addition to promotional activities, the DTPCs should also should give due weight on the conservation and preservation of the culture and tradition at its sites.

Clean and hygienic conditions should be ensured at the destinations of DTPCs by outsourcing the upkeep and maintenance to NGOs, local bodies etc.

## **XI. Conclusion**

The concept of DTPC is a unique feature of the tourism scenario in Kerala. The DTPC mainly concentrates on tourism promotion activities like marketing of local products through private/public participation, improvement of quality/standards and evolving procedure for certification of tourism products, improvement of signages and sanitation, heritage conservation and preservation, coordination of tourism clubs, creation of tourism awareness and preparation of host community, information dissemination and local infrastructure building with the cooperation of local bodies. From a close analysis, it is revealed that the DTPCs in Kerala undertake a number of programmes for awareness creation, product promotion and provision of amenities at tourist destinations. But it is observed that these programmes are not found to be effective from the perspective of the tourists and the host community. However, the DTPC projects are beneficial to the host community from the socio-cultural, economic and environmental point of view. Hence, from the study, it is concluded that the DTPCs in Kerala are engaged in a host of tourism promotion programmes, which cannot give the veritable satisfaction to the beneficiaries as envisaged by DTPCs.